Policing in a changing Vietnam

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Policing in a changing Vietnam

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Knowledge about policing has been produced and disseminated unevenly so that our understanding comes from a skewed emphasis on the Western (largely Anglo-American) experience. Whilst such literature usually does not openly declare to be making claims of universal validity, it often does so by implication. Fortunately, more empirical research is being undertaken outside the global North.

The present study adopted an ethnographic approach to explore the nature of policing and police culture in Vietnam. The origins of the Vietnamese police (according to our modern understanding) are located in a war against colonialism and for national independence emerging in the 1940s in northern Vietnam with officers now required to pledge loyalty to the ruling Communist Party. Over the past three decades, the country has undergone rapid economic and social change. Nevertheless, amid this increasing prosperity, the police confront new challenges.

Fieldwork was undertaken over a six-month period in 2016 (and a visit in 2017) with approval from the Ministry of Public Security – a first in Vietnam. The theoretical framework addresses weaknesses in current theorising of policing by proposing a *Southern Policing* perspective. I offer an extension of the interactive model of police culture and practice developed by Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003) which draws on Bourdieu's (1990a) conceptualisations of field and habitus as a relational dynamic. The framework is useful because it provides flexibility for explaining police practices in both Northern and Southern contexts. It can also account for differences in cultural knowledge and institutionalised practices. A *Southern Policing* perspective also recognises that capital comes in forms which may depart from those identified in previous studies.

By applying a *Southern Policing* perspective to Vietnam, the study reveals variations in the field which illustrate that some assumptions about policing do not necessarily hold for a globally inclusive/comprehensive account of policing. Specifically, I address assumptions about relationships between the police, political system, broad societal culture, legal frameworks, organisations, the community, and gender. These variations have to be understood not as deviations from Anglo-American normality but as significant separate practices and traditions of policing from which the North may have something to learn.

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Abstract

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deviations from Anglo-American normality but as significant separate practices and traditions of policing from which the North may have something to learn.

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Importantly, this research would not have been possible without the co-operation of the police in Vietnam. There are so many police officers who have helped me refine my research topic, support the fieldwork and share their ideas with me although I will not refer to their names specifically here. I thank the Ministry of Public Security for entrusting me with undertaking this research and the People's Police Academy for their support and interest in my research. I wholeheartedly agree with the sentiment David Bayley noted in his work (Patterns of Policing, xii), in that the research forged 'professional links across the barriers of custom and politics in an area of enormous sensitivity'. It is also noteworthy that in 2018, Australia and Vietnam upgraded their relationship to a Strategic Partnership and I see this research between Australian and Vietnamese institutions as a testament to the strength of the relationship.

I am appreciative of the in-country supervision of Dr Khuất Thị Hải Oanh, Centre for Supporting Community Development Initiatives (SCDI). I am also grateful to the Director of the Institute for Social Development Studies, Dr Khuất Thu Hồng and the Internal Review Board for taking the time to review and approve the in-country ethics application.

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Thanks are due to my parents who have supported me and my education in a multitude of ways and are ardent supporters of the pathway I have pursued.

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Peer-reviewed published articles

- Jardine, M. Gender equality and the role of women in policing in Vietnam. The People's Police Journal No. 3(13). Ministry of Public Security. Hanoi. 2018.

- Jardine, M. (2018b) Researching gender and law enforcement as public health input. *Journal of Community Safety & Well-Being*, August 3(1) https://www.journalcswb.ca/index.php/cswb/article/view/65/119

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A note on language and terminology

What is now considered 'Vietnamese' is a blend of 'locally diverse indigenous beliefs (such as those represented in the spirit cults), the standard Northern culture of the elite, the strong trans-national Buddhist presence, and other ethnic patterns in the mountains and along the coast' (G. E. Dutton, Werner, & Whitmore, 2012, p. 10). Furthermore, with over 2000 years of chronicled (yet incomplete) history there are contested ideas and versions of the past which are explored in more detail elsewhere (for example, see G. E. Dutton et al., 2012; Goscha, 2016a; Taylor, 2013). Nonetheless, the term 'Vietnamese' is used within this thesis as a broad descriptor for people, history and culture which contain complex series of identities resulting in a 'blended' story.

In this thesis I have used Vietnamese characters *(chữ Nôm)* for spelling names and places where possible and other key words. One anomaly is in the different approaches to the country name, Vietnam, and the two major cities: Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The correct spelling for these are: Việt Nam, Hà Nội and Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh. In this thesis I have referred to them as Vietnam, Hanoi and Hồ Chí Minh City – the English translation in the former two and a partial translation for the latter. The reason for this is that, given much of the research was undertaken in Hanoi, and the frequency of use, not using diacritics may be easier for the reader. I have used diacritics for the southern capital, formerly known as Sài Gòn, because it provides consistency between when I am referring to (North) Vietnam's first President, Hồ Chí Minh or the city re-named in his honour as Hồ Chí Minh City.

The thesis uses a *Southern Policing* (Jardine, 2018b) theoretical framework which draws upon the previous constructs *Southern Theory* (Connell, 2007) and *Southern Criminology* (Carrington, 2016). In these contexts, 'Southern' refers to a distinction between the global North and the global South. It has been used by Connell (2007) and Carrington et al. (2016) to refer to the asymmetry of sociological and criminological knowledge between the two hemispheres. The North-South distinction is not neat, however, as it also generally refers to a wealth

disparity and a difference between former imperialists and their colonies.[1] The objective of a Southern scholarship is to draw attention to the imbalance in power and understanding: it is a project concerned with promoting scholarship from and on regions which have been rendered invisible.

It is important to distinguish Southern Theory from an association with the former distinctions between North Vietnam and South Vietnam in the years prior to reunification. The histories of North and South Vietnam have been differentiated by migration and practices towards economic enterprise, with the south reflecting more 'capitalist' tendencies (Beresford, 1989). After reunification and the failure of centralised economic planning, some scholars referred to the economic reforms of the 1980s as a 'southernization' of Vietnam, implying that characteristics associated with pre-1975 South Vietnam were now being taken up in the North (Tài, 2001, p. 182). In Southern scholarship, Southern refers to Vietnam in its entirety due to the country's geographical location in the global South. Notwithstanding, Vietnam's civil wars over centuries may reflect some of the same dynamics with territorial disputes over land previously occupied by Khmer and conflict with the former Champa Kingdom in southern Vietnam, for example.

[1] Blaustein (2017) gives an account of some complexities of the North/South terminology and the role researchers play in (re)constituting the identity of a place by prescribing it as Northern or Southern.

Glossary

AUD	Australian Dollar
Bộ Công an	Ministry of Public Security (MPS)
Công an	Public Security/security services/police
Cảnh sát	Police
Xã/Phường	Commune/Ward
Công an phường/Xã	Commune/ward police station
Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam	Vietnamese Communist Party
Đổi Mới	Economic renovation
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
Đồng (đ)	(Vietnamese) Currency
Học viện Cảnh sát nhân dân	People's Police Academy
GPD	General Police Department
Hiệp sĩ đường phố	Street Knights (A type of neighbourhood patrol)
Hộ khẩu	Household Registration System
Hiếu thảo	Filial piety
Lý do	Rationale
Linh hoạt	Flexible
MPS	Ministry of Public Security
PPA	People's Police Academy
PPU	People's Police University
PPF	People's Police Force
(P)PSF	(People's) Public Security Forces
RV	Republic of Vietnam
VFF	Vietnam Fatherland Front
VCP	Vietnamese Communist Party
VNĐ	Vietnamese Đồng (Currency)

Chapter 1: Thesis overview

Introduction

This is a study of policing in Vietnam. The country is among the fastest growing economies in Asia and has a stake in disputed territories in the East Sea which is currently a fragile area of military and diplomatic contest. Domestic security is an imperative for the nation's stability, but what do we know about the institutions who police the country's interior, and the people who work for them? The study examines Vietnam's public police or those who most resemble the uniformed police in other jurisdictions – at least according to our modern understanding of police.

The participation of women in law enforcement has been identified as key to peace and security in the Asia-Pacific (and elsewhere) (True, 2016) although empirical research on women in policing has been marginalised. This thesis has a focus on gender which explores the challenges for women's participation in policing in Vietnam.

The study adopted an ethnographic approach to explore the nature of policing and police culture in Vietnam. It explores these in the context of the country's unique history – particularly the influences of Confucianism, colonisation, communism and capitalism – through investigating relationships between the police, political system, broad societal culture, legal frameworks, organisations, the community, and gender as a social institution.

The study addresses the following questions:

1. What are the historical, political, economic, social and cultural influences which shape policing and police culture in Vietnam?
2. How do structural and cultural influences affect the nature of women's inclusion in policing in Vietnam?
3. What are the theoretical and policy implications of the findings?

An ethnographic approach is consistent with a tradition of other police scholars who value the contribution of observation of police in order to understand policing from the perspective of those who have adopted it as their occupation. In his study of police socialisation in the United States, Van Maanen (1973, p. 5) argued that, in order to 'gain insight into the police environment, researchers must penetrate the official smokescreen and observe directly the social action in social situations which, in the final analysis, represents the reality of police work'. According to Reeves, Kuper and Hodges (2008), 'the central aim of ethnography is to provide rich, holistic insights into people's views and actions, as well as the nature (that is sights, sounds) of the location they inhabit, through the collection of detailed observations and interviews'; thus, interviews may be a combination of formal, informal, structured, semi-structured or opportunistic exchanges between the researcher and participants.

This research aims to contribute to a Southern perspective of policing. Most studies of police in the English language literature are from the global North, with a few exceptions. For example, David Bayley (1976, p. ix) prefaces his comparative research by stating that it was undertaken with a view to 'learn about the police problems of the United States by studying Japanese police institutions'. He stresses that examining another culture enables us to reflect on our own cultures, transforming the received norms into something recognisable and obvious (Bayley, 1976). Whilst I have reflected a great deal on my own experiences as a police officer in Australia, this study set out to explore whether assumptions drawn from Anglo-American policing are useful in trying to understand policing in non-Western countries, specifically Vietnam and, in turn, whether studying Vietnamese policing can contribute to an understanding of policing elsewhere.

In this century, empirical studies on policing began to emerge from outside the global North which drew attention to the influences of political regime change and the challenges of policing in unstable environments and transitioning economies (Blaustein, 2015; Faull, 2018; Marks, 2005). For example, Marks' (2005) study of the Durban Public Order Police in South Africa was important because it foreshadowed possibilities for real reform of a police culture amid difficult

circumstances. She is optimistic, but cautiously so, noting that wider structural conditions can limit the scope for some changes in police culture and practice to occur and be sustained (Marks, 2005). This accords a view of colonial policing reforms which suggests training and specialisation do not necessarily contain the use of unlawful violence because police are exposed to wider social conditions which shape their actions (Blanchard, Deluermoz, & Glasman, 2011).

This research was inspired by scholarship on policing (largely from the UK, US, Canada and Australia) that provided frameworks for exploring diversity in policing. These frameworks help us to understand that police agencies comprise a range of sub-cultures which can be differentiated by, for example, officer orientation or style (Reiner, 2010), street-level or managerial roles (Reuss-Ianni, 1983), duties (Ericson, 1981, 1982; Hobbs, 1988; Young, 1991), and location (Cain, 1973; Loftus, 2009). Although the present study is not comparative, the impetus came from a curiosity about what drives police behaviour and the extent to which police officers have a shared culture across national borders.

There is much to learn from policing research outside the Anglosphere, including continental Europe and colonial policing regimes. In *La professionnalisation policière en situation coloniale,* Blanchard et al., (2011) declare that police professionalisation or reform is not necessarily a determinate or linear process in pursuit of progress towards an ideal. The study of policing outside the global North can therefore provide new insights on different institutional arrangements and policing styles which can contribute valuably to the intellectual discourse about policing generally. The significance of 'place' in the production of policing knowledge, thus, comes to the fore.

Police, place and the production of policing knowledge

A familiar conceptualisation of what or who constitutes the 'police' is provided by Reiner (2010, p. 3) who describes the police as 'primarily a body of people patrolling public places in blue uniforms, with a broad mandate of crime control, order maintenance and some negotiable social service functions'. The function of 'policing', however, can be carried out formally or informally by myriad agents as part of public or private institutions of social control (Reiner, 2010).

Consequently, wider social and political systems shape the nature of policing in particular places (Van Dijk, Hoogewoning, & Punch, 2015). Paying attention to place is important because most policing literature is based on a narrow range of locations and cultures, not only preoccupied with the global North, but also Anglo-American in focus. Whilst such literature usually does not openly make claims of universal validity, it often does so by implication, either by not being interested in what happens elsewhere or assuming that Anglo-America is further along an inevitable road of progress than in other jurisdictions.

One example of how 1960s US policing concerns of Northern policing scholarship have overshadowed alternative approaches is the focus on differential enforcement of the law, particularly in relation to racial minorities (Sherman, 1984). Goldstein (1960) explained why *total enforcement* is impossible and *full enforcement* is unrealistic, thus, justifying discretionary practices but with necessary oversight. Revelations by the American Bar Association regarding the pervasive exercise of police discretion 'shocked legal scholars', though confirmed claims by activists that black Americans were more likely to be arrested than whites (Sherman, 1984, p. 65). These studies 'discovering' the use of discretion in the 1950s-60s was, according to Sherman (1984), a perplexing 'scientific boon' because if police saw their role as one of crime control, differential enforcement of the law could be justified empirically and be at odds with the (ideal) view that the law should be applied without discrimination. For example, Sherman (1984) refers to a scenario where police action could potentially be differentiated for employed versus unemployed men if the outcomes for both categories contributed to reducing crime.

Elsewhere, approaches to policing developed very differently. In Taiwan, for example, the police have, since 1945, been trained on the ideological principles — based on teachings from Chiang Kai-Shek (and Sun Yat-Sen) — that underpin their practice (J. T. Martin, 2014). The following excerpt from a Taiwanese police textbook highlights a markedly different policing approach where police are more enmeshed in collective welfare:

> The police role is not merely a passive maintenance of social peace and order. The four great responsibilities of

> "Governing, Teaching, Nurturing, and Protecting" are placed on their person. In everything they do they must embody the standard, guiding the people in life-activities and improving social customs and habits, allowing the average person to become a good citizen, and allowing the average society to progress and improve, to become a new society. Management and education are combined, with the psychology of a father or mother's love for their son or daughter, the police teach and protect the masses, allowing them to unconsciously come to cherish virtue and respect authority. Guiding and teaching the masses with an attitude and language of the dignity and respect: only when this is achieved can one truly be counted as real police. (Chen Y. 1945, p. 2 cited in J. T. Martin, 2014)

The role of police in 'teaching' and 'nurturing' implies that a crucial aspect of policing is a malleability in police practice. From this excerpt, we can begin to consider the implications for a different thematic trajectory among dominant policing scholarship had it originated in a communal or (post-) Confucian culture. It also provides a different account of what constitutes 'real' policing and even has correlations with the Reithian (English) perspective that policing should be more about prevention than detection (Reith, 1956).

The extent to which broader social and cultural environments shape police occupational cultures has been the subject of comparative studies with a range of foci (for example, Banton, 1964; Bayley, 1976, 1990; Cassan, 2010; Choi & Lee, 2016; Chu, 2017; Jiao, 2001; Sheptycki, 1999; Sun & Chu, 2006). The nature of policing often takes on various forms depending on the history and development of institutions and the broader social context. In his comparative study of the ideology of democratic policing, J. T. Martin (2014) describes four different styles which emerged in America, Britain, France and Taiwan. He argues that America 'valourizes the practical wisdom of law in action over the formal logic of law on the books' which contrasts with the French emphasis on 'administrative formalism and the civil law ideal' (J. T. Martin, 2014, p. 470). Whilst the

foundations of British 'policing by consent' appealed to a liberal tradition and democratic sensibilities (J. T. Martin, 2014, p. 470), 'policing of virtue' is the overriding police ideology in East Asia (2014, p. 475). The socialisation process into specific legal cultures and social norms begins in a person's early years as citizen. Although officers are acculturated into occupational and organisational rules as they join the police, as Chan (1997) points out, these structures are amenable to change. Individuals have agency to act outside or resist cultural influences. This explains how cultural variations occur within broader ideologies of policing. Certainly, the case of Taiwan is a recent example where police have had to adjust to change from authoritarian to democratic governance (J. T. Martin, 2006).

Rationale for the study

Globally, the role of police is becoming more complex and subject to increasing scrutiny. Technological advances mean the terrain of policing is no longer just the tangible but includes an online space which presents both challenges and opportunities. As an aspiring policing scholar, I am curious to explore how ideas about police and policing fit with those of their peers with very different histories and structural conditions outside the global North.

Across global jurisdictions there are some starkly different conditions under which police work. For example, in the England, the home of the modern police model attributed to Sir Robert Peel (Lentz & Chaires, 2007), the rise of social media (specifically Twitter) has led to a new form of openness about internal issues (Hesketh & Williams, 2017). It has been intriguing to watch serving and retired police (as well as other stakeholders) publicise grievances and being openly critical of police leaders, politicians and other service providers – in the main, without negative consequences. I wondered to what extent this openness reflects a new aspect of British police culture?

In contrast, expressing derogatory views about government decisions or leaders in Vietnam could land one in prison. In July 2018, the Minister for Information and Communications fined an online news outlet US$9,500 and suspended it for three months for 'splitting national unity' by (apparently) misquoting a state official and

publishing reader comments on an article in 2017 (Tuổi Trẻ News, 2018), which referred to a North-South power imbalance. What makes this punishment more interesting is that the major media outlet is state-owned and run by an arm of the Communist Party – the Hồ Chí Minh Youth Union – which demonstrates that even this affiliation offers no protection.[2] In my observation, Vietnamese police criticisms of state affairs on social media have been rare. An officer explained to me that gripes against the organisation or its decision-makers should be handled in private. The stark differences between the two approaches demonstrate that norms of police practice necessarily vary considerably between a democratic and a one-party political system.

A further entrée to the study of police cultures, for me, came by way of interest in the variations and similarities with routine or mundane (rather than exceptional or controversial) aspects of police work in non-Western countries. This vantage point also piqued the interest of French scholars examining the historiography of colonial policing in the former colonies on the African continent (Blanchard & Glasman, 2012). Blanchard and Glasman (2012, p. 41) urged other researchers to '*banaliser l'histoire de la police coloniale'* (banalise [normalise, render banal] the history of colonial policing) as they would police in the metropole. Whilst a colonial past cannot be separated from the present, Blanchard and Glasman (2012) argue for an examination of colonial policing which is not bound by assumptions tied to colonial categories. Similarly, this study set out to explore the utility of Anglo-American literature for understanding policing in Vietnam, as well as interrogate possibilities for new understandings of police culture.

The paucity of empirical research on Vietnamese policing provides a considerable opportunity for scholars to make an original contribution. It is important to note that, in the wake of the Communist victories in 1954 and 1975, many documentary records and sources were destroyed or re-written to present an official narrative to unite the country and position the Communist Party at the centre of the state's identity (Lucius, 2009; Pelley, 2002). Sidel (2008) refers to the dearth of literature in Vietnam as a result of decades of post-war isolation

[2] Within one week of this report, the English language website of Tuổi Trẻ News used in this citation was also suspended for three months with the homepage displaying a message that it was 'down for maintenance' and will be back online in October 2018.

resulting from both US-led embargoes and a local government protective of foreign interference after protracted occupation.

Formal research in Vietnam remains restricted and controlled, requiring relevant approval (from Government or Party) and restrictions on access to crime statistics as state secrets also limits meaningful or comparative analyses (Cox, 2012). With respect to criminological research, given its nature is often to investigate state responses to crime, critical exploration of these issues is limited: 'Criminology is the preserve of politically-controlled police academies' (Cox 2010, p. 229). Belknap (2016, p. 253) conducted a review on Asian criminological publications by country using ISI Web of Science data (and a second data set from the *Asian Journal of Criminology*) which showed more than half of the original articles included in her samples were published after 2009 with China, Japan, South Korea, India, and Russia, respectively, having the highest representation among 'traditional criminology and crime control'. Belknap (2016) removed Vietnam (and Afghanistan and Iraq) from the analysis because the studies referred to US war veterans who had engaged in crime-related conduct as part of their post-war experience, thus, unfairly skewing the results for useful comparison. Belknap (2016) also noted that the AJC is not included in the ISI Web of Science index, pointing out that this in itself can bias searches towards Western or global North criminology.

Although police are at the frontline of responding to crime and public safety issues amid rapid social and economic change, to date there are few studies examining how police officers in Vietnam are trained in order to adapt to and cope with the pressures of contemporary policing, including adapting to the internal police organisational environment. Lessons to reform police are being imported from Western police forces and tertiary training institutions without first determining through empirical investigation the extent to which police culture is shared or dissimilar. If the latter is the case, many Western-based learnings may be redundant in the Vietnamese context. This research aims to elucidate the extent of shared police culture so that future engagement between Vietnamese police

and international partners can be appropriately adapted and effectively implemented to better suit the needs of the Vietnamese police.

Whilst some aspects of Vietnamese society have been exposed to academic and international scrutiny in recent decades, policing norms and structures remain opaque. Scholarship on policing in Vietnam available in the English language literature is limited. A notable contribution from Anderson (2015) provides insights into the colonial policing regime under the French (1860s-1920s), noting difficulties in recruitment and remuneration which were blamed for the sub-standard conduct of both French and enlisted (subordinate) local Vietnamese. Her archival research uncovered sympathy from a contributor to a 1907 edition of the Bulletin of the Committee of French Asia (*Bulletin du Comité de l'Asie française*) for underpaid French officers who engaged in corruption to subsidise their lowly income (M. L. Anderson, 2015, p. 84).

The People's Police Force is a relatively young institution established by Hồ Chí Minh on the 19th of August 1945 (initially as the Tonkin Security Police) to 'protect the revolutionary government' (Hanoi Police Museum, 2017). Thayer (2014) recently provided an account of 'The Apparatus of Authoritarian Rule', and Grossheim (2018, p. 440) presented an account of presentational strategies by Public Security Forces which, he argues, aim to 'actively propagate a sacred and romanticized image'. However, perhaps some of the most important contributions to understanding policing in Vietnam in its current form are made by the meticulous work by Koh (2001, 2004a, 2004b, 2006) who was able to interview and observe ward-level authorities (including police) in their responses to crime, social order and bureaucratic functions. Koh (2006) highlighted that state-society relations operate through 'control and mediation'. He argued that whilst some aspects of life in Vietnam are tightly controlled, in other areas they experience more freedom than elsewhere through the ability to negotiate with local authorities and avoid punishments for transgressions due to an inefficient bureaucracy (Koh, 2006). Granting that times change, an analysis of recent controls (see Chapters 2 and 5) of internet access and usage may warrant revision of some aspects of life in Vietnam in the decade or more since Koh's research.

Overview of the chapters

The early chapters of this thesis examine Vietnamese history and culture and outline the analytical framework.

Chapter 2, Conflict, continuity and change: shaping Vietnam and contemporary policing provides an overview of key elements of Vietnamese history. The chapter covers territorial disputes, invasions and the re-unification of North and South Vietnam. The transition to a market economy transformed the country's legal institutions, including the role of the police and the way Vietnamese cultural norms mediate police practices around social control and responses to crime.

Chapter 3, A framework for a Southern Policing perspective introduces the conceptual framework adopted in this thesis and underscores the asymmetry of scholarship between the global North and South as described in Connell's (2007) *Southern Theory*. The chapter summarises the development of police cultural studies showing how understandings have expanded from being perceived as a monolithic bureaucratic organisation, to an occupation with a range of sub-cultures which are amenable to change. The framework draws on Chan's (1997; 2003) interactive model of police culture. She proposed a new theoretical framework which draws on Bourdieu's (1990a) social theory of the *field* (structural environment) and *habitus* (cultural knowledge) to conceptualise the production of police culture. Chan et al. (2003) describe how policing and police exist in a 'field of power', referring to the (dominant) position of the police in this space, but also as a field of struggle inherent in all 'social arrangements' (Swartz, 1997, p. 136). The field for police reflects the social, political and legal capital (resource or status) available to them – both as individuals and as an organisation (2003, p. 25).

Chapter 4, Police ethnography in the global South: methodology and ethics describes the methodology used in this study. Thirty-seven formal interviews with police students and officers were undertaken (some multiple times), and observation of police undertaken mainly at the People's Police Academy (PPA) in Hanoi over a six-month period in 2016 and a brief period in 2017. Other stakeholders were interviewed from non-government organisations, academia and international agencies. Ethics approval was granted from the University of

New South Wales, Sydney (UNSW), and the Institute for Social Development Studies, Hanoi. Approval was granted at Ministerial level from the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) and the President (Rector) of the People's Police Academy (PPA). In order to receive approval to conduct the study, I had to agree to certain conditions set by the police. Some conditions would be unacceptable in researching a Western police force. However, these were, firstly, non-negotiable, so any research on Vietnamese policing would be subject to them; and, secondly, the conditions have to be set in the context of Vietnamese norms, in which there is typically a gap between rule and practice. The chapter details the processes involved in negotiating and undertaking the research as well as implications for methodology, ethics and data integrity.

Chapter 5, Overview of police history, structures and organisation in Vietnam highlights the historical and cultural context of policing. The chapter begins by detailing the role of police in the fight for independence from foreign powers. It describes the explicit links between police and the political system with excerpts from the Constitution, legislation and codes of ethics. It describes the structure of the People's Police Force, rank hierarchy and recruitment processes and the connection between police education and academia. The chapter concludes by highlighting how these structural dimensions shape the field for policing in Vietnam.

Chapter 6, Learning to be a police officer explores ways students and officers experience the police organisation and navigate careers. The chapter begins by describing the nature of education in Vietnam and motivations for people to apply to study at the Police Academy and explores the structure and core themes of the Bachelor of Policing, specifically the 'general' and 'professional' curriculum. The data reveal the importance of 'morality' as a concept which officers draw on to make decisions about the conduct of themselves and others. In addition, 'culture' was presented as a useful construct in which to actively shape police attitudes and socialise them into the occupation. The implications of the professional curriculum are discussed with respect to how it shapes police work and the possibilities for different sub-cultures.

Chapter 7, *Bamboo, boundaries and benevolence: police culture, norms and practices in transition* examines ways police relate to the community and understand their role as police officers. Police officers expressed the importance of being 'flexible' or using discretion as key tools in policing the community. This was facilitated by a style of policing which blurred public and private space. However, access to private space did not necessarily lend itself to an over-policing of the domestic sphere, especially where male violence against women was concerned.

Chapter 8, Matriarchy, mobilisation and modern women in the Vietnamese Police Force looks at the multiple and often conflicting representations of women in history, folklore and pop culture. Expectations of women in this culture prioritises motherhood and marriage as social accomplishments. These family obligations were described by both men and women as to why women were less suited for a policing career, although there were exceptions.

In the final Chapter, I identify key dimensions in the field of policing uncovered in the previous chapters. I highlight how assumptions based on police scholarship do not necessarily apply to understanding policing in Vietnam. Specifically, I describe aspects of the field which may contribute to a police culture which are either shared or distinct from Western conceptualisations. I highlight how socialisation includes an officer's childhood, education, family upbringing and social obligations which shape the parameters for changing or sustaining police culture. I also locate gendered recruitment and work policies in the broader literature on women in policing. In the conclusion chapter, I also reflect on the contributions of this study to scholarship on police ethnography. I discuss the fluidity of researcher positionality and how the nature of scholarly inquiry can shape research outcomes. Furthermore, that the concept of 'culture' in policing research can be a useful tool for inquiry and is not necessarily a pejorative term in some contexts.

This thesis offers an original contribution to the English language empirical literature on Vietnamese policing, police culture, socialisation and gender. In addition, it provides a framework for a Southern Policing perspective which recommends a reflexive approach to the study of policing outside the global North

in order to elicit new variables for the study of policing in different cultural settings. The study draws attention to different expectations and incentives for pursuing a police career and the way policing functions are executed.

The following chapter will provide a brief account of selected aspects of Vietnamese history and culture which shape the contemporary environment in which police operate.

Chapter 2: Conflict, continuity and change: shaping Vietnam and contemporary policing

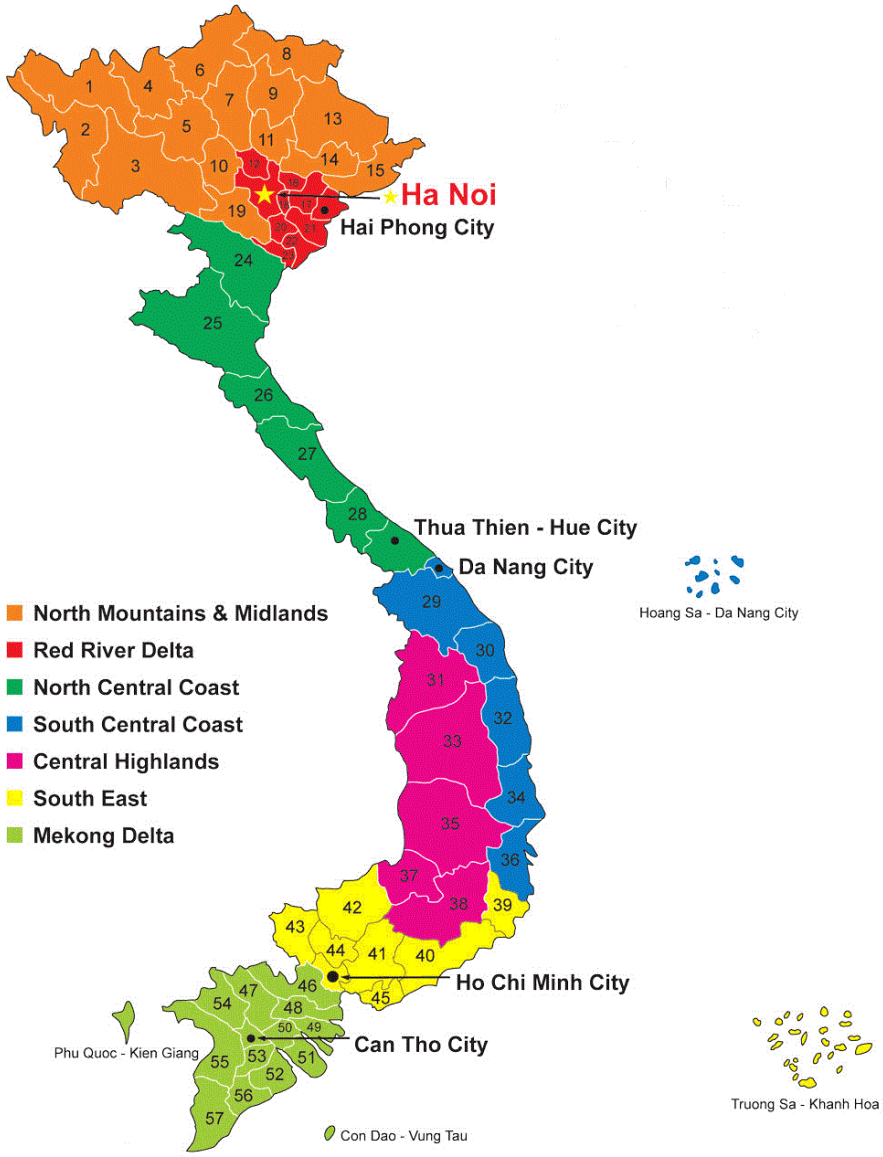

Figure 1. Map of Vietnam 3

[3] Including disputed territories, Spratly Islands (Trường Sa) and Paracel Islands (Hoàng Sa) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018).

Introduction

The territory of modern Vietnam is a seahorse-shaped strip of land in Southeast Asia. At the crown of the figurative seahorse to the east is the limestone of the iconic Hạ Long Bay, while to the west is the famous site of colonial French defeat in the mountains of Điện Biên Phủ. The extent of remote, dense forests prompts this upper region to be characterised as the 'lungs' of the north, an apt metaphor given they flank the township of Sa Pa at the nation's coronet renowned for hillsides terraced with rice paddies with the appearance of lime-coloured ribbing. Commencing around the respiratory tract of the seahorse-shape is 3,444 kilometres of coastline where littoral provinces descend past middle Vietnam's villages and cities reliant on the fishing industry and seafaring trade routes and along a belly-like protrusion of land eastward. The nation's south experiences a more tropical climate and is where the Mekong River, after passing through five countries, finishes its journey and exits out to sea, anchoring the base of Vietnam at the point where mainland and maritime Southeast Asia meet.

The lands in northern Vietnam[4] where indigenous Vietnamese people were first chronicled were the site for many experiences of invasion. Nowadays, Vietnam is a densely populated country with over 90 million people living within an area of 331,210 square kilometres (General Statistics Office of Vietnam, 2016). Its shoreline borders the Gulf of Thailand, the Gulf of Tonkin and the South China Sea. It is bordered by China to the north, and Cambodia and Laos to the west and northwest, respectively. However, the seahorse-shaped country as it is now recognised first took form in 1802 (Goscha, 2016a).

Vietnam's history of territorial disputes has contributed to a culture characterised by concern about external threats by foreign powers (Gillen, 2011; Lucius, 2009). The conflicts have resulted in a unique historical and cultural context of struggle for identity, independence and internal security. This has produced a national security apparatus which draws on a range of sources for its traditions. One arm of this apparatus is the national police organisation, the People's Police Force

[4] 'Vietnam' was not used to refer to the current territory until the early 19th century. See Dutton et al. (2012) *Sources of Vietnamese Tradition* for chronology and description of the variance of what is regarded as 'Vietnamese'.

(Lực lượng Cảnh sát nhân dân). Its structures, procedures and activities all carry the impact of Vietnam's contested geography. This chapter will explore how the experiences of early and modern Vietnam have shaped the environment for contemporary policing, especially in Hanoi.

Indigeneity, invasion and identity

The origins of the Vietnamese people can be traced to the Red River Delta over 2,000 years ago, which now hosts Vietnam's capital, Hanoi. The term 'Vietnamese' usually refers to people from the lowland ethnic Kinh.[5] There are 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam.[6] Around 221 BCE, the Red River Delta area was colonised by a Chinese ancestral clan who migrated from north of the Yangtze River southward and expanded into what is now known as northern Vietnam (G. E. Dutton et al., 2012). Some of the early periods of Chinese presence in northern Vietnam are described as 'loose and relatively unobtrusive' (G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 9), but the retrospective official Vietnamese view characterises this period as a time of foreign invasion. What is uncontested is that, across these 1,000 years, there were periods where the Chinese held northern Vietnam continuously for several centuries. These relatively stable years contributed to entrenching Chinese customs and cultural influences as core to northern Vietnamese values and way of life (Tran Thi Que, 1995); this included approaches to security. It was not until 939 CE that the Vietnamese restored indigenous rule in north Vietnam (Tran Thi Que, 1995). In the south, by contrast, influences were much more fluid and civilisations that inhabited the region across this time included an Indianised kingdom known as Fu-nan, the Hindu kingdom of Champa and Khmer (Beresford, 1988). This meant that the south and the north developed some distinct cultures and ways of thinking and of being 'Vietnamese' (Beresford, 1989; Goscha, 2016a; Tài, 2001).[7]

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[5] This research is based on police in Hanoi, thus, focus on what is 'Vietnamese' centres around lowland ethnic Kinh. Dutton et al. (2012) provide an explanation of why the term 'Vietnamese' is used as a broad descriptor for history and culture despite its being a 'blended' story.
[6] Nowadays, these diverse groups live mostly in mountainous and remote areas after being forced out of lowlands amid anti-colonial wars in the 20th century.
[7] See Goscha (2016a) *The Penguin History of Modern Vietnam* for commentary about conflict, diversity and division in 'Vietnam' from the 15th century onwards.

Vietnam underwent years of civil war with various dynasties seizing power and seeking to establish central rule over the country. There was still instability when, in the 1800s, trade with China became an important source of revenue for the British and French imperialists. Vietnam's former ruler, Nguyễn Ánh (also known as Gia Long), had permitted foreign trade and missionary delegations to Vietnam, but his successors began to reject foreign access to Vietnamese ports which the French saw as key in their bid for trade with China (Beresford, 1988). The French were initially involved in the fighting in central Vietnam when a successor of the Nguyen family dynasty, Nguyen Anh, sought refuge with a French bishop, Pigneau de Behaine, in south Vietnam following their defeat in the Tây Sơn rebellion of 1765–1773 (Beresford, 1988, p. 5). Nguyen Anh enlisted the help of the French to regain control, eventually proclaiming himself emperor (using the name Gia Long) of Vietnam which stretched from the Chinese to the Cambodian borders. Though the French had established Catholic missionaries and trade organisations in Vietnam from as early as the mid-17th century, it was not until 1850 that the French conquest of Vietnam began, with the protection of the Vietnamese Catholics serving as a pretext for occupation and conquest (Logevall, 2012, p. 5). In 1861, the French navy took Sài Gòn and three adjacent provinces by force, and by 1867, the French had established the colony of Cochinchina, which surrounded the Mekong Delta. Over the next two decades, the French also created two protectorates in central and northern Vietnam (Annam and Tonkin, respectively) (Beresford, 1988; Goscha, 2016a). The region was both a French asset and a site of ongoing Vietnamese resistance to foreign intervention.

A brief timeline between 1920 and 1976 illustrates the blend of cultural, religious and political influences that have characterised Vietnam's search for sovereignty. During the period 1920–1940, anti-colonial movements gradually formalised into political parties with a nationalist or communist focus. According to Beresford (1988, pp. 5–6), French colonisation initiated 'fundamental social change in Indochina'. She credits the destruction of Vietnamese social organisation as the genesis of communist-led resistance. One example of this is the colonial administration's disruption of the traditional social structure which had allowed villages to operate with substantial autonomy from central authorities, provided

they paid tax and supplied soldiers or labourers when needed (Beresford, 1988). This led to many decades of war between France and local Vietnamese forces. It also gave rise to, particularly in the north, the slow consolidation of communist-focused resistance united against foreign intervention.

On February 3, 1930, the Vietnamese Communist Party (*Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam*) (VCP) was officially established following the merger of three communist parties to form a national organisation. Eight months later, the VCP changed its name to the Indochinese Communist Party (*Đảng Cộng sản Đông Dương*) (ICP) to draw attention to and express support for the international nature of class struggle (Beresford, 1988, p. 13). The merger was instigated by Hồ Chí Minh to consolidate anti-colonial support. After studying and being politically engaged in France, Russia and China, he coordinated (with other revolutionaries) a strategy from outside Indochina until his return in 1941 to fight the Japanese invaders and the French colonialists. Goscha (2016a) credits Hồ Chí Minh's multilingual talents (Chinese, French, Russian, English and Thai) for helping him keep abreast of news from various channels and exposed to a range of strategic sources. This is another example of the way Vietnam has been influenced through interaction and engagement with foreign ideas.

In August 1945, the VCP overthrew the French in Hanoi and on September 2 Hồ Chí Minh declared independence. The victory brought together communist supporters and religious leaders (including Vietnamese Catholics, Buddhists and Cao Đài supporters and Hòa Hảo followers) who sought national independence, despite an uneasy relationship between them (Goscha, 2016a, p. 223). But the victory was brief and in 1946 the French military regained control (Thayer, 2010, p. 425). In 1954 the VCP finally defeated the French in the battle at Điện Biên Phủ, gained full political control over the north, and established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV). At the time of the defeat, a conference was being held in Geneva to try to bring an end to the conflict in Indochina. The DRV wanted full control over the south as well but the country was divided at the 17th parallel of latitude and the Republic of Vietnam (RV) (South Vietnam) came into being a year later (Beresford, 1988). The Geneva Agreement allowed free movement between the north and south for 300 days, after which a general election would

be held to determine a single government. This, however, did not occur (V. C. Nguyen, 1983).

The Geneva Agreement enabled the evacuation of Vietnamese Catholics from the north to the south because the new Marxist-Leninist ideology was seen as incompatible with religious worship (V. C. Nguyen, 1983). Furthermore, Catholics were often the strongest opposition to the implementation of land reforms in the wake of the Geneva Agreement (V. C. Nguyen, 1983) and more recently, in 2006, Catholic priests petitioned for democratic reforms (Hayton, 2010; Thayer, 2009a).

The VCP set out to pursue reunification of North and South Vietnam in 1959, firstly by strengthening the underground communist movement, and then by military force in 1964 (Thayer, 2010). The bruising defeat of the French in the 1950s had been masterminded by General Võ Nguyên Giáp. He warned the VCP that the United States would be a greater military test for Vietnam than the French, and that better trained soldiers and modern weapons would be needed (Logevall, 2012, p. 711). The United States military intervention in Vietnam escalated in 1965 when President Johnson ordered Operation Rolling Thunder. Lasting until October 1968, this involved a large-scale aerial bombing campaign across Vietnam (Logevall, 2012, p. 712). On March 8, 1965, U.S. combat divisions landed near Đà Nẵng. This escalation by the United States enabled the VCP to rouse popular support based on patriotism and nationalism and to shore up their political legitimacy as protectors against foreign aggression. In contrast, the narrative from the South Vietnamese government was that of civil war, rather than of opposing an external enemy (Tài, 2001). In 1969, the DRV and the United States government (acting on behalf of the Republic of Vietnam) commenced peace negotiations in Paris, but failed to reach an agreement (Beresford, 1988).

On April 30, 1975, communist forces took the southern headquarters in Sài Gòn, a metropolis which would later be renamed Thành phố Hồ Chí Minh (Hồ Chí Minh City) in honour of the communist leader who died in 1969 aged 79. The Vietnamese casualties from both north and south totalled over three million with several hundreds of thousands unaccounted for (Tài, 2001). The northern forces deployed almost one million soldiers and personnel between 1965 and 1975,

seeking to establish northern control and customs in the south after their military victory (Goscha, 2016a).

The recency of French colonialism in Southeast Asia as well as imagery and literature of the Vietnam-American War have sometimes rendered Vietnam's pre-modern history invisible. Vietnam was certainly a victim of the wave of empire from the global North, peaking in the 19th century, but prior to that, and for much longer, it was victim to an imperialist venture by its Chinese neighbours who are also categorised as part of the global South. In addition, colonisation and population displacement have occurred within Vietnam itself and along its borders by Vietnamese with respect to territorial claims (especially with Cambodia) and internally (e.g., southward into the Champa kingdom in central Vietnam) (Goscha, 2016b). Chinese cultural influences in Vietnam are further discussed in the section Social control, cultivating proper conduct and culture.

Though the Communist Government was established in North Vietnam in 1954, the country remained at war with the South until 1976.[8] A united Vietnam has existed for just over 40 years and despite its unified appearance, the country's geography and subsequent territorial disputes have resulted in a search for identity. Vietnam is comprised of a blend of cultural, religious, political influences (M. McLeod & Nguyen, 2001) which plays out differently across north and south divides. Northern Vietnam's proximity to China has seen some shared features with that country, both culturally and practically (Tài, 2001). The south developed differently due to trade with regional neighbours, which exposed the population to more diverse cultures, religions and economic relations (Beresford, 1989; Tài, 2001). These influences can be seen in some approaches to public security and social order in Hanoi, as will be illustrated throughout this thesis.

Migration and markets

Vietnam's mountains and seas present both obstacles and opportunities for trade and contact with external populaces. Natural resources drew Chinese migration

[8] Vietnam was involved in border conflicts with Cambodia and China in 1978 and 1979.

southward with chronicles showing that, in 231 CE, the availability of exotic goods were exploited for revenue, as the following record indicates: 'This place is famous for precious rarities from afar: pearls, incense, drugs, elephant tusks, rhinoceros horn, tortoise shell, coral, lapis lazuli, parrots, kingfishers, peacocks, rare and abundant treasures to satisfy all desires' (Chen Shou, SBZ cited in G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 16). The early Chinese interest in taking advantage of Vietnam's natural resources is reflected in current debates regarding land use, environment and wildlife protection.

There has been a long history in Vietnam of migration and invasion to take advantage of natural resources for exportation. These invaders have been met by an opposition that has been not only rebellious, but also very confrontational and highly effective. In 231 CE, a Chinese official noted: 'The local people easily become rebellious and are difficult to pacify; district officials act dignified but are careful not to provoke them' (Chen Shou, SBZ cited in G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 15); the Chinese were not to be defeated until 600 years later. One thousand years after expelling the Chinese, Vietnamese people were forced to work on rice and rubber plantations for the French colonial administration (Beresford, 1989). The 'brutal' conditions inevitably resulted in runaways who were then pursued and returned to their labour (Beresford, 1989). In 1927, one of the highest mortality rates for contract labour in northern Vietnam was reported at 5.4 per cent (*Rapports au Grand Conseil*, 1930, p. 177 cited in Beresford, 1989, p. 42). Consequently, not only were Vietnam's natural resources exploited, but the cost of production was also counted in human lives.

Beginning in the 1940s and 50s, the Marxist doctrine used to mobilise the Vietnamese people to expel the French colonisers also formed the basis of socialist economic reform. This was pursued through 'land redistribution, collectivization of agriculture, nationalization of industry, and the institution of central economic planning' (Thayer, 2010, p. 425). In 1975, Vietnam gained independence and was closed off to foreign interference after prolonged fighting with Chinese, Khmer, Japanese, French and American forces which came at the cost of economic growth. In the late 1970s, ensuing border wars with Cambodia and China placed pressure on the country's socioeconomic development along

with the emerging failures of central economic planning (Thayer, 2010). The economic model which was expanded to the south after 1975 was described as contradictory to Vietnamese economic culture and preference, especially in the south where enterprise had been more common (Beresford, 1989). Vietnam's aid from the Soviet Union was drying up and the country was falling behind the economic growth witnessed in neighbouring countries (Beeson & Hung, 2012). In 1986, at the 6th National Congress of the VCP, political leaders sanctioned economic reforms, widely referred to as *đổi mới* (economic renovation) or a socialist-oriented market economy, along with plans to integrate politically and economically in the East Asian region and further abroad.

The stability in Vietnamese politics has been attributed to the success of *đổi mới* in that the VCP's hold on power meant economic change was controlled, subtle and occurred largely within the operating – nominally communist – political framework (Beeson & Hung, 2012; Nørland, Gates, & Vu, 1995). The VCP's strong control may have provided stability at a time when the Asian economic crisis in 1997 may have thought to otherwise present a more 'fluid and chaotic' environment (Beeson & Hung, 2012, p. 541). Consequently, economic growth became a central platform for bolstering the Party's legitimacy.

In the 1990s, almost 60 per cent of the population were living in poverty with a per capita income of less than USD $100 (World Bank, 2015). The economic restructuring which commenced in the 1980s resulted in a per capita income of over USD $2,000 with 9.8 per cent of the populous considered to be living poverty in 2016 (World Bank, 2018). Economic reform set out to transition from a focus on agriculture to increasing industry and manufacturing, including garment and shoemaking, food processing, mining, machine building and mobile phones. However, expanding demand for land to cater for the growing population, industrialisation and agriculture needs has led to public concern regarding associated environmental degradation (CECODES, 2018).

Foreign investment and international markets brought greater wealth to Vietnam, but also instigated debates about the environmental costs. In particular, concern regarding bauxite mining in central Vietnam has been credited with propelling the organisation of civil society in Vietnam. A decade after deciding not to pursue

bauxite mining in central Vietnam due to severe damage to the environment and local people, the government in 2001 overturned its decision in the context of economic development (Vuvung, 2010). The project was a joint Vietnam-China venture and although some within the VCP were against the project, an agreement was reached for it to go ahead with caveats on enhancing environmental protections. In a surprising move against the project, anti-bauxite sentiment was dispatched to the National Assembly through a petition signed by 135 scholars and intellectuals who denigrated China's approach to development by arguing that it operated at the expense of the environment (Mydans, 2009). The significance of the anti-bauxite coalition was that it not only unified a broad range of interest groups apprehensive about national and human security issues, but that it gave rise to a 'mainstream elite civil society' (Vuvung, 2010, p. 379) who were critical of the government (Thayer, 2009a).

In 2009, amid concerns for the environment and population near the proposed bauxite mine, an anti-China stance gathered pace. Concern surrounded the potential influx of Chinese workers, distaste for hazardous imported Chinese products, Chinese attacks on Vietnamese fisherman, and disputes over sovereignty in the East Sea (South China Sea) regarding areas with large energy reserves. Major protests erupted across Vietnam in 2018 after the government announced it would establish three special economic zones with 99 year leases for foreign investors (Fawthrop, 2018). After the protests, the government said it would revise the proposed legislation before putting it to the National Assembly. The disruption highlights the ongoing tensions between Vietnam's sovereignty, anti-Chinese sentiment, economic development and environmental degradation. The 2017 Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) reported that among survey respondents poverty and environmental issues were the top concerns for Vietnamese citizens (CECODES, 2018).

The market economy requires legal institutions to support the regulatory framework – these institutions include the police. Where land clearing or seizures for economic developments result in protests, the police are required to intervene, which puts them between the people and the Party. The following section discusses aspects of social and crime control in Vietnam. It explores historical

influences and provides a contemporary example of policing in which the personal and professional not only intersect but may be leveraged in negotiating state power.

Social control, cultivating proper conduct and culture

Approaches to social control developed in China over several thousand years have some implications for understanding policing in Vietnam. McKernan and McWhirter (2009) noted that Chinese scholarship on policing could be used to draw inferences about law and order in Vietnam given the availability of literature on Chinese society. In particular, during the Qin (221–206 BCE) and Han (206 BCE–220 CE) dynasties, a system of self-policing among groups of families was instituted 'based on principles of self-help and collective responsibility' (Ma, 2008, p. 15). Group members were obliged to apprehend fellow members if a crime was committed – or else be subject to the same punishment which would have been accorded to the person who committed the crime. Ma (2008) reports that severe penalties were a successful incentive and group members reported crimes and made apprehensions 'diligently'. The communal dynamic was also sustained by making criminal the failure to protect and assist a family network member who had been the victim of crime (Liu, 1985, cited in Ma, 2008). Thus, policing has been a collective practice since China's earliest periods – regarded as 'everyone's business, starting with the self (cultivation) and ending with the family, clan, or community (control)' (Wong, 2012, p. 66).

The Confucian patriarchal system of governance determines lineage along male lines. Each family unit, much like the state, was set up along patriarchal lines and therefore mutually reinforcing. The familial structure, with a head of the family and a specific order for other family members, was also replicated across the community in bigger groupings but always with a structure in which the male head held most power. It was in the interest of each family to contain acts of wrong-doing, otherwise the head of the family could be forced to cede power to a larger group which would diminish the standing of the family in question. In this sense, there were incentives to self-policing and keeping transgressions local. Furthermore, families and neighbourhoods were often reluctant to inform authorities of wrongdoings because the recourse of the state was typically

physically harsh to the perpetrator and families would seek to protect them from this severe punishment (M. R. Dutton, 1992, p. 3).

The importance of relationships in Vietnamese culture is also embedded in its language. In Vietnamese, the speaker makes reference to themselves and others in a way that 'does not recognize the autonomy of the individual but instead enmeshes each and every speaking self in webs of familial and quasi-familial relationships' (Tài, 2001, p. 168). Pronominals in Vietnamese language recognise kinship ties, entrench age and social hierarchy, and, importantly, patriarchy (Chew, 2011). In most situations respect for seniority would require a younger woman to refer to an older man as *anh* (elder brother), and a younger man to refer to an older woman as *chị* (elder sister). However, if an older woman is in a romantic relationship with a younger man, the convention is that she still refer to him as *anh* to denote his superior status. A further example of the primacy of patrilineal ties is displayed through the positioning of relatives as inside kin and outside kin, where paternal relatives occupy the 'inside' *(nội)* and maternal relatives 'outside' *(ngoài)* (Tài, 2001). Forms of address are also an important indicator of the regard in which a relationship is held – these may be used affectionately and strategically, as exemplified by 'Uncle Ho' *(Bác Hồ)* who used the term to emphasise family in mobilising the population to fight against colonialism in the early 20th century (Chew, 2011). The use of kinship terms to address people within a social network (for example, uncle *bác* or aunt *cô*) can invoke connectedness alongside a respect for seniority, despite no blood relations (Chew, 2011). The extent to which kinship forms of address are used more broadly to refer to non-relatives is amenable to change, as are social and political circumstances, although Pelley (2002, p. 159) notes their continued use is due to the strength of family as a 'legitimating device' to harness a collective disposition.

The influence of the Confucian ethic in Vietnam meant social order was reinforced by promoting virtue and morality from a top-down, paternalistic government. In 1834, the Vietnamese emperor Minh Mang issued 'Ten Moral Precepts' which were to be publicly recited each year by village heads, reflecting similar practices

in former Chinese dynasties (G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, pp. 306-307). The Ten Moral Precepts were:[9]

1. Be sincere in all that you do.
2. Maintain an upright heart.
3. Hold fast to your proper profession.
4. Always practice frugality.
5. Keep virtuous customs.
6. Educate your children.
7. Respect the correct [Confucian] teachings.
8. Guard against licentiousness and evil.
9. Prudently adhere to the rules and laws.
10. Be generous in doing good.

This top-down approach to dictating proper behaviour and morality reflects a coherent thread to present-day Vietnam in that ethical codes are used as a guide for Communist Party members to develop and practice moral conduct. Hồ Chí Minh expected members to 'display higher knowledge and morality than ordinary people' and emphasised the moral authority of the Party (Gillespie, 2010, p. 136).

However, although some aspects of Vietnamese culture are seen as continuations from the past, this 'continuity thesis' has been challenged by Ninh (2002). She argued that colonisation and subsequent Communist Party strategies to mobilise the population to defeat the French and promote a particular political ideology resulted in significant transformations in Vietnamese culture (Ninh, 2002). The mid-20th century saw debates about ridding Vietnam of 'colonial vestiges' and creating a 'new' country unmarked by foreigners (Ninh, 2002, p. 63). In Ninh's (2002) analysis of these debates, she explores the arguments among Vietnam's literary elite where some contended there was no 'Vietnamese' culture because everything was inherited from the Chinese, the West or other influences. What actually constituted 'culture' was also debated as some saw it as 'national achievements of international stature rather than as the body of norms and traditions that nourished a society' (Ninh, 2002, p. 57). In

[9] Translated by George Dutton (G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 307).

seeking intellectual support from the literary elite, the VCP published the 'Theses on Vietnamese Culture' in 1943. According to Ninh (2002, p. 56), sympathetic intellectual, Dang Thai Mai, urged his peers to accept that 'art and literature must be on the side of the working class and must be created to support the people's revolution'. The VCP established the Cultural Association for National Salvation in 1943 to promote the Party's platform.

Politburo chief and author of 'Theses on Vietnamese Culture' *(Đề cương về văn hóa Việt Nam)*, Trường Chinh, determined there were three main characteristics of the new culture: scientific orientation (khoa học hóa), popularisation (đại chúng hóa), and nationalisation (dân tộc hóa) (Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam, 1943). Nguyen Huu Dang and Nguyen Dinh Thi argued that the old culture was transmitted within the family unit and in order to change culture the youth had to be educated outside of the family. In destroying the past culture though, what was to replace it? Hoai Thanh, also from the Cultural Association for National Salvation, suggested that true Vietnamese culture was located in folk art and literature (Ninh, 2002). Previously, Vietnam's national culture referred to high culture inherited from the Chinese. However, as Vietnam fought for independence, this high culture was abandoned for being uncreative, and the essence of Vietnamese culture was regarded as existing within popular culture (although ill-defined) which aligned with efforts to focus on people and popularisation by the communists (Ninh, 2002). In the post-1975 era, the state continued to promote particular visions of culture with a view to shaping it, including those of ethnic minorities, through production of media and television screenings (Messier & Michaud, 2012).

Chinese influence has shaped many of Vietnam's structures and systems. Policing and crime control in early China relied on both harsh public physical punishment (spectacle) carried out by the state and traditional Confucian notions of 'community mutuality' (M. R. Dutton, 1992, p. 3). Dutton describes how the latter contributed to social harmony through 'an intricate web of relations, based ultimately upon the family and policed by a labyrinth of mutually self-checking units augmented by an advanced system of documentation' (M. R. Dutton, 1992, p. 3). The 'technology' used to police the public was called *baojia* (later *hu kou* 戶籍*).* It was the first known system used to record the public and was the state's

method for recording details of the populace to order and police the community, through the family unit, and to encourage mutual aid (M. R. Dutton, 1992, p. 24). The French colonial administration used a similar dossier system to that of the Chinese to monitor and control the subjugated population. However, as Anderson (2015, p. 291) concluded from her archival investigation into the French in Vietnam, 'what made the Sûreté police so formidable in the realm of politics was less new technologies of power and more the police's effective use of the collaborators and informants cited in intelligence reports, the quintessential Sûreté document'. The French colonial police employed Vietnamese agents at the lower levels and engaged in political policing in order to repress anti-colonial sentiment, subsequently exposing the Vietnamese to a new form of policing which blended the police and a political army (M. L. Anderson, 2015).

After 1954, the DRV continued a form of the household registration system known as *hộ khẩu* (Vietnam's Household Registration System, 2016). It was implemented in the north in 1955 and 1960 in urban and rural areas, respectively, initially by communist party officials, but later this became the administrative function of the police. The system was a method of surveillance used to identify political dissidents in both the north and south through compilation of dossiers to monitor the population (Hardy, 2001). After Vietnam was reunited in 1975 the system was expanded throughout southern Vietnam.

The household became an even more important unit for social steering and control with the introduction of merit certificates to reward good behaviour. To promote preferred social customs (e.g., family stability) and political objectives, the VCP introduced the New Cultured Families *(Gia đình văn hóa mới)* program after the American War in 1975 (Bich, 1999). The Party introduced the social program to socialise children to become good citizens and help the country develop (Bich, 1999). The family remains an essential component for achieving socio-economic goals for the country. In 2012, the Prime Minister endorsed the Vietnam Family Development Strategy through 2020 with a Vision for 2030 (2012). One of the targets included in the strategy is that, by 2020, 85 per cent of households will achieve the 'cultured family' standard. Local authorities and neighbourhood groups gather annually to assess whether a family will be

awarded a Cultured Family certificate (Cox, 2010; Hayton, 2010). The criteria have changed in emphasis over time but generally include: having a happy and harmonious family, abiding by the two-child policy (unless in rural areas), supporting neighbours and participating in community activities (Drummond & Rydstrøm, 2004). This type of peer review is used to encourage individuals to be law-abiding and conform to family – and by extrapolation community and societal – standards.

In modern Vietnam, crime prevention and control continue to be promoted as a collective endeavour. Article 46 of the Constitution places obligations on citizens to 'join in the safeguarding of national security, social order and safety and conform to the established rules of public life', which has implications for people in different ways. For example, it has been interpreted by police as an obligation that people who may be suspected of a crime should confess or provide information about it, effectively denying them the right to silence and legal representation despite some (limited) provisions in law (see Lam, 2016). Other laws are more instructive as to how citizens should fulfil their obligations. For example, illicit drug laws demand 'drug addicts' report themselves to their employer or local Party People's Committee to register for drug detoxification (which may result in two years internment in a detention facility) (National Assembly, 2008a, Article 26.1(a)). An example of the contemporary application of the household registration system can be found in the policing of drug users (Jardine, Crofts, Monaghan, & Morrow, 2012; Khuat et al., 2012). Police are required to compile dossiers on drug users by visiting them and their families at home (National Assembly, 2000).

The families of drug addicts are also required to report people who use drugs to local authorities, monitor the person, and: 'oversee, supervise, prevent and stop the drug addict from illegally using narcotic substances or committing acts of disturbing social order and safety' (National Assembly, 2008a, Article 26.2). People can be rewarded for compliance and punished for non-compliance (National Assembly, 2008a, Article 52 & 53) although the consequences are unspecified except that they may be handled administratively (National Assembly, 2000) or under the Criminal Code.

The primacy of the rule of law as assumed in liberal Western democracies is not neatly transferrable to Vietnam. Vietnam has inherited legal traditions from Confucianism, the French, Soviet theory, and the Anglo-American system in more recent times (Salomon & Vu, 2010). Weaknesses in Vietnam's legal institutions have resulted in uneven implementation capacity. However, Sidel (2008, p. 198) claims this is partly attributed to the Party's 'fundamental ambivalence about legal authority and legitimacy' and the 'weak, obedient role of the courts' (Sidel, 2008, p. 202). Though legal institutions have been strengthened (primarily in order to qualify for membership of the World Trade Organisation and to engage in the international economy), they do not always benefit or protect the most vulnerable in society (Sidel, 2008, p. 200). That police exist in a political system often regarded as 'authoritarian', does not necessarily mean the state is always repressive (Kerkvliet, 2001, 2014b). Beresford (1988) referred to the Vietnamese state as being highly decentralised, describing a gap between centrally-made policy and what people do on the ground. It has also been a cause of complaint that local cadres can operate with a level of independence that means a minister may not be powerful enough to 'reprimand' them (Salomon & Vu, 2010, p. 230). Despite the difficulty in implementation, Lucius (2009) claims political decision-making in Vietnam is conducted along predetermined scripts which embed certain 'protected values'. These values, taught in schools, are summarised as maintaining social order and harmony, political stability of the Party, fulfilling duties and obligations to the country, and working together to defend the nation from continuous threats (Lucius, 2009).

The ward (urban) or commune (rural) (*phường/xã*) presents the lowest administrative level where people in positions of authority 'mediate' or 'negotiate' the implementation of centrally-made policies (Koh, 2004b).[10] Koh suggests that officials at ward level believe the community expect them to be sympathetic and not rigidly adhere to formal policies where local circumstances should be taken into consideration, for example, demanding a fine be paid for a transgression if it would serve only to make the 'poor poorer' (Koh, 2004b). Following the law strictly

[10] More detail on the structure of government administration is included in Chapter 5.

could also result in a loss of 'authority' among the community, particularly where a high degree of familiarity existed between officials and residents (Koh, 2004b).

Street-level policing offers an understanding of how local dynamics create an informal social order in Vietnam. In Hanoi, the government prohibits street sellers in a bid to tidy up the narrow pavements. Small enterprises can operate with a permit, but this disadvantages those at the lower socio-economic end who are unable to pay for a fixed space for a stall. Street vendors engaged in this aspect of the informal economy[11] are often poor and migrate from rural areas to sell their goods from public pavements, and are thus at the mercy of authorities. Though the police could confiscate street vendors' produce and equipment or give out fines, there was also room for discretion or turning a blind eye (Koh, 2006; Turner & Schoenberger, 2012). Street vendors reported being able to evade police by crossing from one ward boundary to another where, in theory, police were not able to pursue. Evasion was also possible by tactically operating during the period when police were on their lunch breaks (Turner & Schoenberger, 2012). However, relations between illegal street vendors and police and officials are complicated because authorities are not only to be feared, but are actively targeted clientele:

> Paradoxically then, some branches of the policing apparatus economically support street vendors operating in banned locales, purchasing food and goods while in uniform, and government officials in general are sought-after customers. Indeed, Ha located her tea stall near government offices because ''government officials are reliable customers with money in their pockets''. (Turner & Schoenberger, 2012, p. 1035)

This highlights the space in which rules and regulations are flexible or amenable to negotiation. According to Turner and Schoenberger (2012), street vendors can

[11] There are different definitions of what constitutes an 'informal economy'. It can be used to refer to unregulated or unregistered business, labour and transactions, and often people in precarious employment (International Labour Organization, 2011). For this thesis, 'informal economy' refers to practices which have financial benefits in the context that transactions also bring other forms of 'capital' (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990b; Swartz, 1997) that are not only economic. This is discussed more in Chapter 7.

even use their social capital and family connections to senior police to refuse to obey police instructions or to criticise officers knowing they could invoke their connections to thwart penalty. One street vendor reported openly chastising police while taunting them; she was untouchable due to her status as a war veteran (Turner & Schoenberger, 2012).

Although opposition to official policy is prohibited, it does not mean opposition or criticism is prohibited entirely, but rather that it should be done in culturally and politically acceptable ways. Sometimes the public can affect official policy and enact change through passive resistance rather than outright protest. For example, from the 1950s to the 1970s farmers did not obey rules about collectivisation which resulted in the collapse of the system (Kerkvliet, 2005). Lucius (2009, p. 172) explains this as an example where adherence to the social norm of harmony was maintained whilst agitating for social change, albeit passively:

> They still operated within the bounds of Party rules in that they did not publicly criticize or embarrass Party officials, they did not question the legitimacy of the Party, nor did they threaten the stability of the Party or the State. Instead they slowly and persistently changed their own behavior and showed how individual family farming could work in the interests of the State, thus allowing the central government to get onboard with local changes without losing face.

More recently, V. H. Nguyen (2013) documents the interesting case of police officer Hung from Hanoi. Hung became involved with a neighbourhood group opposing an infrastructure project after discovering his house would be demolished. Prior to his involvement, the group had difficulty getting traction with local authorities regarding their disapproval and opposition to the project. The nature of Hung's leadership and involvement in the campaign is detailed as follows:

> As a police officer, Hung was very sensitive to political issues; he quickly caught on to this new direction and adopted the state rhetoric of anti-corruption as the main aim

> of the struggle. This not only helped re-frame the motives of the Green Alley residents in opposing the Project, it also helped them identify the proper targets of their action and the resources they could bring to bear. From now on, protesters started to see themselves no longer in a purely local context as self-interested individuals but instead as acting within a national framework; that is, driven by their citizenship. They felt empowered to act in the name of justice. Anti-corruption became their new motto and gave their struggle new meaning and legitimacy endorsed by the central state. Their struggle now aimed not only to protect their rights and their property but also to protect the transparency of the government and "national justice." (V. H. Nguyen, 2013, p. 116)

Although the campaign resulted in a 'partial victory' (some residents still had their houses demolished), the scenario demonstrates there is room to push back against central policy. The fact that Hung was a police officer shows that people occupying positions within the organs of government and the Party can voice opposition and, indeed, may be at an advantage in doing so. As V. T. Nguyen (2013, p. 122) notes: 'the very embeddedness of the state in society means that its representatives live and work in close proximity to ordinary citizens and often share their interests and perspectives'. That is, people, including state employees, negotiate state power at local and centralised levels.

Emerging security challenges

The police are important in Vietnam because they support the stability of the political regime. Vietnam has undergone rapid social and economic change which requires police to respond to public safety and security issues in novel ways. Though economic development through global trade and foreign investment has reduced poverty in Vietnam, it has also created an environment for new types of transgressions, including transnational, economic, environmental, human and drug trafficking, and high-tech crimes (Luong, 2017). When considered along with local law-enforcement matters, such as domestic violence, traffic congestion and

drug use, these issues raise concerns among the community about the police's ability to respond accordingly.

Vietnam has a young population which is growing in parallel with a changing economic model which emphasises consumption (Cox, 2010). Youth crime, though low by international standards, has been identified as a concern and is the subject of debate in relation to the effectiveness of the use of a penal approach compared with more informal responses (Cox, 2010, 2012; T. Q. Le, 2017). The internet and violent video games have been attributed to an increase in violent crimes among juveniles (T. Q. Le, 2017). Subsequently, restrictions on internet access is seen as one mode of preventing negative influences among youths. Restricting access to online information and prosecuting individuals for sharing anti-government information are also methods the Government uses to control dissent.

Efforts to change police culture have been made in Vietnam due to its poor public image. Not only are the police ranked as the most corrupt section of society (Transparency International, 2013), but a recent report by Human Rights Watch warns that deaths in custody and physical abuse by police are not uncommon (2014a). Attempts have been made to improve the public image of the police by warning that corrupt officers face dismissal (Viet Nam News, 2011), introducing women to frontline traffic duties (Thanh Nien News, 2013a), and removing overweight officers from duties in the public eye (Thanh Nien News, 2013b). In July 2014, the Ministry of Public Security issued Circular 28 which was aimed at improving the conduct of police undertaking criminal investigations (Bộ Công an, 2014). Despite welcoming the attempt to reform police practices, a Human Rights Watch (2014b) report criticised the regulations for placing too much emphasis on the ward/commune police (hereinafter ward police), describing them as the 'least professional of the country's police'. The report also stated:

> The commune [ward] police have the least resources and training in handling suspects and interrogations and have frequently been implicated in beating suspects in custody. Assigning them investigation tasks with vague instructions

> merely facilitates the possibility they may use abusive methods to obtain confessions and evidence.

Despite increasing economic prosperity, Vietnam's human rights record remains heavily criticised by observers including Human Rights Watch (2014a) and Amnesty International (2015). In January 2015, Vietnam joined the United Nations Human Rights Council for a two-year term. Key areas where Vietnam is urged to make improvements include: freedom of expression, association, assembly and movement, eradication of the death penalty, treatment of prisoners, arbitrary detention and the use of torture and violence by authorities. Perhaps an indication that the Government is taking human rights issues more seriously is the amended Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2013) which has shifted provisions concerning human rights from Chapter 5 to Chapter 2. Although some human rights observers see the revised Constitution as an improvement, it has been criticised for being rhetorical and having limited impact in practice (Human Rights Watch, 2014b) as many provisions granting specific rights are subject to legislative constraints.

Economic development has also brought about social changes in public expectations of public officials in terms of greater demands for better service and accountability (CECODES, 2018). Although corruption existed in Vietnam under the centralised-planning model, Gainsborough, Dang and Tran (2009, p. 397) assert 'with a fair degree of confidence that since *đổi mới* both the incidence of corruption and the sums involved have increased, and almost certainly have increased significantly'. They also describe an environment where 'systemic' corruption is:

> seen less as an aberration of the system but more as the normal workings of the system, which has its own distinctive logic, which is self-perpetuating. The strong connections in people's minds between public office, making money, and other forms of personal advancement, lies at the heart of this (Gainsborough et al., 2009, p. 410).

Though the systemic nature of corruption crosses all levels and sectors in Vietnam to varying degrees, the Government (National Anti-Corruption Strategy

towards 2020, 2009) has recognised that failing to at least restrict its expansion may likely invite questions of legitimacy for the VCP and threaten the Party's survival. Gainsborough et al. (2009, p. 485) argue that the difficulty in attempting to reduce corruption is that it functions as a system with its own 'institutional logic or incentive structure which is self-perpetuating'. Consequently, interventions to reduce corruption must target different aspects of the system which over time will alter the incentives for engaging in corrupt behaviour (Gainsborough et al., 2009). Recent data suggests there some progress has been made over the past decade in stemming corruption in the public sector (CECODES, 2018).

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn upon a range of sources to provide a historical background to contemporary Vietnam. In the first instance, the chapter examines the persistent battles against foreign interlocutors and civil wars which have shaped the multiple identities of Vietnamese people. Though the literature points to much diversity, there remain key features of Vietnamese society which coalesce around its post-Confucian influence, such as the patriarchal and familial social structures. Vietnam's experience with foreign invasion, its closure to much foreign contact in the 1970s after the American War, and the nature of its political system, have rendered policing an opaque profession. Scholarship on the security sector in China is more developed, possibly due to the earlier opening up to foreign economic interests; Vietnam's *đổi mới* occurred a decade afterwards. This history and cultural context affect the way political and social institutions, including policing, have been shaped. The following chapter will outline the conceptual framework used to explore policing and police culture in Vietnam.

Chapter 3: A framework for a Southern Policing perspective

Introduction

Policing and crime control activities in the global South have received less scholarly attention than their Northern/Western counterparts despite affecting a larger and more diverse population. The aim here is not to provide an abstract general theory but rather an account of policing that considers the dynamics which shape policing in all its variations and nuances. Such a theoretical framework will contribute to policing scholarship and our ability to better understand the challenges of the present and future.

Policing is understood in this chapter, following Reiner (2010), to include the activities of staff and organisations whose primary role is social control and order maintenance. This definition accommodates the differences between Anglo-American and Vietnamese or North-South policing and provides a framework for the discussion.

A Southern perspective on policing aims to explore variations in the structural relations which give rise to police organisations and cultures outside the global North or Western contexts on which much of the foundational policing literature was based. The purpose is not to dismiss the conceptual orthodoxy of policing research, but to illustrate that some assumptions about policing do not necessarily hold for a globally inclusive, comprehensive account of policing. This chapter will show that Anglo-American/Northern assumptions about and claims to universality of some core characteristics of police culture, and the nature of police work must be qualified by evidence of variation and fluidity revealed in Southern studies. I argue there is room for expanding our understanding of policing using a reflexive approach to examine broader structural variants which occur outside the global North. As a way of illustrating how a Southern policing perspective might usefully contribute to better informed understandings of policing and police culture, Vietnam will be used as a case study in an attempt to advance policing scholarship with respect to the global South.

Southern Theory and policing

The specific characteristics of policing and police culture that arise in particular places are shaped by social, cultural and political factors as well as physical features (mountainous, island, landlocked) and climate. These features are important not only because local people adapt, modify and respond to them, but they shape available natural resources and opportunities for development, economic returns and possibilities for territorial co-operation or conflict. 19th century imperialism saw the systemic colonisation and repression of local and indigenous populations, particularly in the global South. This institutional exploitation was interlinked with trade, which relied on access to land, labour and resources to flourish. A strong policing regime was also requisite in order to effectively harness local resources (D. Anderson & Killingray, 1991). Globalisation has its own policing requirements. Although imperialist ventures of nation states have receded, powerful corporations continue these processes, investing foreign money in smaller or less developed nations whose legal frameworks or law enforcement capacities are yet to adapt to new economic realities (Carrington, 2016). However, in addition to foreign investment, Goldsmith (2017) notes the occurrence of 'duping the donors' and new ways the formerly colonised are finding to exploit their former masters.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Vietnam is part of the Southeast Asian region which is home to a diverse range ethnicities and cultures. Current policing arrangements in Vietnam emerged during a period of political instability in its wars against French and American occupations and for national independence, which resulted in the establishment of a one-party state. The ruling Communist Party closed the country to foreign interference while the defeated United States set embargoes on trading with Vietnam. Compelled by its consequent state of extreme poverty, in the 1980s Vietnam changed its economic policies and opened itself up to foreign trade and investment to improve its economic status and living standards. Increased prosperity was accompanied by new types of crime requiring new responses by the police. The nature of policing which emerged throughout these periods is directly linked to supporting the Communist Party victory and the stability and legitimacy of the one-party state through rapid economic and social change.

To what extent are the theoretical tools developed from exploring policing in liberal democracies useful for understanding police in countries with very different histories, political ideologies, economic status and national cultures? Assumptions about police officers, such as having a sense of mission, being hedonistic action-seekers or being isolated from society (Reiner, 2010) may not have universal relevance. The experience of policing may be very different where stable democratic government and individualistic cultural norms are absent or changing. Furthermore, the nature and structure of police organisations and their relation to other political, legal and social institutions can take different forms from those in the societies where foundational scholarship on policing was undertaken.

American policing scholar, Peter Manning (2005), has argued for an expansion of empirical research outside of the dominant UK and US (and to a lesser extent Canada and Australia). In 'The Study of Policing', Manning (2005) laments the limited availability of policing research with perspectives from Islamic countries, totalitarian regimes, Continental Europe, transnational policing efforts (including from the United Nations) and private policing enterprises. He contends that this, combined with the historical barriers to knowledge production outside the dominant Anglo-American experience, has led to a dearth of research around policing in the global South (Manning, 2005). However, it may be argued that more research is being undertaken outside the global North to advance knowledge of policing, such as a recent contribution regarding Lusophone contexts which have a shared legacy of Portuguese colonialism (O'Reilly, 2017).

Manning's concerns are supported in *Southern Theory* (Connell, 2007) which highlights this asymmetry and the privilege attributed to social theory developed in the global North which, Connell notes, is at the expense of valid Southern intellectual thought. The power dynamics elucidated by Connell are also reflected in criminological research where, it is argued, a Southern perspective challenges the assumptions of 'metropolitan' criminology (Carrington, 2016). These assumptions, founded in stable democratic governance, may have little relevance for other contexts or places regarded as the 'periphery' (Carrington, 2016; Connell, 2007). Connell (2015) challenges scholars to consider the relative absence of Southern theory through the context within which knowledge is

created and circulated. For Hountondji (1997, 2002), factors such as access to acquiring research skills, networks, and resources situate academic careers forged in the metropole as a form of 'extraversion'. Consequently, Connell (2015, p. 51) argues the 'theoretical hegemony of the North is simply the normal functioning of this economy of knowledge'.

Scholarly knowledge on policing is shaped by the environment and context in which it was produced (Bradley, Nixon, & Marks, 2006; Manning, 2005). The relationship between police, place and the production of knowledge can be conceived in different ways. Firstly, there is the obvious need to recognise that policing practices can vary substantially across diverse geographies, regions, countries and cultures (and sub-regions and sub-cultures which exist within these). Secondly, knowledge about policing has been produced and disseminated unevenly so that our understanding of policing comes from a skewed emphasis on the Western experience. Finally, approaches to the 'reform' of policing can take on different forms leading to a variety of consequences, depending on the social, political and cultural history of the place. I argue that these elements have not been sufficiently accounted for in policing scholarship and suggest a more suitable framework to address the weaknesses in current theorising of policing.

The present study adopts a Southern Policing perspective to frame the research.[12] This framework draws on the concepts of the 'field' and 'habitus', adapted by Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003) from Bourdieu's (1990a) theory of practice which examines how relations between the environment and individual experiences function as a dynamic to produce (or reproduce) social structures. This framework is further discussed towards the end of this chapter. The following sections will look at more specific areas and examples where Northern/Anglo-American assumptions about conventional policing may be challenged by a study of policing in the South. These sections indicate policing fields which have the

[12] A brief account of *Southern Policing* was first published in Jardine, M. (2018b). Researching gender and law enforcement as public health input. *Journal of Community Safety & Well-Being*, August 3(1).

capacity to act dialectically with the physical and social environment and thus are amenable to change and variation.

Police and the political system

In 1973, Van Maanen quoted Trotsky's assertion that 'there is but one international and that is the police', when referring to a stereotype of police that 'seems to run deeply through all societies regardless of social, economic or political orientations' (1973, p. 2). However, at the time Van Maanen invoked Trotsky's claim there were even fewer studies of policing under different political paradigms than there are today. The wave of imperialism and subsequent colonial policing that took place was largely before the ethnographic lens had turned to police culture. Furthermore, post-colonial societies with more recent disruptions to the political order, or transitioning democracies and economies, remain little studied in the search for universalities among police and are, therefore, worthy of more scholarly attention.

Formative policing research undertaken in the US and UK assumed the underlying political system to be liberal-democratic, with commitments to the separation of powers, the rule of law, and individualised justice. Policing in a democracy is notionally committed to upholding specific values including 'freedom of speech, association, and movement, and freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, and exile' (Bayley, 2006, p. 19). Sklansky (2008) argues that, in societies which value democracy, the goal of the police is to uphold the political values which underpin it. In Anglo-American policing, political independence is the ideal, even if it has often not been achieved in practice. The independent role of constable was a vital political device here, even when the structural position of the police in the state is recognised. In his study of police in the US, Van Maanen (1973, pp. 1-2) referred to the relationship between police and the political system in the following way:

> Fundamentally, a police officer represents the most visible aspect of the body politic and is that aspect most likely to intervene directly in the daily lives of the citizenry. If one considers the President the "head" of the political system,

> then the patrolman on the street must be considered the "tail"

The conventional account regarding the development of modern policing is that it began in early 19th-century England with a model which had a preventative focus due to concern about the French model, a top-down mode of enforcement which concentrated power in the executive (Van Dijk et al., 2015). The French centralised approach included the policing of political opponents which Brodeur (1983) designated as 'high' policing, as a way to distinguish it from the public order aspects or 'low' policing. Although the advent of modern policing is associated with Sir Robert Peel's[13] English 'New Police' in 1829, his role as Chief Secretary in Ireland saw him establish, many years earlier, in 1814, the first organised police force: the Peace Preservation Force, which would come under the Irish Constabulary after 1822 (Brogden, 1987; Jeffries, 1952; Sinclair, 2008). The Irish police was a colonial model used both to control the Irish citizenry and as a training ground for officers who would later be sent to police the empire (Sinclair, 2008). That former colonial police officers returned to Britain after service and took up domestic positions also resulted in a 'cross-fertilization' of imperial and colonial models (Sinclair & Williams, 2007, p. 222).

The role of the police and the source of their mandate in Anglo-American jurisdictions have been the focus of most policing studies (Manning, 1978). Manning (1978, p. 487) has described how Anglo-American police initially saw their functions as pertaining to 'crime prevention and deterrence', but over time this transitioned, or was cultivated, to emphasise a 'crime-fighting' orientation. The police identify as crime-fighters, necessarily giving the impression (at least) that police authority is based in law where infractions designated as 'crimes' are found.

In the US, the idea of 'professionalism' was adopted to emphasise scientific methods for crime investigation (Carte & Carte, 1975; Vollmer, 1971). Professionalism was also put forward as an anti-corruption tool which sought to

[13] Reference to 'Peelian principles' has been critiqued as a 'textbook' construction of a collection of principles not entirely, but to a large extent, attributable to Sir Robert Peel (Lentz & Chaires, 2007).

create distance between police and local politics to promote law enforcement against vices, including gambling and prostitution, objectively and independently (Carte & Carte, 1975; Vollmer, 1971). However, in the 1980s Bayley (1988) noted this approach (which by this stage was considered 'traditional' policing) had failed and new arguments for a community-oriented policing which emphasised localised engagement and problem-solving had emerged.

There are different interpretations of what 'professional' means with respect to policing. Professionalism can be championed with a view to 'limit or manage officers' decisions and actions' through increased accountability (Hills, 2014, p. 769). It may also be conceptualised as either 'old' or 'new'. Elements of 'old professionalism' centre on the task of being 'professional crime fighters' (Manning, 1977, cited in Fyfe, 2013, p. 410), propped up by centralised management systems relying on 'random, motorised patrols, rapid response to calls for assistance, and the retrospective investigation of crime rather than upstream preventative approaches' (Fyfe, 2013, p. 410). 'New professionalism' drew attention to accountability, legitimacy and innovation, including evidence-based practice (Stone & Travis, 2011).

In terms of 'new' professionalism, Fyfe (2013, p. 411), drawing on Stone and Travis (2011), describes legitimacy as being 'conferred by the law and democratic politics' (as well as the result of principled interactions with the public). This is obviously problematic for non-democratic states. Whilst there are fewer one-party states than there were in the last century, most are located in the global South and have been under-researched in terms of empirical studies providing an opportunity to re-think the relationship between politics and policing.

In contrast to Bayley's (2006) ideals of democratic policing as upholding freedom of speech and association in some political systems, police themselves may not have this opportunity, let alone be mandated to support the citizenry in this manner. For example, police in China 'are first and foremost political agents of the ruling class' – the Chinese Communist Party (Wong, 2012, p. 13). Moreover, not only police, but all Chinese citizens are expected to support and endorse the ruling party, including, for example, in prohibiting freedom of association. To what extent does this difference in official political doctrine affect policing at the

frontline, given claims that police work as an occupation has common features? Though adherence to a political party may not preclude police from carrying out law enforcement functions, it may influence some aspects of their work or occupational identity. Hills (2014, p. 769) asserts that definitions of professionalism are dependent on context, such as the case in Zimbabwe police professionalism has been referred to as the 'effective delivery of specific political aims and objectives'. Whereas the politicisation of police activities can occur anywhere and change over time, the formal relationship between police and political institutions has assumed a model of independence as a necessary condition for a professional police force. However, this has been contested by scholars of Chinese policing who argue a professional police force can be compatible with authoritarian governance (F. Liu & Martin, 2016, p. 371; Wong, 2012, p. 369). Furthermore, Brogden (1987, p. 8) provides one (of several) alternate view of policing whereby 'professional policing' – understood as protection of the state – could be the norm and community policing a 'peculiar deviation'. These assertions raise questions about the origins of definitions of 'professional police' and their applicability to different (including non-Western) contexts.

The nature of a political system can also determine the mechanisms through which police can be held to account and how reforms may be instigated. In some jurisdictions, the pressures or possibilities for change in police practices or culture may include demands for more gender and ethnic diversity following sex discrimination cases or 'race riots', intense media scrutiny of police investigations, royal commissions and judicial review (or their equivalent), examination of stop and search practices, and unionised strikes among the police workforce. In some countries, these avenues may be unavailable, inaccessible or even prohibited by law and so the effects that these have had (or not) on police organisations in stable Western democracies may not be found under other political circumstances.

Police and discourses about the law

Anglo-American policing's relationship with the law is a crucial part of its historical identity. The legal nature of police authority and the police role have led to

extensive discussions of the limits and uses of police discretion within the law. When police authority purports to be derived from the law, the circumstances in which police use discretion to enforce the law or not is necessarily an important focus of research. Thus, assumptions which drove early policing empirical research in democracies was based on the rule of law focused on exploring 'behind the mock-bureaucratic façade' and 'the law in action by contrast with the law in the books' (Reiner, 2016, p. 237). The use of discretion has been documented in many foundational studies in the context of patrol work (Banton, 1964; Cain, 1973; Skolnick, 1994; Van Maanen, 1973; Westley, 1970) and detective work (Ericson, 1981; Hobbs, 1988; Young, 1991). These have differences in levels of visibility of decision-making and possibilities for supervision or review (Brogden, Jefferson, & Walklate, 1988). Discretion can also be used at higher levels of the police organisation through decisions by management (Brogden et al., 1988; Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983).

The ethos under Sir Robert Peel's English model emphasised the role of police as not unduly interfering in the lives of the public. The priority of policing was to maintain social order. Police saw their work as discerning between the 'rough' and 'respectable' (Shearing, 1981) and manifested in an 'us versus them' mentality (Waddington, 1999). Despite the development of a crime-fighting ethos, ethnographic studies on patrol-work found authors described crime work as forming only a small part of the nature of police work which was described as having a service-oriented or peace-keeping role (Banton, 1964; Ericson, 1982; Reiss, 1971; Westley, 1970). Anglo-American police justified their interventions as the exercise or expression of legal authority.

The circumstances described as giving rise to police intervention and opportunities for discretion in Western democracies may not be neatly applicable to contexts where legal rational discourse was not historically presented as an ideal. For example, studies on policing in countries with a Confucian influence emphasise that police (or those undertaking policing functions) traditionally derived their authority not from law, but from state power and processes of moral ordering (Jiao, 2001; J. T. Martin, 2014). Jiao (2001) explains that the criminal justice system in China emphasises early intervention, rehabilitation and re-

education. A correct moral order is hierarchical, with an inherent natural order within the family, neighbourhood and state. By acting virtuously towards others, with correct 'manners, etiquette, propriety or rites', moral and social stability are maintained (M. R. Dutton, 1992, p. 22). The policing of virtue did not necessitate strict rules and regulations because morality was an intrinsic behaviour to be cultivated did not require legal form or public proclamation (M. R. Dutton, 1992).

This has implications for the relationship between police and the law. Jiao (2001, p. 160) claimed that 'the rejection of codified and publicly promulgated laws for centuries in China served a practical purpose for the police – to enable them and the community to create new and mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts without their hands being tied'. An approach founded on policing a moral order also has implications for the legal culture which develops and the extent of investment in police knowledge of the law. However, the Chinese authorities have pursued an agenda to professionalise the police driven by the need to control market-oriented institutions amid rapidly growing prosperity (F. Liu & Martin, 2016). Efforts towards professionalising Chinese police have focused on their being 'more scientific, rational, rule bound, and humane' (Wong, 2012, p. 231), although the shape that this takes depends on the emphasis on which 'rules' are prioritised, for example, Party doctrine, laws or local interpretations.

Factors affecting police culture and practice

Northern policing scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s gave the impression of a monolithic organisation with a workforce who shared similar worldviews and characteristics (Reiner, 2015). In his classic study of police, Van Maanen (1973, pp. 3-4) claimed: 'In short, when a policeman dons his uniform, he enters a distinct subculture governed by norms and values designed to manage the strains created by his unique role in the community'. The police 'role in the community' was that of the 'patrolman'. The insights garnered by Van Maanen (1973) and other researchers such as Skolnick (1994, 2008; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993) formed the basis for much of the policing scholarship that followed, examining the relationship between frontline police and citizens (Manning, 2014). Reiner (2010, p. 3) refers to the 'taken-for-granted' perception of who the police are, as 'primarily … a body of people patrolling public places in blue uniforms, with a

broad mandate of crime control, order maintenance and some negotiable social service functions'.

The emphasis on police patrol work and interaction with the public resulted in identification of core characteristics of police culture (Reiner, 2010). Police were described as setting about their work with a 'sense of mission' to catch 'villains', as seeing themselves as the 'thin blue line' between order and chaos (Reiner, 2010, pp. 119-121). Catching criminals required physical strength, machismo and a penchant for excitement and action (Fielding, 1994). Racism has been regarded as an enduring feature of police culture (Skolnick, 2008; Westley, 1970), although this is partly a reflection of the multicultural societies where dominant scholarship was based (Reiner, 2010). Research has associated some police cultural characteristics with a masculine orientation, including 'aggressive, physical action, competitiveness, preoccupation with the imagery of conflict, exaggerated heterosexual orientation and the operation of patriarchal misogynistic attitudes' (Fielding, 1994, p. 47), and alcohol consumption (Reiner, 2010). Police are described as typically cynical and pessimistic as means of expressing frustration and disappointment with their mission, though often manifesting in humour (Reiner, 2010).

The core characteristics included a sense of social isolation between police and the community which Reiner (2010, p. 122) suggests stems from: 'shift work, erratic hours, difficulty switching off from the tension engendered by the job, aspects of the discipline code, and the hostility or fear that citizens may exhibit to the police'. It also reflects the bureaucratic and 'professional' portrayal of police work which emphasised a distance between police and the community so as to be impartial in executing law enforcement functions (W. R. Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2010). The distance between police and community formed part of the pursuit of 'professionalisation' which dominated American approaches to improving policing from the mid-20th century (Sklansky, 2011), and which Manning (1977, p. 120) described as 'a strategy employed by the police to defend their mandate and thereby to build self-esteem, organizational autonomy, and occupational solidarity or cohesiveness'. Early US studies focused on the work of the 'patrolman' as typical of policing generally, with Van Maanen (1973, p. 38)

pointing out that ‘patrolmen rarely see the same people twice’, and Ericson (1982, p. 6) observing that ‘the vast majority of their time is spent alone in their patrol cars without any direct contact with citizens’.

Anglo-American literature characterised police culture as monolithic, with shared cultural agreement across a range of organisations, departments and ranks, but police culture really only referred to ‘street-cop’ culture. In 1983, Punch (p. xi) remarked that the ‘politics of access conspired to deflect academic attention downward, particularly to patrol activities and away from senior officers and high-level decision making’. In his edited book, *Control in the Police Organization* (Punch, 1983), further research began to reveal differences among police depending on their rank and function, acknowledging that the ‘patrolman’ does not represent the only occupational outlook of a police officer. Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) studied two precincts in New York City and determined that, as a result of increasing demands for efficiency and accountability, ‘two cultures of policing’ had arisen – ‘street cops’ and ‘management cops’. Whilst both cultures share the mission to ‘combat crime and insure a safe and secure city’ (Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983, p. 258), they differ in their approach and focus. The ‘street cop’ is concerned with proximate experiences that require a ‘gut-level’ response to situations learned on-the-job. The ‘management cop’ oversees and is responsible for the allocation of resources across a wider terrain and is thus concerned with the efficiency of the system and managing ‘impersonal variables’ (e.g., individual officers and the police unit). Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983, p. 259) describe the two cultures as reflecting a classic manager–worker relationship with an inherent conflict because their differences in ethos, between flexibility and pre-packaged practice, result in a ‘game’ requiring an ability to ‘maneuver [sic] around, outwit, or nullify the moves of headquarters decision-makers’.

Further understanding of policing and police culture as distinct from the ‘patrolman’ or ‘street cop’ came with the investigation of detectives and their work. In the locales of initial studies, the pathway to becoming a detective was through doing time in uniformed general duties. This progression meant detectives could reflect on the differences between uniform and detective work through their own experiences, as was the case with Young in the UK (1991) who noted a difference

between uniform work, which emphasised the importance of an arrest, compared with the detective who had to pay more attention to statistics. Other differences include the 'low visibility' of detectives who are seen to have more control over their work (Ericson, 1981). Although a largely reactive role with cases typically brought to their attention by uniformed officers, detectives maintain control over information and a range of possible responses to reports, including determining if a report constitutes a crime at all and thus part of their workload, and possibilities for performance evaluation (Ericson, 1981). Hobbs (1988) also studied detectives and described their work as 'entrepreneurial', distinct from the more 'militarist' uniform police work. Hobbs' (1988) contribution was to highlight how the symbiotic relationship between the economy of London's East End shaped the nature of detective policing in the area. It showed that, despite bureaucratic and militaristic approaches, the police are not necessarily involved in a top-down controlled approach but that the specific conditions of 'the policed' interact with the police to create a particular style (Hobbs, 1988).

Early accounts of police culture were also captured through a narrow lens, examining their formal position which, according to Manning (2014, p. 519), reflected a 'visible, preventive, reactive and responsive, uniformed, and politically neutral' public police. This view of the police, and their role, is one that had obligations towards public safety and order distinct from the obligations of members of the public. Policing was an activity in the public domain, a demarcation limiting the role of the state in private affairs (Locke, 1982/1689). As noted above, Manning (2014, p. 530) points to the need for the exploration of policing models other than Peelian in order to understand 'the role, if any, of the political economic, and cultural context of the police organization's operations'. Though the British police were exemplified as impersonal authority under Peel's model, Miller (1999) described social isolation as a consequence. The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 under the Chinese Communist Party saw the formation of the *renmin jingcha* 人民警察 (People's Police) which provides a contrasting example. In theory, police were to have 'no separate identity and interests' to the people and were to assist the people by responding to crimes as personal problems, rather than as legal violations (Wong, 2010, p. 89). The relationship between the police and the people was expressed using

iconography of ‘fish (police) in the water (people)’ (Damin, 2001, cited in Wong, 2010, p. 88). Policing constituted a rather informal activity emphasising education and rehabilitation, and interactions with the people. This included broad social functions and administrative tasks of the state, such as population management and collecting taxes (M. R. Dutton, 1992). The low mobility of the Chinese population (prior to economic reform in the 1980s) contributed to a localised, familiar neighbourhood or clan approach to mutual surveillance. Thus, the lines between police and community were more blurred and overlapping than those described in early Western policing literature. The mass-line policing approach under Mao Zedong aimed to mobilise the people into an active role in policing where collective responsibility for reducing crime was emphasised (Wong, 2010). Therefore, assumptions from Northern literature about the relationship between police and community and the extent of social isolation among police may not necessarily be valid for police in the global South.

Given the police are drawn from the citizenry, they are necessarily embedded in the social relations of the broader culture. Some scholars have drawn broad comparisons between Western and Asian societies and implications for crime and social control (Jiao, 2001; J. Liu, 2017). Asian societies in general are regarded as having closer familial relationships and more social relations than their Western counterparts (J. Liu, 2017; Nisbett, 2001), often framed as a difference between collectivist and individualist cultures. J. Liu (2017) asserts that ‘relationism’ and collectivity characterise East Asian societies, giving rise to particular ‘cultural values, and thought patterns’. He cites four key features which inflect criminal justice responses with certain features: attachment to families and communities, preserving honour (including behaving correctly to preserve the honour of others), harmony over conflict avoidance, and holistic over analytical thinking (J. Liu, 2017).

Although not all Asian societies are the same, some (including China and Vietnam) are marked by a focus on the collective, especially family (and extended family) relations and close community networks. Expectations of police may be that they participate in social functions of local residents which can blur the lines between public and private concerns. Where gift giving is a social custom in these

environments, police can be the recipient of offerings which may not be easily refused. Cao, Huang, and Sun (2014, p. 154) describe the dilemma in the context of Taiwanese community police:

> For officers in Taiwan, many of the gifts are seen as a mixture of voluntary and obligatory conduct, and the importance attached to the creation of a harmonious relationship in a post-Confucian society makes the rejection of such gifts more difficult.

Cao et al. (2014) note that police in Taiwan have a different experience to those in the West where the public and private spheres are more clearly delineated. In the case of the latter, maintaining a distance between the police and the policed was a means to avoid close relationships which may risk officers being corrupted (Herbert, 2006). Whereas in Taiwanese society, 'the ubiquity of informal relationship networks means that large sectors of the social order penetrate the boundaries of the police in Taiwan' (Cao et al., 2014, p. 151). Though the combination of informal networks, social obligations and gift giving can facilitate corruption, it also means the cultural characteristic associated with social isolation of police in Western countries may be experienced differently where the lines between public and private are more blurred.

Police recruitment, training and education

The nature of police recruitment, training and education in a particular place is a product of the historical emergence of the police, the political system and broader societal cultural attitudes to education and civil service.

Police recruitment in 19th-century England sought or attracted young, single men, as well as younger boys who could begin as cadets (Emsley, 2014). Constables were typically from low to middle socio-economic backgrounds; '"respectable" upper working-class men with minimal educational qualifications' (Punch, 2007, p. 106). Dominant reasons for joining varies across countries and cultures; for example, some research has found people become police because they have a desire to serve the community, perceive police work to be a noble profession and see it as stable and secure employment (Chan et al., 2003; Fielding, 1988).

Pressure or encouragement by family and interest in job security are major justifications for joining the police in Taiwan (Cao et al., 2014). By contrast, one reason for becoming a police officer in South Africa was as a last resort in precarious economic circumstances (Faull, 2017). In his ethnographic study of the South African Police Service, Faull (2017, p. 333) found police described their employment as 'both lucky and deserved, and accidental and unplanned'.

In the mid-19th century, police training in England constituted two weeks of 'drill and sword exercises' and some lectures with an emphasis on learning law by rote (Emsley, 2014, p. 206). At the turn of the 21st century, a report critical of police training in the UK described it as rigid, militaristic and focused on knowledge acquisition (especially legal) (Charman, 2017; HMIC, 2002). The HMIC (2002) report criticised the length of formal police training, comprising 31 weeks (out of a 104-week total probationary training period), and recommended that it should be increased given the complexity of police work and the need for it to be regarded as a proper profession. Though police should know relevant law, the report found the composition of police training focused too heavily on knowledge of the law and recommended greater emphasis on communication, use of information technology, problem solving, team working, techniques of reducing crime and evidence-based practice (HMIC, 2002, pp. 44-45). In 2018, the College of Policing (UK) began recruiting under a new Police Education Qualifications Framework which provides pathways to tertiary-level qualifications (College of Policing, 2018).

Punch (2007) notes differences between 'Anglo-Saxon' countries and continental Europe's approach to police education with the former focused on recruiting people with secondary-school or college education and the latter likely to provide high-quality training internally. The continental approach to police training more closely reflects a military model. There are Southern examples where police training is centralised with a bifurcation between academy/university and college/vocational institutions catering for officers to work at the lower ranks or management and upper ranks; Taiwan being one such example (Cao, Huang, & Sun, 2015). There are also assumptions in relation to a mutual suspicion between police and the education sector (2017), though this does not necessarily have

universal application as it is predicated on the assumption that police training and university education are separate enterprises. Indeed, in Taiwan, China, South Korea and Japan, a university policing degree is a standard requirement (Cao et al., 2015).

Society's expectations of police

The perception of police culture as unitary was borne from research that ignored the diversity of police work. Notwithstanding, Crank argued police had a shared 'common culture' because frontline officers 'everywhere' responded to 'similar audiences everywhere' (1998, p. 26); however, the audiences he refers to appear to be confined to the United States populace and institutions. There is an increasing body of knowledge outside the global North showing that street-policing culture is not universal because the dynamic between the police and the policed is subject to cultural variations.

With respect to police cultures in Asia, some scholars have drawn attention to the way broader cultural characteristics shape understandings and expectations of policing (Haanstad, 2013; Jiao, 2001; J. T. Martin, 2016; Wong, 2012). In a study on drug control in China, the researchers found citizens 'tend not to hold police accountable for neighbourhood conditions in the same way as Americans do' (Dai & Gao, 2014, p. 217). In the East Asian context, Wong (2010) refers to the way broader culture provides different perspectives on community policing approaches. He refers to Goldstein's problem-oriented policing (POP) (H. Goldstein, 1990) as a 'police' theory which seeks to address a 'community problem' where an individual or community seek police support to solve a problem (Wong, 2010, p. 96). In contrast, Wong (2010, p. 85) proposes that a community policing approach in China is better understood through 'police power as social resource theory'. Here, people see police as one of many social resources they can draw on to solve a problem but with a view that police advise, facilitate or empower people to solve their own problems without formal legal intervention; this amounts to a 'people' theory where police are not central for resolution (Wong, 2010). Theorising about police culture, therefore, relies on an understanding of community expectations of police because they only function in relation to each other (J. T. Martin, 2018). This includes understanding the

historical underpinnings that have formed a ‘friend–enemy’ (Schmitt, 2007) conceptualisation of police–community relations (J. T. Martin, 2018).

Outside the Asian and Anglo-American context, scholars have considered the relationship between the police and community with respect to historical and cultural influences (Marks, 2005; Strobl, 2011, 2016). Marks (2005, p. 149) referred to the dynamic between police and some communities in South Africa where antagonism could develop over time. She describes how the accumulation of ‘localised historical memories … which created a vicious circle of response and counter-response’ acts to sustain particular types of relationships between the police and the policed (Marks, 2005, p. 149). Marks also noted that, even after six years of reforms in the Durban Public Order Police, the level of violence and brutality to which the officers were exposed would continue to shape their memories of and behaviours towards specific communities.

Wong (2010, pp. 98-99) says community expectations of police, and subsequently the nature of police responses, must consider:

> How the people of a given society in a certain era and at a certain place conceive of the police and their relationship with society must of necessity depends [sic] on the cultural understanding of that society about the role, functions and relationship of the police with the public.

Furthermore, Wong (2010) takes issue with Bittner’s (1970, p. 41) proposition that when people call the police there is an expectation they have the capacity to employ the use of force (not that they will), arguing that, in the Chinese context, the Western conception of the expectation of force as being central to the police role is not neatly transferrable. J. T. Martin (2016, p. 463) argues that the ‘reduction of police power to physical force’ misses other understandings of the capacities of the police. For example, in Taiwan, a dimension of police work is to be called upon to ‘help out’ which, as Martin (2016, p. 469) describes, ‘is intimate, the mode of policing implicated in the sphere of social obligations’. But in Taiwan, the police are not necessarily the only people citizens call upon to solve problems that are in the police remit, and patronage networks can be brought to bear on situations that disrupt (or shape) police authority. If we conceptualise police

culture as something that is the product of a relational dynamic between the environment and individual, as per Chan's (1997; Chan et al., 2003) framework, then an environment where police and citizens navigate social obligations, reciprocity and patronage networks may mediate an officer's disposition towards the use of force differently.

Conceptualising police culture and its production

To date, studies on police socialisation and occupational culture have been concentrated in the West, for example, in the United States (Van Maanen, 1973), the United Kingdom (Cassan, 2010; Fielding, 1988; Loftus, 2009), Australia (Chan et al., 2003) and France (Cassan, 2010). Chan et al. (2003, p. 3) describe socialisation as 'the process through which a novice learns the skills, knowledge, and values necessary to become a competent member of an organisation or occupation'. Whereas Van Maanen (1973) conceptualises a passive role of police in the socialisation process, Chan et al. (2003) highlight the agency of individual officers as they adapt to new positions. The role of police culture in socialisation has, in the past, been viewed with negativity and often blamed for the transmission of bad practices from one generation of police to another. Most views of police culture in the Western literature have negative connotations (Paoline, 2003), amongst which include: being a major barrier to reform (Dean, 1995; Goldsmith, 1990; Greene, 2000), tolerating tacit support for misconduct and misuse of authority (M. K. Brown, 1988; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993), and the 'code of silence' among officers which often prevents investigations into police impropriety (New York Commission to Investigate Allegations of Police Corruption and the Anti-Corruption Procedures of the Police Department, 1994; Walker, 2001). Consequently, police culture has been seen as an impediment to professionalisation. In contrast, some researchers have identified positive features of police culture, such as the collegial support available for coping with the stresses of police work (Chan, 1997), and as an effective mechanism to achieve police reform (Crank, 1997; Skogan & Hartnett, 1997). Attempts to change police culture in this context can, therefore, be seen to contain both opportunities and challenges.

A study by Chan (1997) in Australia critiqued previous research, arguing there was an under-recognition of the interactive nature of factors that result in the production of police culture. She contended that police culture should not be viewed as static because changes in the political environment or challenges of new social issues could influence police, and because individual officers had agency in choosing how to respond or interact with their environment, more so than was previously recognised by academics. Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003) drew on organisational theorists to position police as 'actors' within organisations who are 'active decision-makers who are nevertheless guided by the assumptions they learn and the possibilities they are aware of' (Chan, 1997, p. 74). Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003) introduced Bourdieu's (1990a) concepts of *field* and *habitus* to conceptualise police culture as a relational dynamic between the environment and an individual's dispositions. Here, individuals take up objective positions in the social world which subsequently shapes their subjective dispositions towards their social world acting as a dialectic. Therefore, the *field of policing* is a social world which can shape the individual dispositions (habitus) of officers. The habitus is where an individual processes information about the environment and organises it into 'schemas'. These schemas shape the parameters for an individual's perceptions and determine whether information received in the future will be accepted or rejected. Though responses are not predetermined, they are fashioned to an extent by an individual's knowledge of possibilities, described by Powell and DiMaggio as 'menus of legitimate accounts' (Powell and DiMaggio 1991, cited in Chan, 1997, p. 75) or a 'vocabulary of precedents' (Ericson, Baranek, & Chan, 1897). Actors may also respond subconsciously and then be inclined to consider 'how an action can be retrospectively justified rationally, that is, what types of justification are organisationally permitted' (Chan, 1997, p. 75). The interactive model proposed by Chan challenges the assumption that individual officers are 'passive entities' participating in an organisation's culture rather than having a capacity to be active change agents.

There is some commentary on how, once socialised into the police culture, police take on an identity which influences their attitudes and behaviours outside work. While Van Maanen (1973) asserted that police don the uniform and enter a

distinct subculture, Waddington (1999, p. 291) suggests that some police culture research may have engaged in 'interpretive over-reach' by assuming too much distance between the culture associated with police and that pertaining to the society more generally. The fact that racism is present within police culture is described as a likely reflection of prejudice in the community and especially the communities from which police officers were typically drawn in the US and UK – lower and middle working class. Similarly, a high tolerance for violence amongst police in South Africa was seen by Faull (2018) as a reflection of societal attitudes given the political upheavals and instability. Furthermore, Dixon (1997, p. 161) critiqued the tendency of some researchers to 'over-socialize' conceptions of police officers by attributing to them characteristics that are indistinct from (the ordinary) activities of other work cultures. Waddington (1999) posits that the problem of detecting or measuring a cultural attribute of an occupation can be determined only with an appropriate benchmark, otherwise how can it be determined that a characteristic arises from the occupation or wider society?

In China, the public security sector perspective of police culture appears to diverge from Western conceptualisations. Whilst acknowledging a poor police culture is detrimental, it is viewed as a product that can be harnessed and nurtured to make a positive contribution to the quality and productivity of police work (Wong, 2012, p. 112). This is in line with the view that a good social culture more broadly can be developed in Chinese society. Consequently, police culture is something that should be examined, invested in, cultivated and maintained to improve the moral and material performance of the police.

There are examples of how police culture has been defined and addressed in China: the Public Security Bureau (PSB) in Jinzhou, Hebei Province, regards police culture as pertaining to:

> (1) a professional culture *(zhongcheng fengxian guogan zhuhui, weimin zhifa, gng wei ren xian)*, which is devoted to service, is resolute and wise, enforces the law for the people, and is not afraid to lead; (2) an artistic culture; (3) and a social culture. (Wong, 2012, p. 112)

Other examples of deliberate cultivation of police culture focus on art, photography, singing and organising festivals (Fuzhou PSB, Fujian Province) or sport and physical activities (Shanghai PSB, Baoshan subdivision) (Wong, 2012, pp. 112-113). In addition, there was the establishment of a Police Culture Salon (*jingcha wenhua shalong*) where police could meet from 7.30 p.m. to 1 a.m. three times per week and discuss various topics, not necessarily related to policing, but to provide space for police to 'relax and reflect' and learn new things (Wong, 2012, p. 113). In China, police culture has been viewed not simply as the product of a disposition attributed to the nature of police work but as encompassing a wider identity that is not wholly distinct from broader social culture. From the examples presented above, we can begin to elucidate differences in how different cultural settings can lead to different assumptions about what police culture is, and that theoretical constructs developed in the West may not be applicable elsewhere.

Although there is increasing diversity in policing research, the foundational studies provide what Loftus (2009) refers to as 'the orthodox account' from which other police scholarship is anchored (Manning, 2014). Sklansky (2007) argues that the study of police culture may also suffer from 'cognitive burn-in' where the frames used to examine the subject are re-used, thereby limiting opportunities for new insights and developments. Chen's (2016) study in China is a useful starting point from which to examine universalities among police, but it could also be an example of how cultural characteristics associated with police are entrenched rather than interrogated, as Sklansky (2007) suggests. Chen (2016) set out to measure the adherence of subcultural perceptions of frontline police in China with those identified among police in Western studies, specifically: role orientation towards crime control and service; levels of cynicism, traditionalism, solidarity and isolation; and receptivity to change. He surveyed 401 officers from 29 provinces and reported similarities between Chinese police and core characteristics in Western literature with respect to adherence to 'solidarity' and 'isolation' but noted a receptivity to change and a service orientation which may indicate an element of difference. The study is useful because it indicates how broader cultural differences may shape police culture, although future studies might benefit from identifying new variables or characteristics of police in China which could be

tested in the West so that possibilities for universalities are not explored in one direction.

Gender

Policing is a male-dominated occupation. Early literature focused on policemen and patrol work, emphasising an action-oriented, macho, crime-fighting ethos (Fielding, 1994; Reiner, 2010) despite studies showing 'action' comprised only a small part of police work. Women's inclusion in police work has historically shown their involvement at least initially on the periphery, doing 'care' or 'service' oriented work (Silvestri, 2003). Studies on the integration of women into policing have been dominated by the global North (Heidensohn, 1992; S. E. Martin & Jurik, 2006) based on a critique of a patriarchal system in a liberal democracy. They have identified barriers to women's participation in what are seen as 'core' policing roles, for example, frontline crime response and investigation. In order to be deemed capable alongside men in policing, many women try to project themselves in a way that does not tie them to their sex category so they can succeed in a male-dominated occupation (Morash & Haarr, 2012). In addition, Rabe-Hemp (2009) found that, in order to fit into the male dominated police culture, policewomen in the US take on masculine characteristics to broaden career opportunities yet, at the same time, often behave in ways that reinforce traditional concepts of gender difference. In Australia, Chan, Doran and Marel (2010) found that many female police expressed during their training a desire for equal treatment to their male counterparts although, after field experience, many policewomen became resigned to 'doing gender'. This is manifest in undertaking gendered roles often categorised as 'soft' policing and perceived as peripheral to core police functions which require physical strength and the capacity to use coercive force (Chan et al., 2003). However, McCarthy (2013), invoking Chan's (1997) more fluid construction of police culture, suggests that recent trends towards multi-agency approaches may be used to position 'soft' policing functions with more legitimacy in the male-dominated organisation.

Scholars have argued that theoretical frameworks and understandings of women in policing, established through empirical studies of Western policewomen, do not necessarily suit other contexts (Naratajan, 2008; Strobl, 2008). Strobl critiques

Brown's (1997) model which suggests integration of women police arises from a small number of 'pioneers' prepared to publicly resist and litigate for change and observes that countries where this occurs have more 'cultural space' for women to do so. Strobl's (2008) ethnographic study of policewomen in Bahrain highlighted that efforts towards women's liberation take different forms depending on broader political and cultural characteristics. The cultural parameters for women to express tendencies towards specific gender roles are affected by religious identity and social stigma associated with reflections on their family and marriage prospects (Strobl, 2008). Like Al-Mughni, Strobl points out that women's liberation does not neatly follow a linear progression and points to the way Islamicisation in Bahrain and other Gulf states has seen a 'reversal of the relaxation of traditional gender role expectations … in the 1960s and 1970s' (Al-Mughni, 2001; Strobl, 2008, p. 54). However, Strobl says women still participate in 'politicking', though it is more likely to be 'behind-the-scenes' which preserves the ideal of male leadership (Strobl, 2008, p. 55).

The progression of women's inclusion in Western police forces has been towards full integration where men and women undertake the same training and operational duties despite the fact they may end up doing (and wanting) different roles (Chan et al., 2010). and can vary depending on the national context (Van der Lippe, Graumans, & Sevenhuijsen, 2004). However, this approach is not reflected globally and Strobl (2008) argues the imposition of this model is itself a colonial act and fails to take into account local needs and cultures. Notwithstanding, segregated models instituted locally, such as the *Delegacias de Policia dos Direitos da Mulher* (Women's Police Stations) in Brazil, do not escape criticism for their ability for meeting expectations of their employees and the segment of the community they set out to serve (Hautzinger, 2002). Strobl argues for more empirical research to be undertaken to provide evidence for the circumstances under which variations and alternatives should be implemented, and that hybrid or 'two-track' systems for women's integration into policing are suitable for some contexts (2008, pp. 55-56). Chu and Abdulla (2014) echoed Strobl's assertion following their study of self-efficacy beliefs and gender roles among policewomen in Dubai, noting that Western gender integration models may not be suitable for non-Western settings.

The nature of women's participation in policing is also shaped by the incentives which propel their inclusion. For example, some jurisdictions may seek to employ women to address specific problems of gendered violence where women officers are regarded as providing more empathetic responses to victims, and that victims are more likely to feel comfortable to report crimes (Hautzinger, 2002). However, some drivers for women's inclusion arise out of a broader push for gender equality and equal opportunity, sometimes driven by top-down government employment policies. For example, in Taiwan, Gingerich and Chu (2013) report that, in line with changing consciousness regarding gender equality, the police are recruiting more women and integrating them into a wider range of roles, although overall the proportion of women was just 7.72 per cent. Although Asian countries share strongly patriarchal social structures, policy directions for women in policing are varied. A theoretical framework for policing must also consider the broader culture, especially those with different religious or ideological backgrounds.

A Southern Policing perspective

To develop a framework for a Southern Policing perspective, I propose an extension of the interactive model of police culture and practice developed in Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003) which draws on Bourdieu's (1990a) conceptualisations of field and habitus as a relational dynamic. The framework is useful because it provides flexibility for explaining police practices in both Northern and Southern contexts. It can also account for differences in cultural knowledge and institutionalised practices. Chan (1997) suggested the field has been underestimated in terms of its influence on police occupational culture. Fields are made up of agents which may be institutions, individuals or other agents participating in the 'struggle to maintain and enhance their positions in the social order' by pursuing forms of capital (Swartz, 1997, p. 137), including political, social, symbolic, economic and cultural capital. Chan's (1997) research was important in providing a theoretical framework which could account for a variety of subcultures: police officers can occupy different positions in a particular field which can change depending on role, function, place and other external political and social factors. Police officers have the potential to change police culture

(within certain parameters) because they can pursue forms of capital such as knowledge through education or by fitting in with the culture via expressing a codified demeanour or attitude.

Within this context it becomes clear that in a Southern Policing perspective, the field pays attention to the historical relations of a particular place, its political system, broad societal culture, legal frameworks, organisations, relations between police and the community, and gender as a social institution. Each of these constitute a subfield of power, and their positions are not fixed and have varying degrees of autonomy which can change over time. Changes in one field may not have a determinate impact on another field, and indeed, may have unintended outcomes. A Southern Policing perspective recognises that capital comes in forms which may depart from those identified in Northern-dominated research. If we understand police culture to be fluid because officers have agency to pursue different forms of capital, it is important to recognise that societies may weigh various forms of capital differently leading to different manifestations of police culture.

It is possible that increasing globalisation, migration and technological advances may result in convergence of some police strategies and practices, though this is neither necessarily determinate nor appropriate. In addition, changes in the nature of crime may lead to different presentational strategies by police which in turn affect the nature of policing and police identity (Manning (1978, p. 499). The contribution of this research is to highlight that the field of policing can be very different from that described in the foundational policing research by Northern scholars. It is not to say traditional research on policing does not offer useful explanations to understand police better, but, rather, that there are more perspectives from which we can learn. A Southern Policing perspective aims to elucidate aspects of the field in order to challenge underlying assumptions about the structural conditions in which the police operate.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the limits of northern and specifically Anglo-American-focused studies of policing which assume that what they describe are necessary elements of policing everywhere. Though some aspects of Anglo-American principles and practices have been exported to countries outside the global North, they overlay and interact with established cultures and norms of a specific place – cultures and norms are also amenable to change over time. Some examples of transfer of policing strategies are the result of colonial and globalising practices. In addition, indigenous forms of social control occur in societies with non-Western roots. These have to be understood not as deviations from Anglo-American normality but as significant separate practices and traditions of policing from which the North may have something to learn.

Chapter 4: Police ethnography in the global South: methodology and ethics

Introduction

Until recently, most ethnographic studies on policing available in the literature were undertaken in the global North – developed countries with relative political and economic stability. Decisions made by researchers in these fields could be informed to an extent by the work of previous scholars. Increasingly, scholarship about policing is being produced outside the global North, giving rise to a range of fieldwork issues (Belur, 2014; Blaustein, 2015; Faull, 2018; Goldsmith, 2003; Haanstad, 2008; Jauregui, 2013; Marks, 2005, 2012; J. T. Martin, 2006; Xu, 2016). Sometimes, scholars study police within their own country and culture. In other cases, there are those who, like me, travel to a foreign country to study policing in a different culture, in a different language and in an environment which presents very different dilemmas and opportunities. In this chapter I outline methodological strategies employed and discuss in detail my motivations for studying the police in Vietnam. I draw upon a range of research regarding policing and culture to examine some considerations when undertaking fieldwork. Discussion of ethical challenges, constraints and limitations on the scope of the research among other considerations are also presented, as is access to the research participant cohort.

Situating the researcher in ethnographic police studies in a one-party state

Prior to commencing my doctoral candidature, I was cognisant of limitations to what could be explored in a study on policing in Vietnam. The personal, political and professional[14] complexities of this task were realised during fieldwork and, perhaps more so, while writing the dissertation. Typically, a 'methods' chapter is descriptive, with attention directed towards weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the selected methods and their limitations in theory and practice. There is also an inclination – especially for a doctoral researcher – to

[14] Christine Bonnin (2013) also refers to 'professional, personal and political' although their rearrangement here indicates the order of primacy I perceive for my study.

characterise fieldwork as being not only well planned, but smoothly executed in order to demonstrate a level of competence worthy of academic status. To do so in this case would exclude many of the crucial insights elicited through confronting and navigating (not always successfully) challenges relating to the intertwining exercises of process and method, research and writing, as described by Sowerwine (2004). 'Methods' chapters often separate the research process from its content. However, it became increasingly clear to me that the process (broadly including positionality and reflexivity at the time of, or even prior to, conceptualising the research idea) determines the content of the thesis. Sowerwine has argued that explicating the research process is essential due to the 'politics of data inclusion or exclusion' (2004, p. 229), but in my experience the politics of inclusion or exclusion begins before data collection starts, especially where policing in a one-party state is the subject of study. For example, when I was considering undertaking the type of research I wanted to do on policing in Vietnam, I knew that I would have to seek official approval. A wholly informal approach would not have been possible in this case for several reasons which I outline below. The fact that I had to obtain official approval from the MPS meant the scope for my study would be limited.

In the following sections I address some of the considerations, processes and interactions that shaped my engagement with the subject area and with data collection. I then present discussion in further detail of my ethnographic approach in the Methods section below.

I conducted an ethnography of policing and police culture in Hanoi, Vietnam. Ethnography involves an acute awareness of one's positionality, reflexivity, awareness of the power relations present in every interaction, the role of gatekeepers and ethical dilemmas (Turner, 2014). I found anthropological literature useful to draw upon for this study. In Turner's edited book, *Red stamps and gold stars: fieldwork dilemmas in upland socialist Asia*, she states, '"professional detachment" is neither an option nor a goal for any of this volume's contributors, and we explore the quandaries raised when trying to balance empathy with observation, and scholarship with advocacy' (Turner, 2014, pp. 2-3). The book provides accounts of ethnographic fieldwork with ethnic minorities

in socialist states in China, Laos and Vietnam. The accounts of researchers (anthropologists, geographers and ethnohistorians) describe challenges in relation to how positionality is negotiated in the field with poor, often marginalised communities with huge differences and disparity in wealth, education levels, access to information, and even their ability to leave the field after the research was completed. Although participants in this study were not ethnic minorities, holding positions of relative power within the Ministry of Public Security, there were many similarities in the challenges faced in conducting fieldwork under socialist rule.

A police officer in this study explained to me: 'In Vietnam, you can't get anything done without relationships'. Relationships were key in the process to gain approval for this study which I believe was facilitated by my ability to speak Vietnamese and previous work history in Vietnam.[15] Language helped me to bridge a gap with Vietnamese police officers who supported my application with the Deputy Minister of Public Security, enabling me to be the first foreigner to be granted this type of access. That I had been a police officer (Victoria Police) and that the Australian Federal Police work closely with, and provide significant funding for, police capacity building in Vietnam were mentioned as supporting factors by Vietnamese officers. A researcher's appearance or ethnicity can affect the way they are perceived or accepted in the field. Sowerwine (2014, p. 102) examined how her nationality (as an American) may have shaped her research with ethnic minorities in Vietnam given the post-war, post-colonial environment. She considered that her nationality may have attributed to her some 'baggage' with regard to the American War (Sowerwine, 2014, p. 100). Indeed, it was suggested by a Vietnamese academic that had I been American it might have been more difficult to be given access for the study.

My previous work with the Vietnamese police provided a form of continuity to my identity which facilitated the research. My first letter of request for approval to the People's Police Academy (PPA) was sent back to me to be re-drafted; I was

[15] I commenced Vietnamese language study at Monash University in 1997. I also studied for one year at the Victorian School of Languages and received a scholarship to study at Intermediate level at the Vietnamese Language School for Foreigners in Hồ Chí Minh City in 2005. Between 2006 and 2013 I had intermittent tutoring in Melbourne, Hồ Chí Minh City and Hanoi.

advised to include a list of activities I had been involved in to support Vietnamese police to date. I was able to detail activities spanning several years such as organising international study tours and helping police with successful scholarship applications to study in Australia. That my access was leveraged by my status as a former Australian police officer and current policing consultant could ascribe me the 'position' of an 'outside insider', someone who is a serving or retired officer with inside knowledge of the police officers' world observing their colleagues (J. Brown, 1996; Westmarland, 2016).[16] I return to the issue of researcher position in Chapter 9.

Other scholars have noted a difficulty in navigating access to interviewees where previous research on police reform may have been perceived negatively (see Goldsmith, 2003 for his experience in Colombia). Former Indian police officer Belur (2014, p. 189) attributes her 'perceived pro-establishment persona' to her success in gaining access to study police in India. She noted, however, that this created an ethical dilemma in that, although she was 'sympathetic to the establishment in principle, the analysis would be objective and data driven' (Belur, 2014, p. 189). Belur (2014, p. 190) also indicates her discernible empathy towards the challenges of police work which had enabled access to zones off limits to other, 'activist' researchers perceived as intent on exposing police as 'brutal and oppressive'.

The global South presents a range of considerations in relation to gaining access and ethical review requirements. Marks describes how a 'relationship of mutual trust and respect' had been established with the Durban Public Order Police prior to her being invited to undertake an evaluation of the unit (2005, p. 84). She attributes the ease of her access in part to the broader political changes in South Africa which were opening up government institutions to more scrutiny. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Blaustein (2015) examined community policing facilitated by his involvement in a project with the United Nations Development Program. Scoggins (Scoggins & O'Brien, 2016) used her former position, teaching English

[16] My 'position' as a researcher might be considered more accurately as 'outside outsider'. I'm inclined to regard myself as both 'outside insider' and 'outside outsider' as previous policing experience provides occupational knowledge although it has obvious limitations in a foreign organisation and country.

to police in China, to interview a cohort of officers on the sensitive topic of job satisfaction (there appeared to be very little) although she does not indicate whether she had official endorsement. The necessity of obtaining formal approval at all was challenged by Goldsmith who states: 'While the advantages of obtaining it are fairly obvious, it comes at a price and its absence should not be allowed to dictate the viability of field research' (Goldsmith, 2003, p. 110). Studying police without formal approval depends on the context and the nature of the data sought by researchers. Furthermore, a PhD project is subject to the demands of the university research ethics committee which, in this case, required a Letter of Support from the Vietnamese police, in-country ethics approval and the appointment of an in-country supervisor. Consequently, the 'price' (as per Goldsmith) paid for these prerequisites includes satisfying (or negotiating) conditions set by the institutions involved. Alternative approaches at various stages of seeking approval through 'gatekeepers' could have been to negotiate different terms with the university ethics committee and the police about the conditions of the research. It is not known to what extent some conditions could have been adjusted at the outset and with what consequences. By not agreeing to conditions set by the police, it may be the research would have taken a different course where formal access may have been rejected altogether, rather than restricted. The specific conditions relating to this project and their implications are detailed below in the sections on methods and limitations respectively.

Where research on policing involves observing officers in the field, it necessarily means potential risks associated with police work – for example, exposure to physical violence or trauma. The security environment can vary markedly, such as those experienced by Goldsmith (2003) in Colombia, Marks (Marks, 2005, 2012) in South Africa, and Belur (2014) in India. Given my knowledge and experience in Vietnam, I did not expect to confront serious threats to my physical safety while undertaking fieldwork. A safety protocol I prepared for approval by the ethics committee, which provided an opportunity to pre-empt how to mitigate harm in such circumstances, was largely redundant because I was restricted from observing police on 'patrol'. However, it may in some cases be the police or officials who present the greatest risk to a researcher (Goldsmith, 2003; Polsky,

1967). This could be a concern if one was attempting to investigate or oppose the political regime in Vietnam, but this was not the focus of my study.

In 2016, a large-scale environmental disaster sparked major protests in Vietnam after toxic waste was illegally dumped into the East Sea from a Taiwanese steel factory, Formosa. Protests are rare in Vietnam and are usually shut down quickly and with force, if necessary. Over several weekends, major protests were held in Hanoi, Hồ Chí Minh City and central Vietnam where the Formosa disaster occurred. By coincidence, I observed protesters in Hanoi being shuttled onto a bus by police to be removed from the city centre. I saw footage online where plain-clothes 'police' were, in some cases, violently arresting protesters and pushing them or dragging them onto buses. The Government blocked internet access to social media sites for several consecutive weekends, reportedly to stop people from being able to organise protests online. Although using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection to get around firewalls is possible in Vietnam, I was able to use my Australian SIM card in my mobile phone to access banned sites on affected weekends, albeit only intermittently due to the expense. I had made public social media posts that I was in Hanoi doing my PhD fieldwork on the police. During this period, I was contacted on social media by people who appeared to be Vietnamese and I could tell from viewing their online profiles that they clearly had a pro-democracy agenda. I am not sure why they contacted me and can only surmise that they were seeking information or a perspective on the police actions from a foreign observer. I remained focused on my study aims and did not want to compromise my research through any perceived association with anti-government protestors (if, of course, their social media profile was indeed genuine). The vigilance taken here was one example of where I actively considered my positionality as a researcher whereas there were other scenarios which were unplanned or accidental (as detailed below).

The final product of a research project is the result of innumerable factors. A researcher's positionality influences the nature of 'access, relationships, the "data" collected, and the knowledge encoded' (Sowerwine, 2014). In my case, gender is an obvious factor that shaped my interactions. In addition, I experienced health issues which meant I did not participate in as many social and group

activities with police as I would have liked (typically late-night drinking) despite receiving direct invitations. Behar's (1996, p. 20) assertion that 'an anthropologist's conversations and interactions in the field can never again be exactly reproduced' weighs heavily on me given the lost opportunities to learn more for inclusion in this study. Even so, the circumstances would allow for many fruitful conversations.

Some scholars suggest that, when building rapport with new acquaintances, a good rule of thumb is to avoid 'religion, sex and politics' (Goldsmith, 2003, p. 122). I found these topics difficult to evade. In Vietnam it is considered normal, indeed good manners, to enquire about a person's age, marital status and whether one has children yet (literally 'yet?' *(chưa?)* because parenthood is an expectation). Age is important because it denotes how people should address each other in Vietnamese language (as described in Chapter 2), and to enquire about a person's family is a mark of politeness. It was not uncommon for police students and officers to ask me these questions at the start or end of an interview. In 2016 I was 37 years old and, according to Vietnamese culture, it is unusual for women of my age not to have children. After initiating the subject, some students responded to my predicament with laughter or sympathy – sometimes both. Fortunately, over the years I have assembled a series of amusing retorts for just such scenarios with a view to take advantage of the situation and build rapport rather than dampen it. Perhaps it was my single relationship status that prompted one police officer to give me advice (over dinner with his wife) based on Buddhist teachings about how to control my sexual urges – despite my having mentioned nothing in relation to the subject. Equally, politics was a frequent topic of conversation. I have often wondered whether it is Vietnam's past and its school curriculum that promote an outward-looking perspective on international relations, or that simply my 'foreign-ness', and the opportunity for cross-cultural exchange, is what stimulated the many discussions on global issues I had with Vietnamese people. Whatever the case, these conversations required that I share facts about my personal life as well as my values and opinions about the world. For better or worse, these interactions shaped this research project and accords with Behar's (1996, p. 17) view that, 'as a mode of knowing that depends on the particular relationship formed by a particular anthropologist with a

particular set of people in a particular time and place, anthropology has always been vexed about the question of vulnerability'. This view resonated with me, given some of the situations I found myself in during my research.

On a visit to Hanoi in 2017, I was at a social event where I met a highly ranked officer who had a major role in the Police Academy branch of the Women's Union. We conversed for some time in Vietnamese (as she did not speak English) and on saying goodbye she invited me to her house. She told me to bring my personal belongings, so I could stay the night. I accepted the invitation but thought I must have misheard because we had only just met and I resolved that it was simply a dinner invitation. Several days later I arrived at her home and met her husband and son. She asked where my overnight bag was and when I said I did not bring it she was disappointed and showed me to the spare room where she had made a bed for me to spend the night. I apologised and, after explaining that I had misunderstood, we had dinner and I took a taxi home.

Although the invitation described above was a particular example of amiability, it was not uncommon for police whom I had just met to invite me for dinner with their families and friends.[17] Police were often interested in the strategies and tactics of Australian police given the disparity in available technology and resources; however, responses to reciprocal questions about tactics in Vietnam were not always forthcoming. There was an apparent novelty to my being a white woman (and former police officer) who could speak Vietnamese. I was accessible to non-English speakers who previously had limited opportunities to speak directly with a foreigner. Indeed, one student, upon hearing a call for participants in my research (with an interpreter), said that he volunteered because he had never had an opportunity to converse with a Westerner. I also seemed to be of value for police who wanted their children to practise what they learned in English class at school with a native speaker. Sometimes I found myself teaching Vietnamese to young children who were still learning to read. These exchanges gave me a window into the lives of police officers in a way other than 'drinking beer in pubs', as has been the case in some other studies. The emphasis on

[17] Notwithstanding, sometimes a dinner invitation resembled more of a gesture than an intention.

family and social networks involved in the research process also goes some way to supporting the importance of relationships in police practice as described by officers themselves in the following chapters.

Given learning a second language is an ongoing pursuit, police officers and I together found mutual benefit in sharing tips on our native languages, as well as reviewing and editing documents for one another. The latter provided an insight into what police were working on from day to day and led to discussions about policies and priorities to which I may otherwise not have been privy. Another opportunity for reciprocity came when, during informal encounters, curious officers asked me questions about various aspects of my research such as methodology, the ethical review process, informed consent forms and confidentiality agreements. One officer stated that he was observing me in order to learn how to apply similar procedures in his own research. This reflected an appreciation for learning and academic standards, also borne out in the data, and a recognition of the status of higher education in Australia (and some other 'Western' universities).

I consider that my policing experience and attachment to an Australian university played a greater role than my gender in negotiating power relations, which (despite some differences in circumstances) was also the case for Belur (2014) in India. Notwithstanding, 'researching while female' can have both advantages and disadvantages. Horn (1997) suggested being a female researcher in a male-dominated police organisation may lead to being seen as an 'ineffectual' spy, not savvy enough to gain credibility. She revisits her doctoral research where probationers refused to complete a survey despite senior-level approval (Horn, 1997). Conversely, Horn (1997) proposes that, in cases where a woman is perceived as 'unthreatening', male officers may volunteer information more readily than they would to another man. I cannot be sure of the extent to which such cases may be applicable to my research, although I suspect both would apply at various stages or simultaneously.

Scholarship and advocacy

Gender is a major theme of the present study, and how police officers perceive the role and status of women in policing was of specific interest. My research proposal approved by the MPS explicitly stated the study aimed to investigate barriers to the expansion of women in policing. Personal communication with Police Academy staff indicated this was an area that warranted attention in a changing Vietnamese society (notwithstanding, it was also a palatable research topic in a politically sensitive environment), and it is commendable that the police approved my research knowing that I was an advocate for changing the official policy on women's recruitment.

Social science scholars debate the role of advocacy in research; some warn against it while others argue it may be unavoidable or even desirable (Becker, 1967). In her book, *An Unquiet Mind*, professor and psychiatrist Kay Redfield Jamison writes: 'It is an awful prospect, giving up one's cloak of academic objectivity. But, of course, my work has been tremendously colored by my emotions and experiences' (Jamison, 1996, p. 203). Jamison was referring to her own struggles with mental illness whilst working as a professional in the field. I felt curious but emotionally detached during interviews and discussions with police on topics such as policing structures and training approaches. However, when it came to issues of gender I became more engaged and found myself challenging views more vehemently where issues of gender discrimination arose. I often found it confronting when women stated they had little interest in having equal opportunities to men, opportunities which I believed could empower women and help them reach higher ranks associated with higher income, status, decision-making powers and influence. While overall there was a range of views concerning gender (see Chapter 8), I felt torn between my views on gender equality and imposing these views onto women in a different cultural context.

As a former police officer – and foreigner – I was often the subject of curiosity and seen as a source of information about policing in another country. Interviewees asked about the type of police work I undertook and, given the divergent roles men and women usually undertake in Vietnam, my explanation of women's involvement in operational policing was often met with surprise. I

explained that, in Victoria, Australia, all police academy graduates had to complete two years of general duties which included going on patrol in a vehicle or on foot, attending and doing initial investigation at crime scenes, responding to violent incidents such as armed robberies and domestic violence, investigating drug and alcohol issues, dealing with traffic incidents and collisions, and responding to mental health concerns in the community. I also explained that I worked in Criminal Investigation Units or taskforces where I assisted in investigating more serious crimes including murder, rape, gang violence and drug trafficking (including purchasing drugs as an undercover police officer).

In giving a description of policing in Australia, I hoped to convey the breadth of work women officers perform in contrast to Vietnamese police. However, in doing so, I created a contradiction: most interviewees enquired as to why I was doing my PhD on policing instead of continuing to work as a police officer. I explained I suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of exposure to life-threatening incidents involving wrestling offenders with firearms and distressing scenes of traffic fatalities, so I preferred to research policing instead. In the first instance, I was not prepared for this question. In the interest of authenticity, I answered honestly. This question usually came at the end of an interview where I would invite interviewees to ask me any question they liked. Their responses to questions on women in policing had already been discussed and I was therefore not influencing their views. Where interviewees expressed a view that women were not physically or psychologically suited to frontline police work, it is possible that their hearing my experience confirmed rather than challenged this view. Additionally, I felt compelled to be upfront because, in that first instance, interpreters who were present knew why I had left policing, so I felt it could have, in their eyes, affected my integrity if I appeared to be concealing a truth (which, albeit, could have been explained later). Nonetheless, after the first instance, I decided to respond truthfully whenever asked, especially given I was naturally hoping they were being truthful with me. The benefits of being oneself during fieldwork, as noted by Dixon (2011), relieves pressure associated with being ‘on stage’ or pretending to be someone else, which may be easily unpicked, particularly when dealing with police. I certainly found this to be the case and would have felt deceptive if I had done otherwise.

Research methods and design

A qualitative approach was used to address the following questions:

1. What are the historical, political, economic, social and cultural influences which shape policing and police culture in Vietnam?
2. How do structural and cultural influences affect the nature of women's inclusion in policing in Vietnam?
3. What are the theoretical and policy implications of the findings?

I employed document analysis, interviews and observation as the means by which I would gather data. The research design draws on the utility of the ethnographic method commonly employed in the study of policing and police culture. Ethnography is both a methodology and an analytical approach to the study of culture. It uses in-depth, semi-structured and informal interviews alongside participant observation and the compilation of detailed field notes. Geertz (1973) noted the subjectivity of ethnography because it is only through the process of interpretation and writing of what is observed, using 'thick description', is data produced.

In his study of police socialisation, Van Maanen (1973, p. 5) argued that in order to 'gain insight into the police environment, researchers must penetrate the official smokescreen and observe directly the social action in social situations which, in the final analysis, represents the reality of police work'. According to Van Maanen (2011, p. 1), 'an ethnography is written representation of a culture (or selected aspects of a culture)'. The process of interpreting, coding and decoding what has been observed by the researcher is essential in ethnography whereby meaning is attached to data only when it takes written form. Central to the process of ethnography is the practice of 'reflexivity'. As Grbich (2004, p. 28) explains, 'self-reflexivity involves a heightened awareness of the self in the process of knowledge creation, a clarification of how one's beliefs have been socially constructed (self-revelation) and how these values are impacting on interaction and data collection in the research setting'.

Whilst some observational approaches to research rely on pre-determined check-boxes to record behaviour – enabling a quantitative analysis – ethnography seeks

to determine facts or interpretations about a particular culture which are yet to be discovered, requiring an openness to what is being observed. To support this approach, Chan (2012) produced a useful 'Guide for observers' for her research on police culture and professionalism in Australia. The guide covers the following areas: the purpose of the observation, what to observe, how to take field notes and a list of useful techniques which provided important guidance for compiling a fieldwork diary for this study.

The following sections will provide the rationale for the selected study site, a description of the research methods used which constitute the qualitative approach for the research, along with considerations regarding data analysis, ethics approval and study limitations.

Selection of the study site

The selection of the study site was determined based on my previous experience and contacts with the People's Police Force. Although the present study refers to policing in Vietnam, it is more correct to refer to policing in Hanoi and northern Vietnam given that fieldwork was based only in the north. Centuries of migration patterns reveal a relatively stable and Chinese-influenced population in the north, compared with the south where migratory flows were more prominent and diverse. Furthermore, the experiences of French colonialism and the American War in the north and south may have shaped the broad regions differently. It is important to recognise that conclusions drawn from this data set may not be applicable to policing in southern (or central) Vietnam.

Document review

A review of documents relating to policing takes account of the regulatory framework governing police authority and accountability structures, organisational policies which aim to guide police work, and the content and nature of police training as per the documents listed in (a)-(c) below. Grey literature and open source material as set out in (d) below was used to examine the relative status of police, policing and the policed. Whilst efforts were made to source information in Vietnamese, valuable documents in French, Chinese, Japanese

and Russian were also available for review, reflecting Vietnam's colonial and fluid history.

a) Laws, policies, decrees, ordinances and regulations to understand the regulatory framework for police in Vietnam.

b) Policies and regulations to better understand the structure and organisation of public security institutions.

c) Curricula and training documents used to educate police students for their tertiary (Academy) qualifications.

d) Grey literature and open source material regarding policing and security in Vietnam.

Systematic review of relevant documentation is limited by the fact that many official documents pertaining to the MPS and the PPF may be regarded as state secrets. It is worth noting that, during the course of my research, more documents and information about the MPS (including the police) were made publicly available. Furthermore, translations of some regulations, policies and curriculum were not available and limited time and financial resources were directed towards translating key documents, constraining the breadth of the review. For example, the three-volume (official) *History of the Vietnamese People's Police* (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c) is almost 1000 pages in length and only some sections were translated in full.

Access to documents about police and crime statistics was limited. Requests for information were often met with suspicion. Sometimes the response I received to requests was 'they would look into it', but information was not provided. I would sometimes interpret this as a passive way to refuse access without actually saying so, in which case I would stop asking. Sometimes people would tell me information was 'secret', yet when I asked others the information was provided; this gave an insight into how individuals perceived risk and the status of information.

Ethics approval

The President of the People's Police Academy gave written approval for the study following advice from the Deputy Minister for Public Security. The University of New South Wales (UNSW) provided ethics approval. The People's Police Academy does not have a research ethics body and so in-country ethics approval was obtained from the Internal Review Board of the Institute for Social Development Studies, a non-governmental, non-profit organisation registered under the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is a useful way for parties to a research project to agree on the parameters and conduct of data collection beyond ethical approval. An MoU was not developed for this study although it would likely have been helpful to identify and address some critical issues, particularly around participant confidentiality and access to field sites. In contrast, personal communication with scholars of police in nation states, where informal or opaque decision-making processes can override official documentation, suggested the lack of an MoU may be advantageous as both researchers and internal gatekeepers navigate invisible and shifting boundaries.

Approval from the Ministry of Public Security

There were some delays in receiving an official response to my request for approval to conduct the research. I was unsure whether delays in receiving the approval letter was a cause for concern even though I was advised the approval was 'in progress'. In 2015, I decided to travel to Vietnam on my own initiative to make myself available for a personal meeting with PPA officials. Within days of arriving, I was invited to the academy to collect the Letter of Support signed by the Rector of the PPA in person. While there, police officers suggested I could practise my questions and interview a group of female police students. Though I was surprised by this offer, I returned the next day to join a circle of five female police students at varying stages of their training. Four staff supervised the discussion, one of whom placed her mobile phone clearly on the table and recorded the discussion. The two-hour discussion canvassed a number of topics including: reasons for joining the police; family history in policing, if any;

curriculum; and career aspirations. Despite one student being quite shy, the others responded with a range of views with some expressing frustration at the limited opportunities available to female students at the academy. As this meeting took place prior to receiving ethics approval, the content of the discussion is not included in the analysis in following chapters. I wondered if it was a test as to whether my questions for the proposed research were acceptable and appropriate or, rather, not unduly intrusive on sensitive issues. I sensed relief and a more relaxed attitude among the staff who observed the exchange as they had made it clear to me that this was the first time the academy was going to allow a foreigner to undertake research on the organisation and alluded that their facilitation of the research may have repercussions (presumably for their own reputations) if the research had undue findings. Whilst the ethical requirements as set out in the Participant Information Statement and Consent Form stated unequivocally that participants would not be questioned about criminality, which could compromise them or others, the self-censorship on the part of participants was both a source of relief and frustration: relief because it unburdened me of the task of censorship in the process of writing up, and frustration because of the gaps it left in my data, especially where I felt my questions were non-threatening or risky.

Observation

The study involved participant observation intermittently over a six-month period in 2016 (and a brief visit in 2017) principally at the People's Police Academy, as well as interactions with serving and retired police and other stakeholders off site. A Field Research Safety Protocol was submitted to the Human Research Ethics Committee at UNSW. The Protocol says I would be accompanied by an officer from the International Co-operation Department (ICD) at the PPA 'at all times' (as stated at the time they granted approval for my research). However, within a few weeks, I was sometimes accompanied only by a police student and allowed to enter the front gates of the academy unaccompanied and made my way through the academy to the meeting room where interviews were conducted or sit in the café on the campus by myself in between interviews. It appears that the provision for being accompanied by an officer from the ICD may have been stated initially

as a precaution on the part of the Police Academy as it was the first time a foreigner had been approved to conduct research of this kind in Vietnam. The initial supervision became less frequent. I believed they were assessing the nature of the interviews and, once they were satisfied with my conduct, their oversight was no longer necessary.

The original research proposal included observation at police stations. Several ward police (*công an phường*) chiefs who heard about my study through their networks verbally agreed to let me observe their officers on duty and on patrol if approval was given by senior levels of the MPS. One station leader said I could observe his officers on duty but only if I was accompanied by an approved police interpreter in uniform, which appeared to be a condition meant to convey, either internally or externally, that the activity had official sanction. I found this interesting because, as a blonde white woman, it is impossible to be anything other than conspicuous among Vietnamese police. I prepared letters seeking approval to visit the specific stations where the chiefs had agreed to participate in the research, however, these were not passed up through the chain of command. One liaison officer explained the reason for the blockage was that I might 'see too much'.[18] Given throughout the research there was variation in how rules were interpreted and applied, it is possible that, with more time – and trust – access may have been negotiated, but it was not achievable within the timeframe available for fieldwork, if at all.

I rented accommodation close to the centre of Hanoi. In the past I usually rented a motor scooter for a flat monthly fee (about $40), but this time (arguably where it could have been convenient and cost effective) I decided to take a taxi (car) to and from the academy. Depending on traffic congestion, this could take 35 minutes to over an hour, and cost between AUD$7-20 each way. This added significant cost to the research but allowed me to prepare for interviews on the way and write notes on the way home. Officers were often concerned that I was wasting money on taxis and would sometimes flag down colleagues at the end of the day to ask if they would give me a ride home to help me save money. This

[18] Cram (2018) explores the positionality of police participants and provides interesting insights on how different police sub-cultures can render them more hostile or receptive to being involved in policing research.

also provided an opportunity to converse with police otherwise not involved in the study which helped with informal data gathering and background information contributing to the context for policing. Although my movements may have been monitored, there appeared to be an ad hoc approach to who would drive me home, indicating a departure from the rigid structured supervision I was warned about at the outset of the study.

Over the course of my research, I encountered a number of hurdles in regard to the use of observation as a method to gather data on policing in Vietnam. Access was limited by time constraints and a partial language barrier. I was able to observe police students in training at the Academy and the training environment. This included activities such as martial arts and marching on the parade ground, some classes (for brief periods and without an interpreter), recreation and meal times on and off campus, formal events, including a graduation ceremony and anniversary celebrations. In addition to police-specific activities, I paid attention to political, cultural and social dimensions which helped me understand the wider context for policing in Vietnam. I triangulated data from observations where possible through the use of techniques to improve validity, for example, conducting formal interviews after observation to clarify any issues, and obtaining written official documents or other sources to further support or corroborate evidence.

The local practice of having a 'nap' or break in the middle of the day was helpful in that I was able to use the time (between noon and 2 p.m.) to write up notes or spend time between interviews in the academy where informal discussions could take place. (I wrote fieldnotes both by hand in notebooks and on my laptop computer. The detail and quality of my fieldnotes varied (depending on my capacity due to ill health – see below) as sometimes they were made in dot point to assist recall when I had more time to write in full. I read 'Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes' (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011) in preparation for fieldwork which I found extremely useful. It helped me prepare for different ways of interpreting what I observed and what I recorded in my writing, for example, by deliberately turning my attention to the textures, spaces and moods of particular environments or interactions as suggested by the authors).

According to Salemink (2014), the concept of the 'field' can be expanded to include 'scholarly and political terrain' encountered by the researcher even when not in the 'field', that is, not the geographic site under study but rather, for example, at their research institution in their home country.[19] Social media are increasingly being used as a source of data to study social phenomena. Whilst social media sources were not used in a systematic way to gather data for this study, it was useful to observe some aspects of policing given that the state controls much of the media, and police transgressions are rarely exposed through formal channels without Party approval. Many people in Vietnam try to get around internet firewalls to access censored information in the country and to avoid surveillance. In 2018, large protests broke out after the Government announced it intended to pass legislation which would require platforms, including Facebook and Google, to host user data inside Vietnam.

Semi-structured interviews

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 1), 'the qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation'. One benefit of the semi-structured interview is that it enables a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee which allows probing questions to elicit rich data or even present new information to challenge a particular point of view.

The study used purposive and snowballing techniques to identify participants. As per Table 1 below, interviewees included police students, academy lecturers and managers, operational police, retired officers and other professionals, international commentators and other social networks. Formal and informal interviews were conducted with other stakeholders although the data from those interviews are not presented in the thesis, they helped by providing background information and refining interview questions.

Table 1. Sample of police interviewees

[19] Or other place, as ethnographies have increasingly explored cultures within domestic borders or sites familiar to the researcher.

Police interviewees	Students	Officers	Total
Female	11	7	**18**
Male	10	9	**19**
Total	21	16	**37**

The target population included:

(i) Police officers (serving and retired) in the Hanoi metropolitan area – the criteria for inclusion were:

- Officers with current or former experience in operational duties, investigations, administration, supervision or management regarding: Criminal Police, Criminal Investigation, Traffic Policing, Anti-Narcotics Investigations, Environmental Crimes, Economic Crimes, Forensic Science, English language, Martial Arts, Student Management, and State Management and Administration.
- Knowledge and experience regarding the strategic direction of police in Vietnam.
- Knowledge and experience of police education system and training across specialist and core curriculum.
- Knowledge and experience of issues relating to the Women's Union and women in policing.

(ii) Students at the People's Police Academy – the criteria for selection were:

- A mixture of males and females undertaking subjects including Criminal Police, Criminal Investigation, Traffic Policing, Environmental Crimes, Economic Crimes, Forensics, English language and Administration; representing urban and rural backgrounds.[20] Included a mixture of students across the 1-5-year degree program.

(iii) Professionals, experts, academics and observers of public security issues in Vietnam – the criteria for selection were:

[20] The initial proposal sought to interview students from ethnic minorities. A liaison officer said there were few students from ethnic minorities and that to be interviewed by a foreigner would be 'sensitive' for both the student and the organisation. I did not pursue this.

- Knowledge of public security issues in Vietnam, e.g., officials from international law enforcement agencies, i.e., United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; international agencies, i.e., United Nations Development Program, Human Rights Watch; international visiting academics or trainers working with the People's Police Academy; local Vietnamese academics engaged in police studies; representatives from local and international non-government organisations and civil society who engage with police on public security issues.

The People's Police Academy has a regulation that any staff or student contact with a foreigner (inside or outside of training hours or facilities) must be reported to a supervisor. A non-negotiable condition of the research was that the names of all PPA staff and students interviewed were to be recorded and made available to the academy to abide by this regulation. While this presents concerns for participant anonymity and confidentiality, interviewees were aware of this regulation and the reporting requirement prior to giving consent to an interview (see section below on data integrity).

At the PPA, the liaison officers were given a list of criteria for selecting interview participants. The liaison officers then contacted the heads of relevant departments explaining the purpose of the research and to ask them (or their delegate) to seek expressions of interest from staff and students who met the criteria provided to participate in an interview. Snowball sampling was used where participants nominated someone else who met the selection criteria. On one occasion, an interpreter asked the student at the conclusion of an interview if he could recommend someone else to be part of the research. The student said he thought one of his friends might be interested. The interpreter encouraged him to telephone his friend immediately whilst in my presence to arrange a time. Although the friend did not answer the call, the process indicated that potential participants were not necessarily vetted (by senior officers) prior to being invited to speak to me. On most occasions a liaison officer or interpreter arranged the appointments and interview rooms on site at the academy, however, where it was convenient for the interviewee I would meet them offsite, in a café or private residence.

Only two student interviewees declined to allow their interviews to be audio recorded. In a sensitive political environment, interviewees may have considered audio recording would ensure an accurate record of interview thereby putting them at ease. Where a person was interviewed more than once, subsequent interviews were not uniformly audio recorded.

Due to the nature of observation, it was impracticable to seek written and informed consent from all police recruits, staff or officers as this may number more than hundreds or thousands. During the course of the research, many informal discussions with police or people with close police connections took place in a range of social and professional settings.

Purposive sampling of professionals, experts, academics and observers of public security issues in Vietnam was sought by the researcher. Potential interviewees were invited to participate in the study and were provided a Participant Information Statement and Consent form in Vietnamese or English. An interpreter was used if necessary. The regulation of the Police Academy regarding the reporting of staff and student contact with a foreigner does not apply to participants outside the Police Academy and their involvement does not have to be reported to the International Co-operation Department, thus protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of their involvement. Interviews with participants in this category were conducted at a location of their choice, usually an office or café.

Interview data was collected in several ways:

a. Direct quote from Vietnamese participant <u>spoken</u> in English to researcher and recorded using notes where English capability was variable.

b. Direct quote from Vietnamese participant <u>written</u> in English to researcher online and recorded as written including grammatical flaws.

c. Quote from Vietnamese participant <u>spoken</u> in Vietnamese to researcher and recorded using notes written (often using a combination of English and Vietnamese) at the time or from

memory after the conversation took place and paraphrased where necessary.

d. Interpreted by Vietnamese person with variable English capability. Here, it is assumed to an extent that the participant spoke with correct grammar in their native language but that the limitations of the interpreter meant it was reported to the researcher with grammatical errors. Where the interview was audio recorded, these were reviewed and corrected.

Data analysis

Data collected from all sources were analysed by examining the themes from policing literature in other countries and identifying broad similarities and differences with the data from Vietnam. Particular attention was given to areas of difference so that new themes or new relationships between themes were identified and explored. The data was collated manually according to themes. Notably, the themes identified regarding gender in policing (Chapter 8) remained quite stable throughout the process and resembled many issues identified in Western literature. In contrast, the analysis regarding becoming and working as a police officer (Chapters 6 and 7) was adapted numerous times as new themes emerged which diverged from orthodox literature on police culture. The process included sifting through hand-written and typed field notes, photographs, and online sources as well as interview transcripts and sorting them progressively according to emerging themes (Seidel, 1998).

Research costs

On advice from the Vietnamese Consulate in Sydney, to obtain a visa, the PPA had to lodge an application on my behalf with the Department of Immigration. I was issued a three-month education visa, which I extended for a further three months in-country through the PPA's International Co-ordination Department for the standard fee of approximately AUD$240 in total.

UNSW provided AUD$5000 towards the cost of flights, accommodation, translation and some equipment (audio recorder and printer). The researcher contributed personally where there was a shortfall in expenses.

Most interviews were conducted at the participant's place of work, during work hours, and so compensation for time or incidental costs were unnecessary.[21] Due to security concerns, the People's Police Academy provided interpreters who were either students or staff at no cost (although there were issues around availability and potential risks for data integrity, as further discussed below). Where interviews took place outside the academy, in many cases, participants paid for drinks or meals (usually between AUD$1.50-20), insisting that I was a guest in their country and that it was polite for them to pay on my behalf. In several cases, interviewees said they preferred to pay because it was the proper manner for a man to do so for a woman even though the meeting was at my request. One added that he would feel embarrassed in front of the waitress to have a woman pay for his meal (a $2 bowl of soup). At the conclusion of the fieldwork, some key facilitators for the study were dined at the researcher's expense to thank them for their support.

Limitations

This was the first study of its kind on Vietnamese police, and the first to receive official endorsement at the Ministerial level. Like other law enforcement agencies, the Vietnamese police were cautious about what information would be accessible to an external researcher. In spite of its useful and original contribution to the literature on the global South, there are a number of limitations to the research, which are discussed below.

Informed consent, data integrity and presenting a social reality

As I was about to start my interviews, I was told I had to provide a list of participants to the President of the Police Academy. I was informed there were specific regulations related to monitoring police interactions with foreigners which

[21] Ethics approval provided for $10 reimbursement for interviewees although it was not expended.

I had not identified during my discussions with the liaison officers prior to arriving in Hanoi. I had to seek a modification to approve these new limitations on confidentiality and anonymity and I am grateful to my supervisors for addressing these with the ethics committee at UNSW in my absence. A modification request for the participant information, consent and confidentiality process was approved after it was emphasised to the ethics committee that, for police in Vietnam, surveillance of their interactions with foreigners was a routine condition and, therefore, not exceptional.

To ensure participants consented voluntarily and willingly, especially given the limitations on anonymity and confidentiality, interviewees at the PPA were informed that it was a requirement of the International Co-operation Department to supply a report about the research to the Rector of the Police Academy, which may include the names of Police Academy staff and student participants and, possibly, some of the content of the interview. At the end of fieldwork, a report summarising some of the findings was provided to the academy. It did not include the names of participants. The interpreters and liaison officers signed a Confidentiality Agreement in the presence of the participant or explained to the participant that the interpreter had already signed one which confirmed the interpreter would not release any information or discuss any information with anyone 'unless in accordance with a direction from the Rector of the People's Police Academy'. The right for interviewees to withdraw at any time was emphasised; they did not have to answer every question if they chose not to for any reason, nor have to explain the reason for not answering.

However, when conditions of anonymity and confidentiality are removed, there are implications for honesty and openness which may affect the integrity of the data. I have paid close attention to information used to identify who is quoted so as to mitigate risk of them being identified by people outside the Police Academy. Recognising that the perspective of students may change between their first and fourth year,[22] I have not stated their year level to protect their identity. Lecturers have not had their departmental affiliation recorded for similar reasons, as some departments may be small and leave participants identifiable. One drawback of

[22] 2016 was the final year for five-year police degrees. I refer to fourth-year students as final year as most students will graduate under the new regulations. See Chapter 5 for more details.

this practice is that removing identifying data relating to participants' experience and specialist fields may adversely affect meaning and obscure important descriptors informing a specific viewpoint, as argued by Salemink (2014) who weighed the importance of protecting participants with presenting meaningful insights.

Participant responses may have been influenced by the fact they had been informed that their responses *may* be reported to the President of the Police Academy. For example, some participants' responses were at odds with information sourced from other literature or open sources, which could indicate a concern for the requirement to report to the President. The circumstances of the police shape the way they express themselves and reflects the theoretical framework informing this study – that the notion of the 'field', as described by Bourdieu (1990a) and Chan (1997) produces and shapes the habitus (dispositions) of police. For example, one male student apologised for being unable to answer some questions by responding, 'I'm sorry that I can't be more open with you'. Another male student was more explicit about the limitations he experienced:

> I haven't been totally honest with you … but the anxiety I feel in not telling you the truth is overwhelmed by my anxiety about saying anything bad about the government or Party. We are taught not to show weakness, only to show our strengths. If as police, we show weakness, people might use it against us and manipulate us. So, we always have to act like everything is working well, even though it may not be. (Police student, male)

Police interview responses that accord with the 'official line' are reported elsewhere (Rowe, 2007) and not unique to Vietnam, although broader cultural parameters may shape the extent to which police officers deviate from what they perceive as acceptable to senior officers (Belur, 2014). The fact that some students and officers apologised for not feeling able to provide more detail or insights demonstrated an unexpected opening in the police culture. That they were actively reflecting on the constraints and possible consequences of

expressing certain perspectives reveals a sense of agency amongst some of the students and officers. Accounts provided by research participants to ethnographers are a presentation of their social reality. Van Maanen (2011, p. 28) emphasises that 'culture is not strictly speaking a scientific object', it is an active creation which is interpreted and written into an ethnography for the reader who may well have their own interpretation of the text and reflect the findings as I have presented them in the following chapters.

Interpretation and translation

An overall limitation of the study was that the Police Academy would not allow an external and independent interpreter which would have aided accuracy. The research was endorsed by the Deputy Minister of Public Security on the condition that a staff member from the International Co-operation Department (or appointed liaison officers) accompany the researcher whilst undertaking fieldwork at the Police Academy (although in practice I was often left unaccompanied). Any accompanying staff or students were required to sign a confidentiality agreement regarding their involvement in the research. Participants were informed of the requirement for International Co-operation Department staff (or their nominee) to be present during interviews and were informed that they do not have to participate if this arrangement is of concern to them. However, it must be noted that in-country fieldwork supervisor, Dr Khuất Thị Hải Oanh, advised me during a consultation that an accompanying police officer is likely to put participants at ease rather than inhibit their involvement; this view is supported by Sowerwine (2004) who thought having an official and approved 'research assistant' meant villagers may have felt more comfortable speaking with her, as well as acting as a form of protection for her from potential claims of pursuing 'politically sensitive' information.

Another limitation is that languages do not necessarily translate directly, and interpreters may not interpret exactly what the English speaker or Vietnamese speaker says but rather an account which encompasses the 'meaning' of what is being said. This means that the interpreter can have a significant impact on how questions are understood and their subsequent responses. In the context of how this study was conducted, the hectic schedule of meetings at the Police Academy

one day and commencing interviews the next, I did not brief interpreters on interview questions prior to the interviews. As interpreters were rotated based on their availability, it was not uncommon for me to meet the interpreter at the same time as the participant. After the first week of interviews, which were conducted in rapid succession, I had time to discuss with the interpreters the aims of the research as well as to explain some terms and definitions in more depth. Furthermore, the occasional use of student interpreters with senior staff members may have influenced how certain questions were framed, especially given that direct translations from English to Vietnamese may not necessarily capture correct 'meaning' and that the supervisor-subordinate relationship may further affect how or what meaning is conveyed.

The use of a police officer or student as an interpreter may have had an effect on the openness of interviewees. Though local advice was that a police officer employed as interpreter would make participants more comfortable, it is not clear from this research to what extent this was the case. On one occasion an interpreter sought to reassure an interviewee by saying: 'Be more flexible, give more information. The project is approved by the MPS [Ministry of Public Security] so don't worry'. Although interviews were audio recorded, having an interpreter present may have been a form of insurance against fear of being misquoted or accused of releasing confidential information. When participating in a recorded interview, one Police Academy lecturer, who also acted as interpreter for others, requested another officer interpret the interview. When asked why he wanted his own interpreter when his English was quite good, he replied that he was worried his English wasn't good enough to express his thoughts as clearly as he wanted (he participated in a two-hour interview and provided detailed responses). Indeed, the new interpreter had excellent English, and although the interviewee in this case went on to interpret further interviews for me, it seems he was less concerned about his accuracy in conveying to me the ideas of others compared with his own – if that was, indeed, the reason for the presence of a third person. This apparent anxiety, of either their level of proficiency in English or being alone with me in an interview, was not apparent with several other students and officers who would try their best to speak English without others present.

Ethnography or espionage

The motivations of police researchers are often regarded with suspicion by those being studied, in part due to the potential to report misconduct (Chan, 2012; Chan et al., 2003; Dixon, 2011; Marks, 2005; Westmarland, 2001). One police officer remarked that he was not sure whether I was a spy. Although he did not seek a response from me, I wondered what the difference was. I asked: 'Why would someone want to spy on the police in Vietnam?' He responded: 'I don't know. Maybe to go back to report to their government'. That he was concerned less with the prospect of reporting to immediate line managers or a domestic body than with how information may potentially be used by a government abroad may indicate that the scope associated with risk aversion is wide, and inclusive of a foreign audience, rather than the more proximate possibility of internal (police) repercussions. However, I was unsure of the depth of his concern about 'spying' or whether his uncertainty was genuine.

In many studies, police culture is viewed pejoratively, as something that facilitates or entrenches poor practices and conduct (Dean, 1995; Goldsmith, 1990; Greene, 2000; Paoline, 2003; Reiner, 2010). In light of this, I did not emphasise 'culture' as a core part of the research in my initial discussions with the Vietnamese police. It was instructive, then, when an officer insisted culture – particularly Vietnamese cultural identity – was central to my topic and a key consideration in how I interpreted my data. The historical context of Vietnam is important here. That culture in Vietnam can refer to both a high culture associated with inherited Confucian ideology, art and literature, as well as a way of 'doing things', appears to make the concept less laden with negativity than I had expected from reading the Anglo-American literature. As such, referring to 'culture' became a useful tool to enquire about practices and ideas in Vietnamese policing with a view to understanding and potentially allaying concerns about being a 'spy'.

I was aware of political sensitivities concerning the study of police in Vietnam and to avoid risks to participants and myself, I engaged in self-censorship when pursuing certain lines of questioning. My approach was inconsistent to the extent that it would often depend on how well I knew the interviewee and others present.

Self-censorship was frustrating because I would at times omit questions which, while not specifically related to my research questions, may have helped me understand the broader, often political, context of a topic under discussion. One participant, a person I considered a friend, accused me of straying from my research topic in response to a general – and, to me, relatively benign – question about Vietnamese society. Xu (2016) refers to self-censorship in researching police in China as an 'invisible hand' which subtly shapes the production of knowledge, especially since scholars have to consider prospects for publication when pursuing research topics. Petit (2014, p. 156) refers to researchers in post-socialist countries as 'experts' in self-censorship.

Self-censorship may be practiced at various points during research, for example, during fieldwork or in the dissemination of findings, to mitigate risks to in-country collaborators, researchers or officials who may potentially 'suffer severe consequences' (Petit, 2014, pp. 156-157). Negotiating positionality was a constant concern in the course of my research. The prospect of having official approvals withdrawn or being deported have been justifications for self-censorship by other scholars (Turner, 2014). I was surprised when warned by several well-placed and knowledgeable expatriates that I should take care in my research in order to avoid being deported. At no time have I considered my research to have encroached on issues warranting risk of deportation and therefore have not felt the need for concern – albeit, perhaps naïvely, as I discuss in Chapter 7. Nonetheless, I was cognisant to avoid some topics which were not central to my research. That is not to say talking about, for example, the Party and politics was off-limits but, rather, that I did not seek to question the one-party system as the legitimate political system for Vietnam.

Moral responsibility

This study specifically set out to explore perceptions of police officers and police culture. Though police culture is a product of the relationship between officers and the community, the views and experiences of the latter were not the focus of this study. To an extent, the proscription of my observation of police at stations communicated to me by my liaison officers provided me with some measure of immunity against a number of the ethical challenges faced by scholars whose

research involves community experiences of policing (Jauregui, 2013; Marks, 2005; Norris, 1993; Reiner, 2000; Rowe, 2007; Westmarland, 2001). Becker (1967) describes how criticism may be levelled at researchers who side with participants who may be deemed either 'deviant' or, conversely, those to people holding institutional power. However, a 'one-sided' view reflects immersive approaches to research which is justifiable as long as bias and subjectivity are acknowledged. One concern with taking an empathetic view when studying police in Vietnam is that, by portraying police as individuals with personal and family needs (rather than one-dimensional figures symbolic of the state) justifications for what may be considered as misconduct may risk giving legitimacy to illegal or unethical behaviour. For example, there may be different interpretations with respect to giving or receiving appreciation money, informal payments or bribery. Despite this, people who are persuaded or coerced into paying these 'fees' for police services (for example, processing paperwork) or to avoid even higher costs associated with violations (for example, traffic violations) likely feel aggrieved regardless of the police officer's personal circumstances.

In her study on police in Uttar Pradesh, India, Jauregui (2013) reflects on the role of ethnographer as she observed officers frequently inflicting violence on members of the community – as well as being victims of violence (and bribery) themselves. She calls for an ethical standpoint of 'strategic complicity' which acknowledges that the 'so-called "powerful" or authoritative agents … [who] often are not as hyper-empowered as they seem' (Jauregui, 2013, p. 147). Thus, Jauregui (2013, p. 147) argues that ethical engagement with police is a singular pursuit to critically engage with them at the same time they continue 'to exist and contribute to the building of knowledge with [their] own voice'. Belur (2014, p. 190) writes that her research in India simultaneously gave 'voice' to police officers while providing an opportunity to 'learn from good practice and avoid mistakes'. Whilst there is widespread knowledge of systemic corruption amongst public officials in Vietnam, there is also risk of exposing police involved in this study who discussed the topic with me. The findings seek to draw some attention to the oft-hidden explanations as to why police engage in such conduct.

Illness in the field

Illness is a factor which shapes a researcher's positionality in the field. It is not uncommon for researchers in a foreign country to suffer illness due to changes in their environment, food and water consumption, and, in less developed sites, hygiene. In this study, I suffered symptoms of PTSD for the entirety of my six months in the field. Having lived with the often-debilitating condition for more than ten years, I did not postpone my fieldwork even though symptoms worsened just prior to traveling to Hanoi. To some degree, I had anticipated (or hoped) the change in scenery might prompt a cessation to the pattern of experiencing series of consecutive days with little to no sleep and days (sometimes weeks) where I was frequently bedridden for extended periods. At the time, my social networks in Hanoi were as strong as they were in Sydney, having moved interstate (from Victoria) for my candidature at UNSW. During my frequent travel to Vietnam I also accessed psychological services a number of times and, in 2013, suffered four pelvic fractures in a traffic collision which involved a medical evacuation. I am thus infinitely more familiar with the country's hospital and health system than I had ever hoped to be. During my fieldwork I was also involved in a minor collision as a passenger on a motorbike taxi. I did not need medical treatment at the time, however, the following day I felt soreness around my pelvis and became concerned that I may have disrupted the previous injury. A subsequent X-ray showed there to be no fractures and the soreness dissipated within a week. A fellow Australian with a research interest in Vietnam once quipped that being involved in a traffic collision in-country was simply an occupational hazard.

Just as self-censorship has certain effects on research, so too, self-criticism can be a destabilising force in research. Naturally, researchers can be self-critical about many aspects of their work – from the quality and comprehensiveness of data collection to the interpretation and analysis of the data. In my case, I lament the extent that my PTSD symptoms affected my capacity to spend more time undertaking interviews or observation when it was available to me. During a particularly difficult time, I cancelled numerous interview appointments at the PPA in succession. I was worried that I not only appeared unprofessional and unreliable, but that it caused inconvenience for the interviewees and liaison officers facilitating the appointments. Eventually, I decided I needed to offer an

explanation. Thankfully, I had known some of the liaison officers for several years and, although they were aware that PTSD was the reason I was no longer a police officer, they were not aware that my symptoms were ongoing (usually periodic) nor how it affected my sleep and cognitive capacity. Although it was disconcerting to reveal details about my condition, I was humbled by their support, sincerity and their subsequent regular efforts to check on my welfare. Researchers can try to deliberately present themselves in particular ways with a view to accessing a deeper dialogue with specific audiences (Goldsmith, 2003; Smith, 2006; Turner, 2014, p. 8); sometimes a particular positionality may be the result of circumstance rather than deliberate choice. Whilst unplanned in my case, it is possible that demonstrating vulnerability as a researcher and exposing oneself as a multidimensional person strengthened relationships and rapport with some of those involved in this study.

Conclusion

The police involved in the study and I navigated our way through discussions about confidentiality, independence of the research, possibilities for censorship, and, written and unwritten rules. There was also uneven transparency about the fact the research was being undertaken at all. On some occasions I was on display as a VIP at a graduation ceremony and at other times informed to keep a low profile. In time, I hope that concerns are ameliorated as public security agencies view academic examination as an opportunity to improve the functions of policing for the benefit of both the community and the officers tasked with carrying out the work.

Throughout the following chapters, I have contextualised interview data with my observations and where possible triangulated data using documentary sources and other interview sources. Whilst I hope this research makes a valuable contribution to scholarship on policing in Vietnam, it is important to acknowledge its gaps and where it remains silent or vague.

Chapter 5: Overview of police history, structures and organisation in Vietnam

Introduction

In 2015, the 70th anniversary of the People's Police was marked by the re-opening and refurbishment of the Hanoi Police Museum in Lý Thường Kiệt Street. Among the illustrations displayed on the white building's painted translucent windows were a white dove (the international symbol of peace), the familiar face of Hồ Chí Minh, and a traffic police officer, dressed in modern attire, guiding an elderly man to safety. These illustrations hint at the story that unfolds inside: from the historic role of police in securing independence and peace for a country under siege to their present-day tasks of helping people to navigate the challenges posed by rapid economic development and changing urban life. Inside the museum, mannequins dressed in various iterations of police uniforms stand alongside a display of epaulettes indicating police ranks. The walls are adorned with maps, photographs and descriptions of people, places and events. The curation of artefacts emphasises what is important in the official history of the police: a faded typed page, dated September 1949, with the codes and ciphers used by secret agents of the Hanoi Police; the 1949 Hanoi Police 'Golden Book' of the actions of infiltrators; and wooden plates for creating false French papers. The exhibits pay tribute to the humble beginnings of the now national People's Police Force whose founding 'agents' were intelligent, meticulous, systematic and innovative (Fieldnotes, 2016).

The re-opening of the Hanoi Police Museum is one aspect of what Grossheim (2018, p. 449) argues is a deliberate campaign aimed at 'heroizing and romanticizing the history of the People's Public Security Forces – simultaneously legitimizing the VCP's [Vietnamese Communist Party] one-party rule'. In 2017, the People's Police Academy unveiled a statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, founder of the first socialist security apparatus in Russia (People's Police Academy, 2017d). The installation emphasises the Soviet-style roots of the security forces, police and Communist Party. It is an example of the way the Communist Party uses 'cultural projects' to shape a national identity which was the subject of debate as its forces prepared for the final defeat of the French in northern Vietnam in the

1940s-50s (G. E. Dutton et al., 2012; Ninh, 2002). The debates concerned the extent to which the past should be preserved 'in order to safeguard the future' or be destroyed in order to make way for a new future (Ninh, 2002, p. 57). History shows that both preservation and destruction occurred as well as a deliberate construction of a 'new' Vietnam.

This chapter focuses on the post-1945 period and the emergence of a police force similar to our Western understanding of police. It is important to note that Vietnam's long history, which dates back thousands of years, has been influenced by a blend of local and foreign ideas. What is 'Vietnamese' cannot easily be disentangled from these influences (see G. E. Dutton et al., 2012; Goscha, 2016a; Taylor, 2013). I draw on aspects of Vietnam's history to provide an overview of the field of policing,[23] including a history of the People's Police Force, its relationship to the political system and other institutions, formal and informal mechanisms for crime and social control, the legal and organisational framework, and an introduction to police recruitment policies and education.

The emergence of the People's Police Force

The Hanoi Police Museum (2017) honours police 'who were engaged in the fight against the traitors and the collaborators of the French and the Japanese in order to protect the Party and the revolutionary movements and participate in the insurrection of 1945'. Specifically, the museum pays tribute to police units including: 'Red Militia', 'Labour-peasants Militia', 'Honor Groups for the Repression of the Traitors', and 'Reconnaissance Groups', some of which operated in the decade or so leading up to the August 1945 overthrow of the colonial French forces in Hanoi under the leadership of Hồ Chí Minh. The actions of Vietnamese spies and use of force by organised groups fighting the French (and Japanese) on the basis of patriotism and nationalism, were the illegal beginnings of what would later become the Vietnamese People's Police Force (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995a, p. 11). As discussed in Chapter 2, the

[23] The principal focus of fieldwork for this study was in Hanoi, thus, the brief history provided here describes the development of police in northern Vietnam. For the development of a police force in the south see, among others, Rosenau (2005), Elkind (2016), and Hoyt (1956).

victory was short-lived and the French military won out again the following year, extending their rule for almost a decade (Thayer, 2010, 425). The date of the August Revolution, August 19, 1945,[24] is now a national holiday to celebrate police stipulated by law (National Assembly, 2014, Article 6). The remit of police in this period blended foreign and domestic security concerns. The official history of public security forces in the 1930-40s refers to their role in 'maintain[ing] order and security in the villages and communes' under the control of communist forces (Cổng thông tin điện tử Bộ Công an, 2018). However, it is noteworthy that the Hanoi Police Museum emphasises the 'revolutionary' activities of early police, as per the following summary, on display at the museum:

> The police were pioneers in the creation of networks in Hanoi: gaining information on the enemy, creating urban bases, starting operations to kill the traitors, for example: the elimination of Truong Dinh Tri [a traitor]. At the same time, they organized actions of espionage and counter-espionage in political and military circles and the French intelligence. (Hanoi Police Museum, 2017)

The first police unit took its name from its colonial designation, the Tonkin Security Police, established in 1945 in northern Vietnam.[25] The first formal proclamation of police authority came with Edict 23 (Sắc lệnh 23, 1946) which established the 'Việt Nam Công an Vụ' (Vietnam Public Security Service/Department). The edict gave jurisdiction for police to: detect information and documents relating to both internal and external national security threats; devise and implement strategies to prevent political disturbances from both Vietnamese and foreign persons; and to investigate and pursue suspects for prosecution in court (Sắc lệnh 23, 1946). Official documents describe the role of Vietnamese police and security services as being involved in educating the people about political ideology and Communist Party policies (Tổng Cục Cảnh

[24] One of the first signs inside the Hanoi Police Museum states under the heading '1945-1946, The Protection of the Revolutionary Government, On August 19th, 1945 the victorious revolution in Hanoi results in independence and liberty. This date is called: "Day of the Police" from the "Soviet Movement" in Nghệ-Tĩnh in 1930-31'.
[25] Also in August 1945 the Reconnaissance Service was established in central Vietnam and the National Self Defense in southern Vietnam (Hanoi Police Museum, 2015)

Sát Nhân Dân, 1995a). In 1946, a Decision was passed stipulating the organisational structure according to national, regional and provincial jurisdictions (Nghị định 121-NV/NĐ, 1946).

In 1953, Hồ Chí Minh signed Edict 141/SL (Sắc lệnh 141/SL, 1953) which upgraded the status of security apparatus to a sub-Ministry of Public Security (renamed the Ministry of Interior). The sub-Ministry comprised seven departments, among them the predecessor to the People's Police Force and a Department of Political Protection. Their tasks included fighting 'spies and reactionaries', protecting the national economy, counter and international espionage, eliminating 'social evils' and keeping public order and safety as well as managing prisons and 'educating prisoners' (Sắc lệnh 141/SL, 1953, Article 2).

In July 1956, Decision 982/TT (1956) established the People's Police which was tasked with building the force 'professionally, politically, militarily and culturally' (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995b). Further development of the structure and organisation were stipulated eight years later with Decree 34/LCT (1962). In 1981, Decision 250/CP established the General Police Department and set out different levels of administration for the national police force under the Ministry of Interior (later reverted to the Ministry of Public Security) (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995c, pp. 136-139). The police continue to develop to meet modern demands although the political roots of police are still celebrated. In 2015, the Government awarded the People's Police Force a Gold Star (for the fourth time) and paid tribute to the 'revolutionary heroes' and 'martyrs' who fought for national independence 70 years ago (Nhân Dân, 2015).

Police and the political system

The Police and the country's ruling Communist Party have been inextricably linked from the time of the August Revolution in 1945. In addition to policing crime and political opponents, they were also tasked with mobilising popular support for the Communist Party in the lead up to their 1954 defeat of French military forces in Điện Biên Phủ and of the American forces in 1975 (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995a). Under the Constitution, the police are considered as a 'well-trained

regular army' (2013, Article 67) and must be loyal to the political and government institutions. Reference to the police as an 'army' highlights the naissance of Vietnamese policing through the struggle against foreign occupation. Indeed, the Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014) jointly outlines the organisation, operations, functions, tasks and powers of police, the army and intelligence agencies in one proclamation. The Constitution outlines the centrality of loyalty to the Party:

> The people's armed forces must show absolute loyalty to the Fatherland, the People, the Party, and the State; their duty is to protect national independence and sovereignty, the country's unity and territorial integrity, national security and social order, to protect the People, the Party, the State, and the socialist regime and the fruits of the revolution, and to join the entire people in national construction and fulfilment of international duties. (2013, Article 65)

The relationship between the police and Party is made further explicit under the Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014) which states:

> The People's Public Security Forces are placed under the absolute, direct and comprehensive leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the supreme command of the State President, the unified management by the Government and the direct command and management by the Public Security Minister. (National Assembly, 2014, Article 5.1)

Opposition to the Party is a crime (National Assembly, 2015a, Article 109). The revised Criminal Code prohibits activities which oppose the Government and Party, or disseminates distorted or fabricated information about the state (Article 117).[26] The implications for policing are that the policing of anti-Government

[26] These powers were used against pro-democracy activists, notably 'Bloc 8406' where, in 2006, activists were arrested and eventually sentenced to imprisonment for their campaign (C. A. Thayer, 2009b, 2014). Since 2006, anti-Government sentiment has expanded from a narrow pro-democracy focus to target other aspects of discontent among the population, particularly

sentiment requires surveillance and intervention for 'making, storing, spreading information, materials, items for the purpose of opposing' the state (Article 117). The relationship between the police and government is such that anti-police sentiment equates to anti-government sentiment which means that people critical of police may be committing a crime.

Codes of ethics for police

Codes of ethics or conduct are sources of authority to guide the ethical decisions and actions of police. In Vietnam, there are three main guides which have evolved over time. Hồ Chí Minh first set out standards for conduct in 1948 with 'Uncle Hồ's 6 Teachings to the Public Security Forces'.

> A cadre should be 'industrious, economical, honest, [and] correct; kind and helpful toward colleagues; absolutely loyal toward the government; respectful and polite toward the people; devoted to his work; [and] resolute and clever vis-à-vis the enemy.' (Hồ Chí Minh, 2000, pp. 404-405)

The six teachings continue to be featured prominently in official publications and ceremonies, especially since the 70th anniversary of the police in 2015 (Lời Bác dạy giúp hoàn thiện phẩm chất người chiến sĩ công an, 2018). In 1954, after the French had been defeated and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam established, a notice was printed in the newspaper 'Nhân Dân' (*The People*) outlining rules of behaviour (Ten Disciplines) for the Ministry of Interior, its cadres and public employees. These included: the protection of public property and warnings against arbitrary arrest (except of those who continue to oppose the government and people), taking bribes or keeping seized money or property, engaging in drinking alcohol or gambling, going to a salon (i.e. bar) or harassing women, among others (Nhân Dân, 1954).[27]

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environmental degradation, corruption and handling of the relationship with China – especially disputed sovereignty in the South China Sea (East Sea) (Thayer, 2014).

[27] A slightly revised version was later published in the *History of the Vietnamese People's Police* by the Ministry of Interior (Tổng Cục Cảnh Sát Nhân Dân, 1995a, pp. 174-175).

In 2008, the Minister of Public Security issued Decision 09/2008/QĐ-BCA (Bộ trưởng Bộ Công an, 2008) to update the '5 Oaths' and '10 Disciplines', last revised in 1997. The 5 Oaths of the Vietnamese People's Police Force are similar to the first five (of six) 'obligations and responsibilities' found in Article 30 of the Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014). All six are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Obligations and responsibilities of People's Public Security officers, non-commissioned officers and men

1.	To be absolutely loyal to the Fatherland, the People, the Party and the State.
2.	To strictly abide by the line of the Party, policies and laws of the State, regulations of the People's Public Security Forces, and directives and orders of their superiors.
3.	To be honest, brave, vigilant and ready to fight and fulfil all assigned tasks.
4.	To respect and protect the lawful rights and interests of agencies, organisations and individuals; to maintain close contact with the People; to dedicatedly serve the People, to respect and be polite to the People.
5.	To regularly study to raise their political, legal, scientific-technical and professional levels; to temper their revolutionary quality, sense of organisation and discipline and physical strength.
6.	To be answerable before law and their superiors for their own orders, the execution of their superiors' orders and the performance by their subordinates. Upon receipt of commanders' orders, if having grounds to believe that such orders are unlawful, to immediately report them to the persons who have issued the orders; if still having to obey the orders, to promptly report them to the immediate superiors of the order issuers and to bear no responsibility for the consequences of the execution of such

orders.

Source: National Assembly (2014) Article 30.

The 10 Disciplines of the People's Public Security Forces (Bộ trưởng Bộ Công an, 2008) expand on and revise those first published in 1954 and are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Ten Disciplines of the People's Public Security Forces

Article 1.

Public Security officers and soldiers must not have any word or act which can affect the prestige and honour of the Motherland and the Vietnam Communist Party, or harm the stability and strength of the State of the Social Republic of Vietnam, or bring discredit to the People's Public Security Forces' honour and tradition.

Article 2.

Public Security officers and soldiers must absolutely comply with and fully implement the People's Public Security Forces' regulations, always be ready to receive and successfully fulfil their assigned tasks.

Article 3.

Public Security officers and soldiers must strictly observe the law, regulations and instructions regarding secrecy and confidentiality of the Party, the State and the People's Public Security Forces.

Article 4.

Public Security officers and soldiers must always be upright, honest, and protect the rightness or challenge and take action against misconduct and violations; and must not hide or report untruth to the Party, the State and the People's Public Security Forces.

Article 5.

Public Security officers and soldiers will always uphold the spirit of unconditional service to the people. They must always have a warm, polite attitude and retain proportionate behaviour when contact with people, and respect older persons, love

children; must ensure the principle of non-bias treatment to women, help and support disabled people.

Public Security officers and soldiers must always make sure that their behaviour or word will not be deemed by the public impolite, rude, authoritarian, troublesome, or unreasonably slandering others and the people.

Article 6.

Public Security officers and soldiers will constantly study and develop themselves, strictly implement fundamental ethical values: Thrift, Integrity, Just, Impartiality. They will not misuse or abuse their powers, positions, duties or work reputation to gain benefits for themselves or other persons. They must be determined not to engage in any act of corruption, not to embezzle, waste; not to give, to ask for or accept any form of bribery in any circumstance and condition. They must also strive towards exemplary implementation of the cultural lifestyle.

Article 7.

Public Security officers and soldiers must resolutely struggle to defeat all conspiracies, activities that harm the Motherland's security and order; cause damage to the State property; constitute a risk to the health and safety of the people as well as their legitimate rights and interests. They must not harm decent people, not shield evildoers; not leave out criminals, and not unjustly punish innocent people.

Article 8.

Public Security officers and soldiers will constantly study to raise and improve their awareness of politics, professional competence, law, as well as their working capacities; in order to make a contribution to build a regular, skilled and step-by-step modern Revolutionary Public Security Forces.

Article 9.

Public Security officers and soldiers must seriously organise effective implementation of criticism and self-criticism; preserve the unity and oneness of mind within the forces, loving help comrades, companions. They must actively cooperate with individuals and collective teams inside and outside the Public Security Forces in order to accomplish excellently assigned tasks.

Article 10.

Public Security officers and soldiers must strictly implement the Party's policies, guidelines, and development lines; the laws of the State and the regulations of the local authorities of the place of residence.

Source: Bộ trưởng Bộ Công an (2008).

In sum, the three main codes of conduct for police are: 'Uncle Ho's 6 Teachings to the Public Security Forces', the '5 Oaths of the Vietnamese People's Police Force', and, the '10 Disciplines of the Vietnamese Public Security Forces'.[28] The codes of ethics are consistent in their requirement for loyalty to the Party and Government, to act in service of the community, to cultivate one's own attributes and correct behaviour, and to be committed to executing their duties. It is notable that ethical guidelines began to include references to police being answerable to the law, which were not present in the earlier teachings. This may reflect the emerging narrative of adherence to the 'rule of law' which, as Nicholson (2010) suggests, may be more rhetoric that reality. Notwithstanding, Vietnam's integration into the global economy has demanded convergence with Western legal models in some ways, although legal scholars argue that inconsistencies remain, and a linear adoption of Western legal reforms should not be assumed (Gillespie, 2010; Nicholson, 2010).

Organisation of the People's Police Force

The organisational hierarchy of the police follows the administrative structure of other state departments: the national General Department of Police sits under the national Ministry of Public Security (MPS) (*Bộ Công an*). Subordinate to the national level are Public Security Departments of provinces and centrally-run cities; Public Security Offices of rural districts, urban districts, provincial towns and provincially-run cities; and Public Security Offices of communes (*xã* – rural), wards (*phường* – urban) and townships (National Assembly, 2014, Article 17.1).

[28] 6 điều Bác dạy, 5 lời thề, 10 điều kỷ luật công an nhân dân cần nhớ. In 2016, the General Police Department was working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on a new and comprehensive 'Code of Conduct' with involvement from local and foreign consultants. It was yet to be finalised at the time of writing.

Party People's Committees sit above the Police Chief at each administrative level and disputes between Party policy and law are typically resolved in favour of the former (Sidel, 2008). The Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014, Article 1) sets out 'principles of organization and operation; functions, tasks and powers of, and regimes and policies' for the People's Police Force (PPF) (and People's Security Force (PSF)). The General Police Department (GPD) oversees functional departments which change depending on local and international crime trends and official responses, including Department of Drug Investigation and Control, Environment Police Department, Economic Police Department, Department of Anti-Smuggling, Department of Hi-Tech Crime Investigation and the Department of National Population Data Management.

Current legal frameworks guiding police activities and jurisdiction are found among a hierarchy of laws, regulations, decisions and circulars which may be issued at various levels of Party and Government. Official policies can be vague, leaving room for local interpretation at lower levels resulting in uneven implementation nationally. The Criminal Code (National Assembly, 2015a, Article 4.1) authorises the police (and prosecutors and courts) to 'provide guidance and assistance for other state agencies, organizations and individuals in prevention and fight against crimes, supervision and education of criminals in the community'. The Criminal Code sets out what may be considered mitigating and aggravating factors for some crimes and sentencing guidelines, although in many cases more specific details on the nature of crimes, their investigation, and jurisdiction for investigation are found in other legislation. Some major pieces of legislation relevant to police include: the Criminal Procedure Code (National Assembly, 2015b), the Law on Organisation of Criminal Investigation Bodies (National Assembly, 2015c), the Law on Handling Administrative Violations (National Assembly, 2012), and the Circular on the Criminal Investigation Mission in the People's Public Security (Bộ Công an, 2014).

The police with whom the community comes into most contact is at the lowest administrative level – the ward or commune. Police at this level have a wide remit regarding crime control and administrative services. They are described as 'a part-time armed force in the organizational system of the People's Police, acting

as the core in the movement [to mobilise] "all people [to] protect national security and maintain social order and safety"' (National Assembly, 2008b, Article 3.1). Though the Chief and senior members of a ward police station usually require a degree qualification, many subordinates have a Police College qualification requiring two years of study which has a lower entrance exam requirement. However, this does not preclude them from continuing education at the PPA at a later date. In fact, if they are already in the employment of the MPS they receive bonus points in the eligibility scoring process. In some cases, at the lowest levels, volunteers and retirees can work in supporting roles at police stations in plain clothes. Others lacking formal police education can don a uniform and perform basic traffic or public order tasks without being on the official payroll as remuneration is received through local arrangements (especially in rural areas). One example of neighbourhood patrols is explored further in Chapter 7. The Ordinance on Commune Police (National Assembly, 2008b) outlines their tasks, which include, inter alia:

- apply measures to prevent and combat crimes and other law violations related to security, social order and safety (Article 3.2);
- manage persons under special amnesty, drug-detoxified persons and persons having completely served their prison terms and being subject to further management according to law (Article 9.3);
- enforce the law on residence management, people's identity cards and other travel papers; to manage explosives, weapons and support instruments, to prevent and fight fires, to protect the environment (Article 9.5);
- body-search, check belongings and personal papers and seize weapons … of persons who are caught red-handed in committing illegal acts … organize the [protection] of victims ... protect the scenes [of crimes] ... make initial records, take testimonies of victims and witnesses … (Article 9.6);

- sanction administrative violations; make dossiers proposing the application of other administrative sanctions against violators ... (Article 9.8); and,
- request agencies, organizations and individuals in communes to coordinate activities, to supply information and perform tasks related to the maintenance of security, social order and safety (Article 9.9).

As per Article 9.6 above, it is the responsibility of police to manage the household registration system which was modelled on a similar system in China. The system involved issuing a booklet to each household to record the details of all residents (Vietnam's Household Registration System, 2016). People could not relocate without the approval of authorities, the intention being to control rural-to-urban migration and to monitor any potential political opposition. Though there is greater flexibility for migration nowadays, the system is important for accessing education and social services. Since 1964, the system has been managed by the MPS and so the process of updating or amending household registers has been a key reason for police-community interaction. Home visits by police for the purpose of checking household registers have been linked to informal payments to police (McKernan & McWhirter, 2009). In 2017, the system was upgraded to allow residents to update their status online, which may change the nature of police interaction with the community.

Given the broad functions of police in Vietnam, and the fact that precise police numbers are kept confidential, it can be difficult to estimate their number, although the figure of approximately 1.2 million has been reported (Gray, 2000; Thayer, 2008). In 2016, the Politburo ordered the MPS to streamline its bureaucracy, cut unnecessary departments and reduce recruitment in order to decrease budget spending (Do, 2018).[29]

Eligibility, recruitment and selection

To become a police officer, applicants must be politically and morally suitable(National Assembly, 2014, Article 7). The process includes initial

[29] Although the cuts were announced in 2016, fieldwork was undertaken before they had effect which limited exploration of their potential impact.

verification by local authorities where one lives, followed by becoming a Party member through official training, or a member of the Hồ Chí Minh Youth Union. The Circular on Regulations on Admission to the People's Police (Bộ Công An, 2016) outlines criteria for entry including age limits: 20 years old for students or 30 years old for officials, police and soldiers already on the MPS payroll (6.2.b). Student entrants must be unmarried and have no children to meet 'moral standards' (6.2). Men must be 1.64 cm and 48 kg or above; women must be 1.58 cm and 45 kg or above.[30] Applicants whose parents are serving or retired police or public security officers can receive bonus 'points' on top of their competitive examination score to be considered for entry to the PPA. Female applicants must not exceed 15 per cent of the total allocation of police recruits. In sum, these criteria mean men, under 20 years old, who have family or relatives in the security forces are preferred candidates.

Ranks, promotion, retirement age and salaries

The rank structure in Vietnam reflects a military approach. An officer must serve a set number of years at each rank,[31] unless authorised for earlier promotion by exemption.[32] In order to be considered for promotion, an officer 'must fully meet the set criteria on political quality and professional qualifications' (National Assembly, 2014, Article 2) which may include in-service political ideology courses and Masters level or above degrees. Table 4 outlines the rank structure and salary range for the category. The table also highlights the different ages at which men and women are expected to retire and can access their social security

[30] There are some variations on entry requirements for ethnic minorities to assist applicants although overall numbers recruited are still subject to a quota.
[31] Law on the People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014, Article 21.3(a)) Durations for rank promotion consideration:
Operation non-commissioned officers and officers:
Corporal to sergeant: 1 year; Sergeant to sergeant major: 1 year; Sergeant major to second lieutenant: 2 years; Second lieutenant to lieutenant: 2 years; Lieutenant to senior lieutenant: 3 years; Senior lieutenant to captain: 3 years; Captain to major: 4 years; Major to lieutenant colonel: 4 years; Lieutenant colonel to senior lieutenant colonel: 4 years; Senior lieutenant colonel to colonel: 4 years; Colonel to major general: 4 years; The minimum time limit for general rank promotion is 4 years.
[32] Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014, Article 2(c)) 'People's Public Security officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, who record particularly outstanding achievements in crime prevention and fighting and professional activities, may be considered for a skip in ranks; if they record particularly outstanding achievements in work, scientific research or study, they may be considered for ahead-of-time rank promotion.'

benefits. Officers can apply for an extension if they want to work beyond the set retirement age.

Table 4. Rank, retirement age and salaries of the People's Police Force

Professional officers and non-commissioned officers		**Retirement age**		**Salary range[a]**
		Male	**Female[b]**	
Generals (4 ranks)	- Colonel - Senior lieutenant colonel - Lieutenant colonel - Major	60	55	11,180,000–13,520,000
Field officers (4 ranks)	- Colonel	60	55	10,400,000
	- Senior lieutenant colonel	58	55	9,490,000
	- Lieutenant colonel - Major	55	53	8,580,000 7,800,000
Company officers (4 ranks)	- Captain - Senior lieutenant - Lieutenant - Second lieutenant	53	53	5,460,000–7,020,000
Non-commissioned officers (3 ranks)	- Corporal - Sergeant - Warrant officer			4,160,000–4,940,000

a. Salary (in Vietnamese đồng for period 1/7/2017–31/12/2017. Base salary rate does not include seniority allowance and executive compensation but has a deduction for social insurance expenses.
b. Lower age limits for women's retirement hinders women's opportunities for promotion, especially given they have often taken time out of the workforce for family and child rearing reasons (ISDS 2015). Source: Law on People's Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014) Articles 21 & 28. Salary ranges provided to author by PPA.

Police accountability

The People's Police Force (PPF) is audited and supervised by government and Party bodies (National Assembly, 2014, Article 11.1). The police (and all Government bodies) function under supervision of the Communist Party at each administrative level. For example, the Chief of Police (at ward, district and provincial levels) must obey instructions from the People's Council and People's Committee at the corresponding level. Each Police Chief confronts the difficulty of being subordinate to superiors in both the police and the political hierarchies. Despite having some drawbacks, this may allow for selective enforcement in operational decisions (Koh, 2001, 2006). For example, Koh (2001, pp. 290-291) describes how ward police could avoid following instructions from Party officials

with respect to prosecuting illegal karaoke bars by 'play[ing] one chain of command against another when they receive orders that they do not like to carry out'. The MPS also has specific inspection powers outlined in the Circular on the Criminal Investigation Mission in the People's Public Security (Bộ Công an, 2014) which audits police performance.

Prohibited activities of the police are stipulated as (National Assembly, 2014, Article 30.1 & 30.2):

1. Taking advantage of their positions and vested powers to infringe upon interests of the State, rights and legitimate interests of agencies, organizations and individuals.
2. Acting against the law and the statute of the People's Public Security Forces, and doing things which, according to law, must not be done by cadres and public servants.

Possible responses to violations by officers may include being 'disciplined, administratively sanctioned or examined for penal liability; if causing damage to health or life of other people, property or lawful interests of agencies, organizations or individuals, they must pay compensations therefore according to the provisions of law' (National Assembly, 2014, Article 41.2).[33]

The Criminal Procedure Code (National Assembly, 2015b) outlines avenues for citizen complaints against police as well as compliance oversight by state prosecutors, but there are no independent bodies where complainants can seek recourse. Responsibilities for oversight are also given to the Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF), the body encompassing mass member organisations of the Party and a form of citizen supervision. The Law states their role is in both supporting and supervising the activities of the police:

> The Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations shall propagate and mobilize people of all

[33] During a prosecution, officers 'must not wear the public security signs, rank insignias and badges when being prosecuted, held in custody or detention' and if sentenced to imprisonment 'they shall naturally be deprived of the public security signs, rank insignias and badges when court judgments come into force' (National Assembly, 2014, Article 41.3).

> strata to participate in the All People Protect the National Security movement, coordinate and collaborate with and assist the People's Public Security Forces in performing their tasks and building the People's Public Security Forces, and supervising the implementation of the law on the People's Public Security. (National Assembly, 2014, Article 11.2)

Though this article attributes responsibilities for oversight, the VFF and its subsidiaries do not have formal mechanisms for holding police to account.

In Vietnam, media reportage is controlled by the state. The 2018 World Press Freedom Index ranked Vietnam 175th out of 180 countries (Reporters Without Borders, 2018). The Ministry of Culture and Information controls the publication of information, however, growing internet and social media usage has made regulation of information by the state more difficult. Despite repression efforts, poor police practices can be exposed online, which sometimes results in formal disciplinary actions against officers or public apologies. The Government has issued a raft of legislation instituting firewalls and has blocked services providers and websites snot in accord with official policy or sentiment (Thayer, 2014). Although certain freedoms are protected by law, they are undermined and overruled by other legislation. For example, the Criminal Code (National Assembly, 2015a, Article 167) stipulates it is a crime to infringe 'upon freedom of speech, freedom of the press, the right of access to information, and the right to protest of citizens' but these are limited by prohibitions on use of the internet as detailed in a Government Decree on internet usage (2008, Article 6.1 (a)-(c)):

> a. Opposing the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, undermining national security and social order and safety; destroying the all-people great unity bloc; spreading propaganda on wars of aggression; sowing hatred and conflict between nations, ethnic groups and religions; spreading propaganda on and inciting violence, obscenity and debauchery, crime social evils, superstition; and destroying national fine customs and traditions;

> b. Disclosing state secrets and military, security, economic, foreign relation and other secrets as prescribed by law;
>
> c. Spreading information that distorts, slanders and hurts the prestige of organizations; the honor and dignity of citizens;

In 2015, two young men were sentenced to six months jail for using Facebook to spread 'defamatory content and tarnishing the image of police' in Hải Phòng, a major city in Vietnam's north (Voice of America, 2015). The post in question advised people to avoid a police checkpoint, and was determined to have contained the imputation that police were collecting bribes. In 2013, a news article reported that police had drafted a regulation which sought to ban people, journalists in particular, from photographing or filming on-duty police, especially traffic police. It was reported that an agency within the Ministry of Justice had reviewed the document and found it contained provisions contrary to existing law (Tran, 2013). More recent reports, however, suggest that this type of legislation is being reconsidered (Hoa, 2017). Such regulation would act to limit the ways in which police in Vietnam might be held to account as well as, more broadly, place constraints on necessary press freedoms essential for a scrutiny of power that is open and transparent.

Despite its increasing economic prosperity, Vietnam's human rights record remains heavily criticised by observers, including Human Rights Watch (2014b) and Amnesty International (2015). A report published by Human Rights Watch (2014a) on police violence cited cases of injury to and death of people 'during arrest, questioning at police stations, and pretrial detention' between 2010 and 2014. Transparency International (2013), an organisation that reports on corruption globally, found that 72 per cent of survey respondents thought police in Vietnam were either corrupt or extremely corrupt (the highest of any institution). When asked if 'ordinary people could make a difference in the fight against corruption?', 49 per cent of respondents 'Agreed' and 11 per cent 'Strongly Agreed', while 28 per cent 'Disagreed' and 13 per cent 'Strongly Disagreed'. The Government acknowledges corruption as an ongoing issue with potential serious consequences:

> Corruption is still taking place in a rampant, serious and complicated fashion in multiple areas, especially in such areas as administration and use of land, construction investments, equitization of [state-owned enterprises], management and use of state capital and assets, leading to negative consequences in many ways, eroding the confidence of the people in the Communist Party's leadership and the State's management, giving rise to potential conflicts of interest, social resistance and protest, and widening the gap between the rich and the poor. Corruption has significantly hindered the success of [the] Doi Moi [reform] process and the fighting force of the Party, threatening the survival of the regime. (National Anti-Corruption Strategy towards 2020, 2009)

In response, the Government has devised a national strategy which includes passing new legislation, tightening audit procedures and increasing public awareness (National Anti-Corruption Strategy towards 2020, 2009). Reported as being the most corrupt institution in Vietnam (Transparency International, 2013) while at the same time holding responsibility for prosecuting lawbreakers puts police in a precarious position.

In January 2015, Vietnam joined the United Nations Human Rights Council for a two-year term, and was urged to make improvements in a number of key areas including: freedom of expression, association, assembly and movement, eradication of the death penalty, treatment of prisoners, arbitrary detention and the use of torture and violence by authorities. The revised Constitution (2013) shifted provisions concerning human rights from Chapter 5 to Chapter 2 which may be an indication the Government is taking human rights issues more seriously. Though some human rights observers see the revised Constitution as an improvement, it is criticised for being rhetorical and having limited impact in practice (Human Rights Watch, 2014b) as many provisions granting specific rights are subject to legislative constraints.

Academia and police education

Vietnam follows the Confucian ethic of valuing education in that a degree should be a requirement for people holding government positions. In 1484, the Emperor Lê Thánh Tông paid tribute to the country's early scholars by building the Temple of Literature in central Hanoi where 116 steles of carved blue stone turtles were erected bearing elaborate motifs to honour talent and encourage study. In 2012, 14 kilometres away from the original, a miniature Temple of Literature was built at the PPA as a means to encourage a culture of learning and scientific education – the first replica to be constructed on the grounds of a university (People's Police Academy, 2017f). Vietnam inherited the Confucian examination system which focused on a curriculum including 'philosophy, literature, history and government' (Taylor, 2013, p. 208). In order to sit civil service exams in the 15th century, candidates had to undergo preliminary tests which included 'an investigation into one's family history' and 'an evaluation of one's moral character' (Taylor, 2013, p. 207). Despite the flux in Vietnam's political history, an emphasis on the moral character of not only individuals but also their family continues under the Communist system. A family member's criminal record can be justification for refusing a person's entry to the police occupation.

The People's Police Academy

The People's Police School was established in 1968 in Ba Vi district, Ha Tay province (People's Police Academy, 2013b). Today, the police training institution is the People's Police Academy (PPA) *(Học viện Cảnh sát Nhân dân)*, catering to the northern provinces.[34] The PPA is a registered university under the Ministry of Education and Training and the main component for entry is through competitive national examinations.[35] Academy applicants are subject to the same national examinations as for other universities, but must also 'satisfy all the criteria of political and ethical quality, educational level and health, and have

[34] The People's Police University (PPU) (Đại học Cảnh sát Nhân dân) is in Hồ Chí Minh City, catering to the southern provinces. The PPA ranks higher that the PPU in terms of political and regulatory status. The PPU was not the subject of study for this research. Graduates generally work in the north if graduating from the PPA, or south if graduating from the PPU. Sometimes police must undertake secondments away from their home for several years.

[35] National education requirements demand the PPA must offer some compulsory subjects even though they may not relate directly to police work.

aspirations and aptitudes suitable to public security work' (National Assembly, 2014, Article 6.1). The PPA is increasingly trying to situate itself as one of the country's top ranked universities. Entry into police and public security universities has become more difficult than for medical and economics degrees, requiring a higher examination score. This is partly attributed to the fact police and public security degrees are free and provide food and accommodation (Vu, 2017; also see Chapter 6), and graduates are guaranteed a job in an environment where many of their tertiary-qualified peers remain unemployed.

Students at the PPA study one of 14 major courses over four years[36] and graduate with a bachelor's degree (see Chapter 6). The tertiary model and curriculum design mean police are both specialists and professionals, which has implications for the way officers are allocated duties and promotional prospects (as discussed in more detail in Chapter 7). In contrast to the PPA, ward or commune police are usually vocationally trained at smaller decentralised police colleges over two years.[37] As bachelor's, master's and doctoral qualifications are a prerequisite for promotion to some positions, education is an important consideration for police seeking to move up the ranks (National Assembly, 2014, Article 22.1).

[36] Reduced from five years in 2016 following a restructure.
[37] This study did not examine police colleges.

Table 4 outlines the PPA's major units, departments and functions, and indicates the manner in which the university is structured according to political and union committees, academic faculties, and logistics and administration.[38]

Table 5. Major units, departments and functions of the People's Police Academy

	Major units, departments and functions
1	**Director board**
2	**Boards** - Board of Education - Board of Science - Complimentary and Disciplinary Board - Promotion Board - Cultural & Sport Board
3	**Politic and social board** - Party Committee - Youth Union - Women Union - Labour Union
4	**Academic faculties and basic studies** - Political Theories - Criminal Psychology - Laws - Foreign languages - Martial Art & Military Training - Basic Professional Studies - Administrative Management on Social Order Safety - Crime Scene Investigation - Criminal Investigation for Hot Traces - Anti-Economy Related Crime Investigation - Anti-Drug Related Crime Investigation - Criminal Investigation for Proceedings - Traffic Police - Prisoner Education & Rehabilitation - Post-Graduate Training
5	**Functional departments, centres and reviews** - Training Management - Student Management - Scientific Research Management - Personnel Management - Organization Movement Management

[38] Table 4 details the PPA structure in 2013. There have since been changes including additional academic streams and the establishment of in-service training centres. The response to my request for an updated version was that further changes underway and made available once finalised.

	- Administration Management - Food Supply - Material Supply - Centre for Information, Library and Material Resources - Centre for Vocational Trainings (Drivers & Guards) - Review of Social Order Science and Education

Source: Organizational structure of the PPA (People's Police Academy, 2013b)

Police as academic and research leaders

As a university, staff at the PPA are engaged in research activities, and the publishing of books and journal articles. Criminological research in Vietnam has been shaped by the country's unique history and carried out under the control of the MPS. In 2017, the PPA celebrated the 10th anniversary of founding the Centre for Criminology and Criminal Investigation Research referring to it as 'one of the leading scientific research units in the field' in the country (People's Police Academy, 2018a). Accessibility to research is often guarded due to 'national security' and critical exploration of state responses to crime is limited to outsiders (Cox, 2012). The research agenda of the PPA follows directions laid out by the Central Police Party Committee (Decision N0.04 of Central Police Party Committee, Programme No.306, Instruction No. 02 of the Minister of the Public Security) (People's Police Academy, 2009). In 2017, Lieutenant-General Nguyễn Xuân Yêm, Director of the PPA, published *Protection of national security and social order in the new context*, a book which, as described in an official review, 'applies the basic principles of Marxist-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's [t]hought and the basic views of [the] Party and Government to analyze the practice of national innovation and protection of national security and social order recently' (People's Police Academy, 2017a). The requirement for police to be Party members necessarily means policing scholarship is a product of the political establishment.

Conclusion

In Vietnam, the context of policing has distinctive characteristics compared with liberal Western democracies with long-term stable governance. Political stability in Vietnam is a relatively recent phenomenon, achieved only in 1954 in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and in 1975 in the unified Socialist Republic of Vietnam. After the war ended in 1975, Vietnam suffered extreme poverty and in

the 1980s embarked on economic reform. It has since experienced rapid economic growth which has implications for the nature of policing. Dominant studies on policing in the global North have been undertaken under conditions of regulated, developed economies which are supported by substantially stable and predictable legal institutions. Consequently, the police have access to power over others which is symbolic, political, economic and cultural. The way police (and Party) pursue and maintain these positions requires an appreciation of the country's historical trajectory. In taking a Southern Policing perspective, we can analyse the field as having marked differences in terms of its political system, economic development, legal culture and police education.

In contrast to the establishment of Peel's police in England, as a preventive and deterrent force under stable governance, Vietnamese police emerged in 1945 as part of the security forces which fought and won a protracted battle for independence. The new government sought to maintain internal control by punishing political opposition. A core task of police from the outset was targeting political dissidents. Codes of ethics demand loyalty from police officers to the VCP and the Criminal Code makes it an offence for anyone to oppose the state's administration. Individual police officers occupy positions in society as citizens, as part of government (Ministry of Public Security), and as members of the Vietnamese Communist Party. This departs from the apolitical stance underpinning the notion of democratic policing studied in the UK and US and, as Bayley (2006) points out, the right to freedom of association.

The legacy of the role of police in Vietnam's independence is marked by national days for commemoration and within the country's museums. This emphasis on the role of police in Vietnam's battles has been gaining momentum over the past 15 years, engendering what Grossheim refers to as 'commemorative fever' (2018, p. 449), in a move that serves to further legitimise one-party rule. A particular feature being celebrated is its socialist security apparatus with its links to Soviet Chekism and the Russian Revolution (Grossheim, 2018, p. 439). Vietnam's distinct history, therefore, creates possibilities for different presentational strategies or, as described by Manning (1978, p. 499), 'dramaturgical potential'. The police and Party have control over that narrative

through state-controlled media, and anyone seeking to publish or convey viewpoints contrary to its official history can be punished. Though social media provides many new avenues for disrupting media control, it also presents opportunities for the Government to define new crimes to which police can respond.

Police education and training in the UK have been criticised for being too short and too legalistic, leaving recruits ill-prepared for the complexities of policing (HMIC, 2002). By contrast, the bachelor's degree for Vietnamese police, combined with recruitment policies, means the Academy is a site for young people's foray into four years of university life. Efforts to improve the nature and status of police education have led to revisions in the tertiary qualifications awarded by the PPA. The Academy now delivers master's and doctoral degrees for police staff, lecturers and others seeking promotion at district, provincial and national levels, providing police tertiary education with elements of both cultural and economic forms of capital. The shorter, two-year period of college education that lower-level police in Vietnam receive has been criticised for being inadequate, especially given their frontline role (Human Rights Watch, 2014a) – albeit, without effective oversight, more training may not produce the required results.

The policing field in the global North has been impacted by the move towards workplace diversity (for example, gender, ethnicity, age) as a means of increasing accountability to and legitimacy with the communities they serve. This diverges from the experience in Vietnam. In Vietnam, application to the police is largely through post-high school national examinations as well as meeting criteria regarding 'correct' political ethics, and, age, height and marital status. The quota for female applicants acts as a ceiling due to the high number of applicants, thus, limits gender diversity.[39] This may be due to lack of cultural or legal recourse to pursue litigation against discrimination, as well as a cultural emphasis placed on harmony, which means the parameters for disputing official policies or being

[39] This study did not set out to explore the recruitment or policing of ethnic minorities although occasionally participants made brief references the issue, suggesting a sensitivity about the topic.

confrontational are limited. The topic of gender in policing is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

The field of policing in Vietnam has some distinct characteristics.[40] The police emerged amid political and military upheavals resulting in an overlap of bodies responsible for national security. This is in stark contrast to, for example, the London Metropolitan Police Force, whose founder Robert Peel deliberately sought to distinguish from the army through distinct uniforms and (lack of visible) weapons. The police continue to function under the dual subordination of the MPS (police hierarchy) and the Party. Enduring insecurity has been described as creating a sensibility among Vietnamese to the threat of foreign invasion (Gillen, 2011). The positioning of the police (and security forces more broadly) is, therefore, an important source of capital for the legitimacy of the one-party state, and is promoted to develop a 'strong corporate identity' (Grossheim, 2018, p. 439). The narrative of the police as depicted in the Hanoi Police Museum emphasises their initial role as a political force, but the imagery then transforms them to be more reflective of the public police seen elsewhere. Police identity is underscored by a cultural appreciation for tertiary education in which the Police Academy situates itself and competes with the country's top universities. The following chapter will explore some of the individual experiences police have with becoming and working as a police officer.

[40] It should be noted it has a long history of international influences from China and other parts of Asia, the Soviet Union, France, and, in more recent times, Western countries.

Chapter 6: Learning to be a police officer

Introduction

The tall yellow painted buildings, set among an expansive and neatly paved parade ground at Vietnam's premier police training institution, appear suddenly from behind the roofs of shopfronts lining the road. Through widely spaced bars of a black metal gate,[41] a statue of Hồ Chí Minh is clearly visible on the far side of the parade ground. The golden coloured full-body statue of Vietnam's first President stands high upon a reddish pillar. Affectionately known as Uncle Hồ, he is poised, his left arm by his side and his right raised in front of him, fingers curled except the index finger which is pointed gently as if trying to convey an important lesson to his audience. Indeed, his life and lessons are honoured in the Academy's Hồ Chí Minh Chamber, purported to hold over 600 documents pertaining to 'the great leader, hero of national liberation, [and] cultural celebrity and about the leaders of the Party and State through the ages' (People's Police Academy, 2017f). Behind Hồ Chí Minh are similarly brassy busts of the unified Vietnam's four Ministers of Public Security. Not only are the statues a statement on the direct link between the Vietnam Communist Party and the People's Police Force, they also serve as a reminder of the role of police in territorial integrity, evidenced by the large banner inscribed with the words '*Vì an ninh tổ quốc'* ('For national security') draped behind the statues.

In this chapter, the Vietnamese police training and work environment which construct one aspect of the 'field' are examined (Bourdieu, 1990a). The objective field, which includes, for example, the distribution of resources and constraints (capital) in the Academy and workplace, the training curriculum and the history of the country and the police force, frames the social world for officers. The chapter draws on interviews with police students and officers to explore the nature of policing in Vietnam and the experiences of police at work or in training which shapes their individual dispositions, or habitus (Chan, 1997; Chan et al., 2003). The following sections detail that there are diverse views and experiences among the police in Vietnam. This highlights that the relational dynamic – between the

[41] The front gate to the People's Police Academy was upgraded in 2017.

environment and an individual – can produce different experiences of the socialisation processes in learning to be a police officer.

Edification and policing in Vietnam

Education in Vietnam has a symbolic status inherited from the Confucian emphasis on an educated civil service as well as a social significance as a means of escaping poverty. The police codes of conduct, particularly Uncle Hồ's 6 Teachings and the 10 Disciplines (see Chapter 5), emphasise the importance of continual self-improvement through study – a sentiment that is reflected in the physical surroundings of the PPA. For example, as police students enter the Academy library, they walk underneath a large red banner with yellow writing reminding them to 'Учиться, учиться и учиться … – Học, học nữa, học mãi … V.I. Lenin', ('Study, study more, study forever …').[42] The Russian script and quotation from the socialist leader invoke the importance of education while serving as a daily reminder of a historical and political ally. Lenin's emphasis on learning suggests a complementarity with Confucian edification in the form of scholarly reverence. This reverence is literally cemented in Vietnam's history through the construction on campus of a mini replica of Hanoi's historic Temple of Literature.

The status of and value placed on education in Vietnam is a journey from temple to tertiary institution. Its influences are located in both Vietnamese history and culture and a history of foreign influence. Adjacent to Lenin's quotation is another recently erected sign, this one in English: 'Innovation in police education and training for a safer and more secure Vietnam'. Taken together, the Russian and English signage is unapologetic about deriving its inspiration from foreign sources. Even though they require translation for many of the students, the signs indicate a symbolic link to socialism and a pragmatic relationship to English language, most likely due to its current global dominance. The signs indicate a deeper current central to Vietnamese culture: the importance of a tertiary

[42] Lenin's quote is often translated as 'learn' rather than 'study'. "Về chuyện học, Chủ tịch Hồ Chí Minh có câu nói rất hay: "Học ở trường, học ở sách vở, học lẫn nhau và học ở nhân dân", có thể dịch là "Learn in school, learn from the books, learn from each other and learn from the people"."
http://vnexpress.net/tin-tuc/giao-duc/hoc-tieng-anh/phan-biet-learn-va-study-3586904.html

education. This belief is instilled in young people and across social class for pragmatic reasons. As one male police student put it: ‘My mother told me to study hard to get into university otherwise I would end up poor and, on the street, selling lemons’.

Joining the police: from patriots to pragmatists?

By design of the police regulations, new recruits in Vietnam are young, unmarried and usually recent male high school graduates. It is expected they enter this phase of adult life with optimism towards their chosen career. In interviews for this thesis, a string of police students repeated the common refrain: that they joined the police because it was their ‘dream’ since childhood. This was not a surprise finding. In some cases, the interviewees reported their dream was spurred by memories of their parents donning the green police uniform. In others, they were inspired to sign up by having watched locally produced television dramas that represented police as crime-fighters protecting social order and national security. Reinforcing these ideals, new recruits are treated to a stage spectacle by current students about the “*Ước mơ màu xanh*” (green dream) of joining the security forces (People's Police Academy, 2017h). The heroic and noble characteristics associated with being a police officer were also reflected in the colloquial referent *siêu nhân xanh* (green superman):

> It was my dream. In fact, I know a lot of women who work in the police. I thought police were superwoman/superman and I thought when I grow up to become a police officer it would be my dream come true. The second reason, I always find that police help a lot of people in the world and it is meaningful for people. The third reason, maybe because a lot of people in my family, my parents, my father, are police too. I want to follow my father. As a child, I always saw my father in uniform. He worked really hard to help everybody. In the police district, he always went out and came home late but that is his duty. He wants peace for everybody. I had a good impression. (Police officer, female)

Some students and officers were more explicit in describing the role of police in Vietnam's independence and attributed high status to policing as a result of this legacy. In addition, policing was described as essential for enabling Vietnam's prosperity by enforcing laws against economic crimes post *đổi mới* (economic renovation) to facilitate business growth and to protect environmental degradation through unauthorised development.

> There is an honour and pride to be police not only because my parents guided me [to become police]. It was my dream from when I was a child because police are very important in protecting national security as well as social order. It makes me proud. Not to mention in Vietnam, the police are very prestigious … As you know, in the period of war in Vietnam with America and the French, the police force was established when Vietnam declared independence. They [the police] served a lot in the work of the revolution against America and France.… At that time, when we received the peace treaty, the role of police was more indispensable than ever … After the peace treaty was signed the newborn government of Vietnam had a lot to do, protecting the country and social order was a high priority. Of course, the law and administration in Vietnam had many problems and there were many political criminals and so police had to create a stable life, so the people can live happily and develop their living standards and gain prosperity. The basic role [of the police] is the same now because the main role is protecting national security and social order. In times of globalisation it is much stricter, and we have to learn to do better to learn the new world order to serve the people. (Police student, male)

Responses of this kind reflect the general sense from interviewees about what the police could and should do in theory. They indicate a naiveté and a belief in

an idealised policing and are not reflective of the challenges police confront in practice.

Cultural expectations relating to behaving correctly, especially towards elders (*Ơn*), are indicative of an inclination to increase others' comfort, to fulfil others' aspirations, to lighten others' burden of work and worry (Jamieson, 1993). Consequently, aspirations for joining the police to 'protect national security and public order' and to 'fight crime' were considered alongside (sometimes supplanted by) the desire to please the family.

> The police job in Vietnam is quite good, you can earn a higher salary than other jobs. When people become police, they have been trained a lot, they're confident and they have the ability to deal with life. Many parents want their children to become police to become confident. Parents ask their children to become students at the PPA, it means the students have to try hard. Parents use this to motivate and encourage their children to study hard. (Police officer, female)

One student admitted he applied for the People's Police Academy (PPA) because it is the only 'university' where tuition is free, and a small stipend is paid. By attending the PPA he could relieve the financial burden of his tertiary education from his family. Given that most police students are accepted to the Academy based on their high school exam score, their pathway to recruitment requires diligence and planning due to the competitive entry. This diverges from recruitment processes in some jurisdictions, for example, in South Africa some officers described their police career as 'accidental and unplanned' (Faull, 2017, p. 333). Students also mentioned parental preference for them to join the police on the basis the Academy would provide a disciplined environment for learning, which would hold them in good stead for the challenges of adulthood. Women were more represented in administrative academic streams. This was frequently self-identified as personal choice with interviewees often expressly anticipating the necessity for flexible hours afforded by office work for their future reproductive and family obligations. It was clear however that gender constraints were also in

play, as women identified being deliberately allocated into administrative streams against their personal preferences. Only one female interviewee talked about joining the Academy in opposition to her father's stated belief that becoming a police officer was an unsuitable job for women.

One student said some people described policing as their 'dream' job because it was the response expected by the Academy. This was confirmed by a senior officer. It is clear there were a myriad of, often more pragmatic, reasons for joining the police. My attempts to explore these reasons more deeply was largely unsuccessful. For example, a student said her family, who had a business background, wanted her to join the police because 'they don't have a police officer in the family so maybe they thought they need one' (Police student, female). When asked in what way having a police officer in the family would 'help their business', the student declined to answer, possibly anticipating my inquiry regarding a conflict of interest. A male student said he was attracted to the 'exploration, the danger and thrill' of police work, although when prompted to elaborate, he chose not to explain, as if it was a taboo subject. This attitude is quite different from those of police in other countries, where 'action' and 'hedonism' have been well documented as an attractive part of policing (Reiner, 2010).

Policing in Vietnam covers a broad range of administrative and other roles often undertaken by civilians in other jurisdictions. This meant some students joined with no intention to work operationally. One student said he was 'really good at maths and wanted to do a job in [forensic] science' (Police student, male). Another student was concerned about the extent of pollution in Vietnam and so joined the police with a specific intention to study the environmental crimes investigations major, so he could make a contribution to improving the state of the environment.[43] This type of specialisation at the outset of training is not a universally common feature of police education under the Anglo-American model.

[43] He noted that environmental crimes could include: violations of food security, smuggling and trafficking of rare animals, deforestation and illegal chemical usage.

Despite some obfuscation (mainly by students) this study found that another reason for joining the police in Vietnam was its status as a 'hot' occupation. According to several senior officers, getting into the force was in high demand because police are among the highest paid workers in the government sector.[44] Policing was seen as 'hot' also because of its longevity and stability. Despite the private sector showing strong growth and increasing opportunity, working in business was viewed by some as unstable. Perceptions of job instability and of having to work harder than in the public service contributed to the idea of policing as a sensible choice. An officer put it this way: 'Policing is "hot" because with it you get power, privilege, benefits, stable job and good money' (Police officer, male). Another officer described a lack of commitment among junior officers in the following way:

> New police recruits don't care about an oath to protect the people. They join because they know they will have a stable job with a good salary. They have no commitment to the people. But the government says that they will "look after" new police and give them good benefits. The parents encourage their children to join the police too because they will have good connections. (Police officer, male)

The Bachelor of Policing

The PPA transitioned to a credit system to be in line with 'advanced' international university practice (People's Police Academy, 2015c).[45] An undergraduate program comprises two streams to make up a total 149 credits: general (42 credits) and professional subjects (107 credits). General subjects include political theory on Marxism-Leninism, Hồ Chí Minh ideology, and history and doctrine of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Students are required to do subjects in the social sciences and humanities including scientific research methodology and to

[44] In terms of official salary and access to other incomes.
[45] Specifically, the Academy website referred to: 'Credit-based training system is an advanced training mode that has been deployed and applied in many countries all over the world, such as: United States of America, United Kingdom of Great Britain, France, Germany, Thailand, Philippines and so on.'

produce a minor thesis. Elementary English and computer skills are compulsory alongside physical education, swimming, firearms, driving, drill and martial arts. Students must pass the general education subjects, including political education[46] and soft skills,[47] to graduate (People's Police Academy, 2017b). The following sections will examine more closely the general and professional curriculum.

The 'General' police curriculum: Learning morality

Many of the offices I visited at the PPA were adorned with statements printed in yellow lettering against a red background in gold-coloured frames. The '5 Oaths of the Vietnamese People's Police Force' are displayed prominently around the Academy as guidance for expected behaviour of the 'cadres'. The principal tenet of the 5 Oaths is that of loyalty: loyalty to the country, the people, the Party, the State, and to the 'struggle and sacrifice' in the pursuit of these ends. Loyalty to the police and to the Party, and following instructions, were described by students and staff as crucial to being a 'good' police officer.

Police students frequently mentioned the importance of 'morality' in terms of what they learned at the Academy and how they should behave as police officers. The compulsory subjects on Hồ Chí Minh ideology and the VCP taught students about what constituted moral conduct. Students recounted a number of important points from these lessons, including: 'We must obey the regulation of the Ministry of Public Security and have a good relationship with our comrades and local communities' (Police student, female); 'By studying [those subjects] we learn not to oppose the regime of Vietnam. Secondly, studying at the PPA and means we follow certain disciplines and it keeps us in line' (Police student, female); and 'Hồ Chí Minh teaches compassion and humanity … the way of living, the

[46] According to the PPA website, students must have 'a stable political background, clear ethics, strictly implementing the regulations of People's Police and law of the State. After graduating, students are members of the Communist Party of Vietnam or have been granted certificates of training in the Party's knowledge and certificates equivalent to intermediate level of political theory.'
[47] See Appendix 1 for the standards for soft skills.

characteristic of people in a Socialist Republic and of a soldier in particular' (Police student, female).[48]

Morality was described as something that could be taught and learned through knowledge and discipline, and through the creation of 'habits' over years of training (Police student, female). The study of Hồ Chí Minh and Party policies is designed to cultivate in police a higher level of morality than that of the general community:

> Theoretically, maybe the majority of police have better morality than average citizens. Practically, this cannot be compared between police and [the] normal citizen because each group of people has good and bad people. In the police, people have the chance to train and improve their morality more than the people outside. For normal citizens, they don't have to follow the rules of the police. But it is not absolute, so police probably have higher morality. (Police student, female)

However, what constitutes correct morality is not so straightforward as following set guidelines. When asked if following official rules was an indicator of good morality, one student responded:

> Abiding to the rules of government in the police force is just one part of good personal morality. It is not following the rules. It is not good to strictly follow the rules. And some rules need to be adjusted or amended to better suit the situation. Following rules and regulations is unnecessary. We must be flexible. (Police student, female)

Police officers do not always rely on written codes or regulations to determine their actions. They learn through a process of socialisation which rules must be followed, which rules may be followed depending on the situation, and which rules

[48] Police and soldiers are both regarded as public security officers. The use of the term 'soldier' in this context may reflect the nature of policing in Vietnam as being more closely aligned with the military than in other jurisdictions.

are optional or even detrimental if followed. Therefore, what is deemed 'moral' according to the principles of the general curriculum (including ethical codes) provides a framework for the use of discretion.

Though guidelines for conduct and ethical behaviour for police are common, the Vietnamese version of moral order reflects Wong's (2012, p. 61) description whereby culture refers to both a 'high culture' associated with Confucian principles and as a way of doing things is invoked with respect to police culture, as something that can be cultivated and developed though continuous learning and reflection. The process of developing or aspiring towards a version of high culture may be a form of socialisation. Thus 'oaths' and 'disciplines' can be sources of inspiration for correct morality rather than prescriptions in order to shape individual behaviours and dispositions. Nonetheless, a code of conduct, where conduct typically refers to actions, may indicate a Western analytical framing in so far as conduct of the kind familiar to a Western understanding refers to actions, whereas policing in a post-Confucian society may be regulated more by feelings and cultural processes as per Wong's (2012) suggestion in the Chinese context. In other words, police morality in Vietnam may be more akin to a feeling and a process than to a Western way of thinking and judgement as described in the Western police literature (Crank, 1998). (This is further discussed below in the section 'Constructing a police culture'.)

The 'Professional' police curriculum: Specialist subjects

Once applicants have been assessed, met the entrance criteria, and selected to study at the Academy, they are asked to nominate a preferred study major (up to three preferences). The Academy, however, will ultimately determine the stream to which a student is allocated depending on gaps and workforce needs. The Academy provides a degree in policing based on a curriculum, unavailable at other universities, which is designed to equip students with specialist skills and knowledge and to meet the specific requirements of the policing profession.[49] To pass, students must score a minimum of 2.7 out of 4 in at least two thirds of their

[49] The PPA recently commenced a degree course for people to work more closely in criminal justice administration and the procuracy. Students must pay a fee for their degree (unlike other police students) and are not guaranteed employment after graduation.

specialist subjects (People's Police Academy, 2017b). The evolving policing environment means that new majors are added as needed, for example, high-tech crime investigation is a recent addition given changing crime trends. Below is a list of the major streams which were available in 2017.

Table 6. Major specialisations at the People's Police Academy[50]

	Major specialisations
1.1	State Management on Social Order and Safety
1.2	Criminal Police
1.3	Investigative Police
1.4	Economic Police
1.5	Forensic Science
1.6	Traffic Police on Roads and Rails
1.7	Police on Criminal Sentence Enforcement and Judicial Assistance
1.8	Police on Narcotic Crime Prevention and Suppression
1.9	Armed Police
1.10	Student of English for Police
1.11	Environmental Police
1.12	Police on Hi – tech Crime Prevention and Suppression
1.13	Police on Criminal Procedures Code
1.14	Police on Water Ways
1.15	Students of Chinese for Police
1.16	Police Advisory and Commander

Source: People's Police Academy (2017b).

One national director of a police department remarked that, although students graduated from the PPA with a bachelor's degree with a specialisation/major, the status of being a 'professional' in policing was not conferred until an officer had undergone practical training in the field and had experience in investigating cases. As one male police officer put it: 'The word "professional" is hard to define'. And many responses tended to focus on similar themes of Communist Party

[50] See Appendix 2 for more details on each specialisation.

loyalty and obeying instructions. For one female Police student, professional meant:

> Being loyal to the Communist Party, [and] the people; being all ready to do anything when the Communist Party calls you to do it and the Ministry of Public Security asks you to do it…. [I'm] really happy and proud to work under their way and instructions.

In accordance with the Academy's stated ethic of continuous learning, graduates should be capable of carrying out scientific research and continue on to further levels of education (People's Police Academy, n.d., p. 17).

Homestay and internships as part of police curriculum

Along with the specialised syllabus, compulsory drill marching and martial arts, the Police Academy curriculum includes general programs to improve 'soft skills' designed to build confidence, public speaking ability and public relations aptitude among the newly enrolled. One such program, undertaken in Year 1 of training, is a one-month homestay with a family to help students develop skills for cultivating close relationships with the community. The students report back on their experience to their class, reflecting on how they built trust with their hosts by familiarising themselves with their needs and preferences. A student recounted his homestay experience in a north central coast region:

> This internship is to learn how to get along with the people. I stay with them, I work with them, I eat with them…. I have to know about the customs of that place. I see what the people do and what not to do…. They asked about my schedule in the PPA. Do I have to get up early for exercise? What is the standard of living in PPA? They ask me about rules and regulations of PPA. I ask them about their standard of living, their work life, about their family, their children. At the end of the internship, they considered me as part of their family. I keep in touch with them now. At Tet [Lunar New Year], I call them to wish them a happy new

> year. When I finished my internship, they hugged me, and they cried. (Police student, male)

The positive reaction described above is likely a reflection that homestay hosts are already sympathetic towards the police. Investment in the residential program is evidence that forming close relationships with the community is regarded as a key police capability. An explicit benefit of cultivating this familiarity was its contribution to police reliance on the community for information – a concept not unique to Vietnam, although the ways to achieving better police-community relations are varied. For example, a week-long homestay is not a feature of Anglo-American training methods despite efforts to improve community engagement.

One student noted that, during the homestay, he changed his usual sleeping and eating routines to fit in with the family's schedule because it was important to adapt to please his hosts. Whilst these adjustments could be chalked up to simple politeness, the ability to modify behaviour to ensure a harmonious relationship with others, in this case unfamiliar hosts, is a characteristic nurtured through the police curriculum and expected to be transferrable after graduation. It also relates back to the collectivist cultural beliefs which impact on the ways policing in Vietnam is understood.

The students are required to undertake two further internships at police stations for their bachelor's degree. These occur in Year 3 (three months) and Year 4 (four months) and are an opportunity for students to apply their class-based knowledge in practice. These internships provided useful points of discussion for exploring students' operational experience, as presented in the next chapter.

Post-graduate police education

To be promoted to supervisory or management roles, police in Vietnam require post-graduate qualifications. In 2015, the Academy reported it had on staff seven professors, 24 associate professors, 133 people with doctoral qualifications and 358 people with master's degrees (People's Police Academy, 2015b). In 2018, the Academy held a ceremony for 39 new PhDs and 380 master's police officer

graduates bringing the total number of graduates since 1992 to more than 4000 (People's Police Academy, 2018b).[51]

Since there is a strong emphasis on the importance of tertiary education in Vietnam, and postgraduate education for police promotion, several police participants questioned further education as a means to an end. They felt that the quality of, and commitment to, learning was in potential conflict with the desire to get the certificate of qualification, which is tied to prospects for promotion and salary. Several police officers referred to 'achievement disease' as a phenomenon in Vietnam. This was a derogatory way to describe pursuing a master's or PhD qualification to have on your CV rather than to improve your knowledge or skills. Gaining a qualification as a 'means to an end' has been reported in police forces elsewhere (Atkinson, 2013). However, the unique context in Vietnam gives rise to some specific manifestations, including the possibility of getting a subordinate to write and submit a thesis in their superior's name, or examiners might be paid bribes to pass sub-standard work. The resulting qualification enables someone to be promoted, despite having not acquired the learning or knowledge. It should be noted that interviewees and publicly available information indicate this has been a problem with the education sector as a whole in Vietnam and not unique to police. In 2017, the Ministry of Education and Training made it compulsory for newly enrolled PhD and master's candidates to publish their research in English language peer-reviewed journals to demonstrate their English proficiency with a view to improving academic practice and international engagement.

Socialisation

Socialisation is the process by which a newcomer learns to fit in with their new environment (Chan et al., 2003; Van Maanen, 1973). Police are socialised through the way they are trained, their experiences doing police work, and their interactions with others (Reith, 1956). The environment includes the objective 'field', for example, the surroundings in which they study or work, and, the

[51] Figure includes police officers from Cambodia and Laos who are engaged in exchange programs.

interactions students and officers have both with their environment and each other.

Police institutions use artefacts and symbols in presentational strategies to construct the learning environment which shapes occupational identity. On the grounds of the Academy, adjacent to the library, is the imposing blue and white fuselage of a Vietnam Airlines plane which is an aide-mémoire to both the state-owned aviator and modern technological advancement. The plane is flanked by a temple on one side and a traditional stilt house on the other. The plane and house serve as reminders that police work is about the practicality of emergency response and investigation. Their deliberate placement in the Academy is to create a space for scenario training. The plane represents modern technology while the house reminds us of ethnic minorities and hilltribes. There are other ways organisations build, create and mould police identity. The following sections describe how the police deliberately construct the environment for their officers.

Constructing a police culture

At the Academy, the statue of Hồ Chí Minh is symbolic of the direct relationship between the Communist victory and the police. Adjacent to the statue is a space dedicated to Vietnam's current territorial claims in the East Sea, particularly the Spratly and Paracel islands. The islands are the centre of a dispute with other nations in the region but primarily China who has claimed the territory and their rich oil and gas deposits as their own. The dedication sends the message that Vietnam's long-time territorial disputes with China continue. The space has a map of Vietnam positioned slightly above ground level with the concrete to the right side painted blue to mark out the East Sea. Corresponding miniature islands have small glass boxes attached containing sand, rock and coral from those sites to bring them into the grounds of the PPA to remind students of their 'role in national defense' (People's Police Academy, 2017f). Whilst police draw on the legacy of winning independence, the deliberate (and recent, 2011) construction of the East Sea map on Academy grounds indicates that contemporary national security, indeed territorial, concerns are positioned at the forefront of police identity and contribute to fostering a sense of enduring insecurity, as noted by Gillen (2011).

Police are also socialised into the organisational culture through specific activities and by encouraging particular sentiments at the Police Academy. One method is the use of contests. The Academy regularly holds, or participates in, intra- and inter-university contests. For example, in 2018, a team of police students competed (and won) a contest involving other public security institutions. The competition comprised four parts relating to: 'Pride of the police officer, the knowledgeable police officer, the quick-witted police officer, and the talented police officer' (People's Police Academy, 2018c). The Academy website reported the 'competition was an important political activity to raise awareness and make positive changes in the actions of police officers in studying and implementing Six things taught by Uncle Ho' (People's Police Academy, 2018c). The emphasis on contests and group activities serves several purposes. As a senior police officer explained, they help to develop 'soft skills' and build confidence so that officers are better equipped to communicate with others and be role models in the community.

Contests provide a means by which to assess otherwise intangible aspects of police culture and a method for socialising individuals into what is deemed an appropriate disposition. For example, though morality is valued as a core characteristic of a 'good' police officer in Vietnam, it remains extremely difficult to measure. Even if morality is characterised as a sentiment, something to strive for, an active and continuous process pursued as a personal journey based more on 'feeling' than 'thinking', [52] measuring it remains difficult unless these characteristics can be exhibited outwardly. Contests enable the measurement of the more tangible, outwardly-directed signs of morality, such as loyalty and solidarity, partly by observing participation and other externalised markers of these characteristics.

The 'small society' of the Academy

The way the field and habitus for police articulate with each other to socialise police officers can be demonstrated through a reference several officers used

[52] Wong (2012, p. 61) refers to 'obstacles in understanding Chinese policing' and that Western intellectual preference towards rationality (how to reason) can limit understanding sentimentality (what one feels) more aligned with oriental thinkers, including Confucius.

regarding the ‘small society’ of the People’s Police Academy. First impressions of the Academy in Hanoi might lead one to think it is a rigid paramilitary organisation where rules and orders are strictly enforced, robustly followed and consequences enacted. The parade ground is paved in a sandy coloured stone criss-crossed with thick lines of deep red, similar to the pillar upholding Hồ Chí Minh’s statue. Despite the area being vacant, it is easy to conjure images of it filled with police officers marching in formation with discipline and precision. Perhaps only people who have tried to coordinate such complex and precise movements can truly appreciate the difficulty involved. In addition to physical conformity new police need to fit into their new environment through being accepted by peers and superiors. Officers referred to the Police Academy as a ‘small society’ where people should be vigilant and avoid conflict in order to maintain good relations with other police. Police students referred to becoming more ‘mature’, ‘responsible’, learning to ‘avoid conflicts’ in social relationships, and having a deeper understanding of society and politics as a result of their training. Indeed, the Academy is a dynamic place of learning where adjustments are made to one’s behaviour through exposure to the environment and peers. One student described how to self-monitor in order to fit in:

> The PPA is like a small society. Everything you do there is closely watched and acknowledged by others, including teachers and cadets. Therefore, “managing your life around” in the PPA requires certain vigilance. That's, maybe, how you become more mature in PPA. Not all PPA students can become more mature after four years of training. If they are carefree and choose to live their college life not thinking about other affairs. Other universities, however, do unofficially teach students how to be more mature. But, you see, not many universities make all of their students live together in the campus … About relationships with others, if a student is not clever in building up relationships, he would make more “enemies” than “friends”. I cannot explain it clearly. But avoid conflict with others is a priority to police students. For myself, “Think

> more, talk less" is a key word. Talk means saying or giving your points of view on affairs, things that happen around you. There are things you should keep for yourself, not for "announcing in public". (Police student, male)

With respect to what thoughts should not be made public, a student said the following: 'The first thing you are taught when you arrive at the Academy is to never say anything bad about the Party or the Police' (Police student, male). Another student explained the consequences of saying something 'bad', citing an example from a few years prior where a student who criticised the quality of training was subsequently expelled. Life in the Academy as a kind of microcosm of society was also a theme raised by some participants:

> To me, the PPA can be considered as "a small society" when there are so many people with various different characters as well as social relationships that I have to face up and handle for four years. Thanks to that, I became more self-confident and experienced for dealing with professional work and relationships with other people. For example, friends, teachers and so on. It is the reason that I say I become more mature due to the training at the PPA. (Police student, male)

> The police environment is great to train in, makes me more mature and to equips me with firm stuff … I'm careful about what I talk about and what I do. (Police officer, male)

One student indicated that the length of exposure to police culture affects the way they act:

> Maybe if you talk to first or second-year students they might be more open but third, fourth or fifth-year students will be very closed. They have just been around longer and know not to say anything that could be critical. (Police student, male)

Though students in this study were not critical of their training, some indicated there were subjects that were 'boring'. It's worth noting this is not atypical for university students across the globe and it is difficult to quantify the importance of new students finding some subjects dull. What is significant is that this may indicate the limits on what is considered appropriate feedback to avoid the possibility of unfavourable consequences.

The police academy requires students to live onsite. Adjusting to residing on campus amongst other students and staff at the PPA was a source of anxiety for some. The importance of 'fitting in' was a key theme for newcomers who were nervous about starting new relationships with room-mates and making new friends. One student said she had shared dorm rooms with 10 and 16 others respectively but, feeling uncomfortable, moved off-campus to share a room with only four others (Police student, female).

Fitting into the Academy or the police organisation more broadly could be facilitated by having relatives in the occupation who could provide advice and guidance to meet training requirements as well as connections to advance through the ranks. A female student said her father helped her practice martial arts because she found it difficult. A male officer said he applied for a position and justified his suitability to the interviewers due to having a relative in a nearby department. He was unsuccessful, but his story is indicative of the perceived potential benefits associated with significant relatives, networks and patronage.

Family influences were a strong consideration for people joining the police. The move from living with family into the Police Academy traded one living environment for another – the small society of the Academy, with its close living quarters and dorm-style living. Obligations to family, and the potential consequences of not fulfilling them (namely, exclusion), mean police in Vietnam are possibly less isolated than their Western counterparts. Rituals for ancestor worship are traditionally conducted by the male head of a household which explains why a preference for sons remain strong as they are seen as important in linking generations past and present.

> In Europe or other countries, there is less connection with the family, for example, in Singapore, elderly parents live in a home for elderly people. In Vietnam, parents want to live with their children. Or sometimes, the parents want to live separately but the children won't have it. They live in the same house. (Police officer, female)

Alumni, appreciation money and financial 'socialisation'

The Police Academy hosts monuments and 'cultural spaces' to create a physical environment shaping police identity. In some cases, projects are sponsored by alumni from a specific graduate cohort,[53] for example, the replica Temple of Literature, Ethnic Costume Showroom, and Hồ Chí Minh Chamber were supported with funds from courses D2 (1976–1981), D3 (1977–1982) and Lao Cai Provincial Police, and D4 (1978–1983) respectively (People's Police Academy, 2017f). Gift-giving practices and reciprocity can manifest in different cultures in different ways. I made the following observations during fieldwork which describes some of the ways gift giving is practiced among police in Vietnam.

A red carpet welcomed the delegation of Ministry of Public Security officials to the graduation of class D37 in May 2016. After five years of academic study,[54] marching practice and martial arts, almost 700 students were receiving their certificate for a Bachelor of Policing. The ceremony began with a performance on stage by students dancing, or perhaps marching, to the song 'We are Vietnamese Police':[55]

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[53] Sometimes jointly with other police units. For details refer to the Facilities webpage of the PPA (People's Police Academy, 2017f).

[54] The last cohort before the implementation of the four-year curriculum commenced the following academic year.

[55] *Chúng tôi là người chiến sĩ công an Việt Nam*
Giữ thanh bình yên vui cuộc sống.
Chúng tôi là người chiến sĩ công an Việt Nam
Là con em của Tổ quốc yêu thương.
Đường tôi đi qua bao xóm, bao làng
Đường tôi đi qua bao núi, bao rừng
Đường tôi đi vượt bao gian khó.
Tổ quốc yêu mến ơi, một niềm tin với chúng tôi
Có chúng tôi giữ yên cuộc sống, có chúng tôi giữ yên đất trời.

We are Vietnamese police

Keep peace serenity happy life.

We are a Vietnamese police officer

The children of the country of love.

I go through the neighbourhood, the village

I go through the mountains, the forest

My road goes beyond hard times.

Dear Fatherland, a faith with us

Yes, we keep our lives, there we are.

The performance was followed by speeches from officials, a student and a parent. The speech by the father of one newly-minted police officers was accompanied by the presentation of a novelty oversized cheque, the type used in presentations to make visible the process of a financial transaction that otherwise takes place with a few strokes on a computer keyboard. The cheque was made out for VND60,000.00 (approximately US$3000) and presented to the Deputy Director of the PPA. The gesture piqued my interest as I am accustomed to the practice of money transferring from institutions to students through scholarships or bursaries in recognition of hard work. A police officer explained to me the donation was raised from students and their families to thank the Academy for educating and looking after the students over the training period (students must live on campus and are generally only allowed to leave every second weekend to visit family). Furthermore, it was described as an example of 'socialisation' *(xã hội hóa)* – a deliberate government strategy to encourage citizens, in this case police, to contribute to the financial well-being of public institutions.[56] To that extent, donations from police officers were seen to be acts of 'appreciation' towards the Academy for educating them and preparing them for police work.

[56] Salemink (2013, p. 182) also referred to 'socialisation' *(xã hội hóa)* and attributed its practice to changes in the national economy and the withdrawal of state funding from some services, 'meaning that people themselves have to pay for the services they need'.

The officer explained also that the recent opening of the café – called Café Sách (Book Coffee) – in the library building was partially funded by way of a call-out to police officers (former students) for donations. Interestingly, he explained that 'the more successful a police officer has become, the more they were expected to donate' to the Academy in 'appreciation'. Though the Academy might fundraise in this way for specific projects, such as the cafe, seeking donations from past students was a method regularly employed to bolster its finances. The Academy regards money raised by fundraising as a donation. Implied in the concept of donation is that the donor gives by choice, uncoerced, and of their own free will. 'Donations' at the PPA are recorded and, therefore, not anonymous. One officer said that, although it was not compulsory to donate to the Academy, the fact that it is known who has donated is an incentive to give – especially if the officer has to attend in-service training in future or pursue post-graduate qualifications. 'A person might feel uncomfortable returning to the Academy for training if they haven't donated to the Academy', said one officer.

Then there is the question of how much money should be gifted or donated. Several police staff said there is no fixed amount but there is frequently a correlation between position and amount: the higher the position of the gift recipient, the higher the amount; or the higher the income of the giver, the greater the amount. One police officer said people were obliged to participate in the giving and receiving of 'appreciation' money because it was expected within Vietnamese culture.

Pursuing a police career

Implications of the 'Professional' curriculum and police sub-cultures

The fact the police are trained as specialists rather than generalists has several implications. In a practical sense, some students expressed concern that, firstly, they may not be accepted into their preferred major, thus having to study for four years in an area that holds less interest for them; and, secondly, there is no guarantee that after graduating they will be allocated a job in the specific function they were trained in. For example, a person who studies Traffic Policing may be allocated a role in Administration. Though they may later transfer to the traffic

police, their immediate post may not be in the area they had hoped. Graduates may also have a preferred location for where they want to work as well as their role. Some students hoped to be transferred back to their home province to be close to family, whereas others wanted to stay in Hanoi because it afforded more career opportunities and the urban lifestyle suited them better. Thus, although graduates were guaranteed employment, their preferred position and location of work were less predictable.

Given the breadth of specialisations, graduates may be allocated to various positions in the MPS. They may work at ward, district or provincial levels, in administration, policy or logistics offices, and in prisons or forensic institutes. At ward police stations, Academy graduates work alongside police educated at the subordinate Police College but are viewed as having higher status and can hold supervisory positions.[57] Some people who did not initially pass the entrance exam for the Academy may be accepted by the Police College. After graduating from the Police College (two years) and working for two to three years, a person can earn bonus points to be accepted by the Academy. These students undertake a shorter, three-year course, in recognition of prior learning, to graduate with the bachelor's degree and be eligible to work at higher positions.

> When I was at high school my studying results and ability were not quite good, so I was not sure about choosing a major at university. My mother and father encouraged me to send in an application form for the PPA but I only … passed the test for Police College … There are two main differences between the College and Academy. Firstly, is about education. The program and curriculum. The knowledge cadets have to absorb at the Police College is more basic than the PPA and the subjects are fewer than the Academy. Secondly, the facilities. Obviously the PPA can offer a wider range of facilities and provide better facilities to study. Regarding the basicness of curriculum,

[57] Police College graduates also have a specialised curriculum, though not as in-depth as the Academy.

> when I was at the Police College we only have a number of credits according to each subject but at that time no emphasis on self-study or self-research and not taught from the officers. So, our knowledge is kind of limited. Only two years spent at Police College. When at the Police College, students only graduate from high school. After graduation we do three years out working so it is easier for me now to learn to be more professional at the Academy. (Police student, female)

The 'professional' curriculum, therefore, has implications for the way police work is structured and the impact this has on police culture or, indeed, sub-cultures. Upon entering the Academy, police students know they will study a different curriculum to those with a different major. They also know upon graduation that their position could be quite different to those of their peers. This differs from the established models in the global North where recruits study the same generalist modules and are assigned the role of general duties constable as their first exposure to police work, albeit differences in locations, community demographics and workplace cultures may present individuals with different experiences.[58] Some features which may foster different police cultures include the administrative level at which officers work, the nature of their role and contact with the community, and status attributed to tactics, characteristics, official position and social hierarchies. These are addressed in more detail below.

Ward and district level police

Police who graduate from the Academy in the same major can have different operational experiences depending on whether they are assigned to work at the ward or district level. The ward police have more direct interaction with the public and a lower jurisdiction for decision-making. For example, the role of ward police was described as:

[58] In line with other studies, there are likely differences between policing urban and rural areas. Participants in this study mostly had operational experience in urban areas so a useful distinction cannot be made. However, Chapter 7 does include some commentary regarding policing remote communities.

> The main work of ward police is dealing with receiving information about cases and emergencies first-hand. And reporting to the higher level, particularly the head of the District level to be told what to do with this case. Second, going on patrol and protecting social order and people where they work. Thirdly, co-operating with the district police in cases of arresting criminals or (people) involved in peace-breaching acts. (Police student, female)

An officer who recently graduated from the PPA and was deployed to a ward police station (where most officers are trained in a Police College) said: 'I didn't realise how much we had to work together and depend on each other' (Police officer, male). Thus, the bifurcated (Academy–College) education system must prepare officers to work alongside others with different training backgrounds.

As well as responding to emergencies, cultivating close relationships with the local community was emphasised as a core task of ward-level police, particularly in relation to passing on information to residents and eliciting information from them about various relevant concerns.

> Police officers go to each family to know more about their needs and understand more about problems with each area. Get information on the characteristics of each neighbourhood … each person has an individual police officer to call. (Police officer, female)

> It is about convincing people, building propaganda[59] about the harmfulness of criminals and for them to co-operate with the police to catch offenders. (Police officer, male)

> Police spread propaganda about laws and spread information. We don't make the law. (Police student, male)

[59] Police frequently used the term 'propaganda' to describe an aspect of their work, although one interpreter explained to me this referred to spreading information and educating people and that he was aware an English translation may have negative connotations.

Although the ward police work at the lowest administrative level and many officers are less qualified (thus unable to be promoted without further study), they can be important mediators between the community and other police departments and Party officials. Subsequently, ward police are important gatekeepers and decision-makers who can determine which community concerns are elevated to higher levels and can correspond to forms of cultural and economic capital.[60]

The nature of community contact

Though police who graduate from the Academy can work at either the ward or district level, their specific role will shape the nature of their interaction with the community. For example, police can work at the ward level as Criminal Police or Social Order Police (among others, e.g. Economic Police). Police with operational experience in both specialisations were interviewed in this study. One officer described the different policing approaches associated with these functions:

> Each police specialty has a different relationship with the community. Maybe the Criminal Police have conflict with the people who have illegal behaviour. The Social Order Police will provide information to the Criminal and Investigation Police. The Social Order Police will explain the law to the community. The Criminal Police focus on behaviour that is illegal. For example, in the Criminal Code, there are crimes for preparing to commit criminal behaviour, for example, like buying a knife and a gun. That's the behaviour we are looking for. Prevention is a priority compared to investigation. It is the job of the Criminal Police and the undercover police to prevent criminal behaviour. All of the officials have to do that, the undercover police do that, also the Social Order Police have to do that. (Police officer, male)

[60] See Koh (2001) 'Negotiating the Socialist State in Vietnam through Local Administrators: The Case of Karaoke Shops' for more detail on ward police as gatekeepers who can facilitate evasion of prosecution for illegal activities.

I asked the officer to explain what he meant about the role of the undercover police in crime prevention. He responded:

> [Undercover police] do social prevention. It means they co-operate with other organisations and people to deliver propaganda, to help the people to understand the law, for example, the Department of Education and the media. There are two types of undercover police. First, for social prevention as above with propaganda. Secondly, prevention by using tactics which focus on people who could become criminals in future. The undercover police use professional tactics to investigate these cases.

When I asked the officer how police determine who might become criminals in future in order to target with undercover tactics, his response was: 'Sorry. That is a matter of national security'. The types of behaviours or attitudes exhibited by these officers likely have implications for how they are perceived and the nature of their relationship with the community.

Status accorded to subject

During interviews with police students and officers, it became clear that there was a hierarchy among the major subjects which attributed some with a higher status than others. Whilst some justifications for higher status accord with what is often regarded as 'real' police work, for example, the crime fighting and crime detection aspects of policing, there were also some variations. Some police said Economic Police and Traffic Police pathways were highly desirable. Economic policing was described as attractive because police were able to liaise with businesses and external agencies which made the work interesting. In both cases, possibilities for extra remuneration through increased exposure to the public in circumstances which may result in economic benefits (informal payments, bribery) were mentioned as possibilities for their desirability. One officer said the two most popular specialisations were the Criminal Police and the administration police (State Management and Social Order Police). The latter may seem anomalous. The Criminal Police is associated with crime-fighting and almost entirely male-

dominated, whereas the administration police are viewed as more suitable for women (though given the gender quota women are still a minority). So, why is Social Order considered a highly attractive role? One possibility is that administration police is responsible for the management of the household registration system which can provide economic opportunities through informal payments for processing residents' documentation necessary for accessing social services.

The specialised curriculum reflects the way police work is structured. For example, the following quote describes how the delineation between catching and interrogating a suspect works in practice:

> The Criminal Police capture the criminals, but the Investigation Police talk to them. In other countries, it is one job but here it is two jobs. An advantage of this is that people do their jobs quite well, for example, the Criminal Police don't have to think about paperwork and process, they just focus on catching the criminal. The disadvantage is that sometimes they don't have good co-operation between divisions, they don't work well with other police. The Investigation Police didn't witness the crime and capture the criminal and so it makes the procedures between them time consuming. If two people were one, it could be simpler. They're trying to co-operate better. (Police student, male)

It is worth noting there is a trend towards specialist interrogators in some foreign jurisdictions.

Gender

Decisions regarding how prospective police students were allocated to specialisations are highly gendered. One senior officer (male) indicated there were four out of 13 specialisations suitable for women including: State Management and Social Order and Safety (1.1); Forensic Science (1.5); Traffic Police (1.6); and, Criminal Sentence Enforcement and Judicial Assistance (1.7).

He qualified this categorisation by further noting that only certain roles within these specialist functions were suitable for women. For example, women in Traffic Police were most suited to vehicle registration and management or 'traffic safety propaganda', i.e., office work. Notwithstanding, there are some efforts to increase the number of women doing operational traffic duties (see Chapter 8 for further discussion of gender).

Age

Because Criminal Police were seen as prestigious because they were involved in crime-fighting and arresting criminals, i.e., 'real' police work, the physical nature of this work appeared to make it more desirable for younger officers. Investigation Police, who are responsible for interrogation of suspects, were more likely to be older and were more difficult for me to access for this study. Although police students can study to be Criminal or Investigation police, the process by which a suspect is caught by the Criminal Police and handed to the Investigation Police meant the latter were more likely to be more experienced and mentors to the former. A male police student said it was often desirable for graduates of Criminal Police, after gaining some experience, to transfer to the Investigation Police. Although there are distinct differences, this process resembles the progression from patrol officer to detective described in policing scholarship in the UK and US. The differential status associated with Investigation and Criminal police officers was described in the following way:

> The relationship is like supervisor and student, or partners with a very strong bond. Respect is paid from the younger officers to the older ones. Everything the Investigation Police says should be followed. Sometimes the Investigation Police have to teach the young Criminal Police a lot and it takes time to teach and they teach them well. (Police student, male)

The specialisation of police training requires co-operation between functional roles, however, some functions can have higher status for different reasons. In relation to the Investigation Police, experience was associated with age and this

reinforces a general cultural deference to elders. Respect for elders, and the high regard and status given to educators and teachers in Vietnam, also manifested in certain classroom dynamics between officers and students in the Academy:

> In Vietnam, from Confucian teachings, the teacher always knows best and is always right. So, the student can't question the teacher about something they said. Also, if the teacher is wrong or doesn't know the answer, they will be very embarrassed because in our culture the teacher is supposed to know everything. They can't say, 'I don't know'. Students are also mindful not to embarrass the teacher with a difficult question. (Police officer, male)

A female police officer said that to be a teacher and a police officer was something to be proud of as both held special status in Vietnam.

> Everyone in society respects the police. We respect them (the people). They respect us. I'm careful about my actions and behaviour as a police officer. In Vietnamese culture, the most powerful jobs are police and teachers. When you go out on the road and you say you are a teacher everyone looks up to you. (Police officer, female)

Another officer commented on the style of teaching in the Academy, comparing it with methods observed while undertaking a master's degree in conjunction with the University of Maryland in the United States:

> The teacher [from Maryland] requires us to prepare before the lesson and contribute to group discussion. It is very hard because you really have to concentrate and think. It gives me a headache and makes me tired. It is very different to how we teach in the Academy. Here, the teachers usually just talk, and you don't have to worry about being asked a question. I think it is good to have discussion, but it is hard because we are not used to that method. (Police officer)

These comments reflect a culture where knowledge is conveyed from teacher to student, from older to younger people, and where hierarchy is valued and authority unquestioned.

Organisational and social hierarchy

In light of the police hierarchy, and the cultural deference to elders, a premium is placed on an individual's ability to maintain or promote harmony in relation to the community, one's peers and supervisors, and as a leader. Consequences for transgressing social norms perceived as being critical or disrespectful to a senior could affect one's reputation and chances for promotion, and subsequently affect higher pay and status. According to a police officer among the eldest in this study, possibilities for injecting new ideas into policing remain limited due to what are deemed age-appropriate actions and responses.

> As people get older they become more conservative and think no-one can question them. Even a young person who knows they are right can't question a senior person. It could cause them problems and get criticism and affect their promotion. (Police officer, male)

One of the drawbacks to respecting hierarchy in this way is that socialisation leads to established authority going unchallenged, placing limits on capability and adaptability. Junior police are told not to talk about things they don't know about. For example, if a regulation does not make sense to a person, the most likely explanation, in this worldview is, that they probably don't have enough information to understand. The junior police person should just follow the regulation because due diligence would have already been done by senior officers. This construct discourages any questioning of authority. It heightens the perception that senior officers are highly capable and that subordinates need to accept that they are inferior. Subordinates simply don't know enough to understand the situation fully and should therefore just do as they're told (Paraphrased from fieldnotes, 2016).

Deciding not to directly question or confront somebody with a concern could also be a sign of respect and not wanting to diminish a person's perception of their own capabilities or status. A police officer said:

> Our culture is very indirect. We try to be polite. We don't want anyone to feel bad. But it can be unproductive. It means that sometimes something needs to be done but we don't want to upset anyone, so we don't say things, or we say to them indirectly and conversations go around and around, and it takes a long time for some things to get done. If there is a problem, we don't want to blame one person. It is about saving face of the other person. We want to be respectful to them and not make them feel bad. (Police officer, male)

One interviewee said that it was difficult to question a supervisor even if the supervisor was clearly wrong. He said if people didn't like their boss, they would not usually tell them or confront them directly, though neither would they go out of their way to help them, and might passively withhold support, so the boss's underperformance would be noticed and get them moved or rotated elsewhere. This somewhat passive form of resistance has been identified by others as a general cultural characteristic (Kerkvliet, 2005) which appears to be found also in the police force. Some police indicated they would speak up if a colleague or supervisor was not doing what they thought was right, for example:

> If doing an investigation, a boss told me to do something against the law, I would point out the law to him and say if you want to go against the law that's fine, but you must say that it is your decision. Otherwise, mostly, I would obey instructions, even if I thought it was not a good idea. I think most police will just do as they're told … Many bosses are not competent because they get promoted due to their relationships and not their ability, so sometimes they don't know their job. But we have to follow them. Our culture is to do as told. Follow instructions. (Police officer, male)

Police must obey their superiors, but if in doing so they break the law, they contravene Article 30 of the Law on People's Public Security Forces (2014) which

prohibits them from acting against or not abiding by State laws and statutes. This places officers in a precarious position.

When asked if they had witnessed misconduct by a colleague, several students and officers indicated they did not want to answer the question. This suggests that the issue is contentious and possibly divisive. What is interesting is that one student who responded did so using a hypothetical example.

> My choice for this is that I would speak to that police officer in a personal private conversation. I would confront them and ask if they have a good reason. Then I will sympathise with him and let things go. But if his reaction is bad when I ask about it or hesitating or his reason is bad I will mention this in the next meeting of the station … I would have nothing to be worried about when I talk to them in person or in the meeting because I know that I can make a comfortable way to satisfy both that person and me and happily correct it and that police officer will not treat me unfairly in the future. (Police student, male)

There were those who felt comfortable to talk about challenging others behaviours and though dissent was unusual, there were cultural supports for those who chose to speak up. A different male student said he had seen a senior colleague detain a suspect using too much force, so he confronted the officer later and 'suggested some other methods to arrest or deal with the suspect which were much more softly'. He said he did not report the matter to anyone else and when asked if he was concerned about confronting his colleague about the matter, he responded: 'No. We think we are brothers, so it doesn't make me nervous'. The student described his intervention as making a 'suggestion', which could be a strategy for mitigating potential fallout from a more strenuous critique. A senior officer explained that police do not have to worry about raising a concern about the conduct of another officer if they were doing so from a position of righteousness. He referred to the idiom, '*Cây ngay không sợ chết đứng'* ('The tree is not afraid to die standing'), explaining to me that in this context it meant an officer who reports a colleague's bad behaviour or misconduct has nothing to fear

because they are doing the right thing. In sum, though there was a range of strategies to deal with a peer's wrongdoing, the most common response among police was to speak in private to the officer concerned to give them an opportunity to justify their actions.

Diversity and inclusion: gender, ethnic minorities and LGBTI communities

The concepts of diversity and inclusion as a way for the police to be reflective of the community are documented in studies on policing in Western countries (A. McLeod & Herrington, 2017; Prenzler, Fleming, & King, 2010). Though relations between ethnic minorities and the government have been complex, the police recognise the importance of having ethnic minority officers policing their own communities and recruitment policies reflected some differential criteria to facilitate their employment.[61] There were no such strategies to recruit people from sexual and gender minorities (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex, LGBTI). Although the Constitution (2013) has provisions against discrimination, Vietnam lacks specific legal protections for LGBTI communities.[62] In an interview with a female student, I explained the concept of diversity in police employment in Western countries and asked whether it was an appropriate strategy for the police legitimacy in Vietnam. She responded:

> There is a difference in culture. In Vietnam, the government does not recognise gay people, also the police don't recognise gay people. Further related to ethnic [minority] groups, the PPA and MPS [Ministry of Public Security] give a high priority to ethnic [minority] groups to study with the police. In terms of women, they can't work in the frontline, but they can work in the office [and] foreigners can't join due to the political system. [For legitimacy] I think the first thing is that the police should have a good appearance and be

[61] Ethnic minority applicants can be 2 cm shorter and weigh 2 kg less than the standard criteria (Bộ Công An, 2016, Article 6.2(d))

[62] Article 5.2. All ethnicities are equal, unified and respect and assist one another for mutual development; all acts of national discrimination and division are strictly forbidden.
Article 16.2. No one shall be discriminated against based on his or her political, civic, economic, cultural or social life.

> good inside. The police need good behaviour and polite behaviour. (Police student, female)

Although reporting of sexual harassment and assault is low in the community because it may upset patriarchal power structures, their occurrence inside the police – a male-dominated organisation – was difficult to assess. Several male and female staff and students were asked about sexual harassment or assault in the People's Police Force. Three of the four people asked about this issue denied that it ever happened in the police and appeared genuinely surprised at the prospect, even when I mentioned it was not uncommon in police forces around the world. However, it became apparent in one interview that what constituted 'sexual harassment or assault' was unclear. A senior female officer initially thought only an incident of rape or where a serious physical injury occurred constituted a problem. Subsequently, a more nuanced line of questioning in a following interview elicited a different response where the female student indicated sexual jokes by men were commonplace. She said:

> In my department in some situations we have a tea break, some men try to joke with us about sex and we feel upset and say, "Don't do that", and give them feedback…. Sometimes they comment relating to a part of my body "so sexy, so beautiful"…. I feel uncomfortable…. Sometimes I'm so busy so I ignore it because it occurs almost every day. It occurs in the Police College, the PPA and in the District where I worked. (Police student, female)

The student denied being reluctant to complain due to fear of repercussions affecting her future career path. The #MeToo movement has opened conversations about sexual harassment in Vietnam. Gender expert Dr Khuất Thu Hồng, from the Institute for Social Development Studies, Hanoi, indicates sexual harassment is often considered within the realm of 'normal' behaviour towards women (Khuất, 2004; Taft, 2018). Dr Khuất Thu Hồng also suggests that acknowledging a wider problem of sexual harassment could be seen as a failure of the state, given sexual harassment was rarely publicly discussed prior to embarking on *đổi mới* (economic renovation) (Taft, 2018). In this sense, women

are expected to bear the burden of ill-treatment to protect the veneer of social harmony.

Promotions

Policing in Vietnam is generally a lifetime career. One male student said: ‘Most police will never know any other job – unless they do something like a serious violation and they will be charged and sent to court’. However, with proposed major budget cuts, including the PPA student intake being almost halved to 370 for 2017-2018 and associated reductions in staffing (People's Police Academy, 2017c), occupational stability may be challenged in future. Policing was previously a domain for the poor to access tertiary education, although it was indicated to me by a police officer that increasing competitiveness may mean the selection of new recruits would be weighted towards those who have networks and can contribute and reciprocate benefits to insiders.

Police can be considered for promotion after serving sufficient time at each rank, but there is scope for early promotion for high performers. For example, the Law on People’s Public Security Forces (National Assembly, 2014) Article 2c states:

> [For people] who record particularly outstanding achievements in crime prevention and fighting and professional activities, may be considered for a skip in ranks; if they record particularly outstanding achievements in work, scientific research or study, they may be considered for ahead-of-time rank promotion.

Even though police are trained in a specialised manner, they can transfer laterally and learn another field on the job and through in-service training. It was not clear in this research how easy this process is to navigate although the appreciation for specialists (and associated capital) over generalists appeared to have limited scope for mobility across functions. One officer said policy on job security (a person may hold one position for 30 years) limited staff turnover and rotation, and may be hindering fresh ideas from coming into the workplace. I asked the officer about whether the police had policies regarding forced rotation – an oft-used anti-corruption measure in some international jurisdictions to prevent or disrupt

unhealthy collegial relationships in high-risk units. He said, although people can be transferred or demoted due to poor performance, there were no policies that required a fixed period of service to facilitate change. Indeed, he said that this would be inappropriate for the Vietnamese system and that policing approaches overseas cannot necessarily be transferred to Vietnam. Specifically, he proposed: 'In my opinion, only about 40 per cent of foreign knowledge can apply here' (Police officer, male).

Some police expressed concern about people being promoted based not on their ability but on their relationships with influential people, although one officer was quick to qualify his statement as not necessarily pertaining to Vietnam:

> I don't know. [laughs] In some cases it is maybe related to relationships. Hard to describe. Maybe. I'm not sure about that. Actually, I think it is similar in any police force in the world because we are all people. We are not mechanical. I think we may control it in some efficient way. If we can't control some problems relating to the relationships between staff and leaders it could be negative, and it could make the police force suffer from corruption…. I don't mean that it is in the police force in Vietnam, I mean it is in all forces in the world. It is the same as that. (Police officer, male)

Police could also improve their promotional prospects by being 'active'.[63] A female officer described 'active' in the following way: 'Active means willing to do anything. Being active is a main feature to get a higher position by building a good reputation. If someone wants to get a higher position, they must be responsible and be able to solve problems, they are willing to show up in difficult situations'. A senior police officer commented that the ways police can be recruited and promoted might be undermined:

> Relationships are very important, the most important thing in the police. For example, a rich police officer can take out

[63] 'Active' can mean 'năng động', as in being energetic or invigorated. Or it can also be used pejoratively, 'chạy chọt', relating to using a 'backdoor' or receiving benefits through connections.

> others for dinner and build relationships which will help him get promoted. A policeman who is poorer can't do that and so even though he is smarter than the rich guy, he will not get promoted because he can't build the relationships. This is very sad about the police. It means we are not promoting the best people. I worry about the future of the police because it may be that, more and more, only the rich police with connections get promoted rather than people with more ability. (Paraphrased from fieldnotes, 2016)

A survey of public officials found that 17–19 per cent reported that having powerful connections helped secure a job or promotion, while 13–16 per cent said family/friends connections were helpful (World Bank, 2012, p. 73). In this study, an officer commented on the importance of family connections in a workplace:

> It is common sense in Vietnam to have family and relatives to work in the same workplace so it's better for a candidate and so it is easier to get support and guidance from a superior who is a relative. It is not convincing for staying [in one office], but it can create better co-operation between divisions. I know it's not like this in other countries. (Police student, male)

The reference to it being 'common sense' for family and relatives to work together (particularly in a large organisation) also reflects the weight applied to the perceived benefits of group cohesiveness and stability in social relations, rather than selecting people who might be more qualified but present an uncertain cultural fit.

Performance management

One police supervisor from an administrative unit in the Academy was frustrated that some of his colleagues and staff were unproductive, leaving him to take up the slack. I asked how he, as a supervisor, addressed this lack of productivity as well as what mechanisms were in place for periodic performance review. He said

there was no structured approach to give feedback to subordinates in the form of an annual review, for example. The only way to address the work output was to speak to the person privately on an as-needed basis, though this was generally avoided as much as possible. One concern was that the supervisor was not involved in staff selection processes and that, because it was a sought-after office to work in, people may have been appointed based on their social networks rather than on merit. As a result, the supervisor was reluctant to have discussions regarding performance management with any of his staff because if somebody felt aggrieved, regardless of how appropriate or constructive the feedback, they may complain to their 'contact' who could block any promotional aspirations of the supervisor in future. In contrast, having connections within the organisation or work unit may have beneficial effects on work performance:

> We have to think very carefully before we do anything because we must think of other people's, for example, our relative's images. Sometimes people think that they can do anything if their relative is a manager of somewhere, he will think of himself more freely and not always do the right thing. (Police student, male)

> We choose to talk in private and in person with someone who is not doing their job right. After that if things don't change they might bring it to a public meeting. It depends on the temper of the boss. Also, it can be hard to tell someone they aren't doing a good job because they might be related to someone higher up and it might come back poorly on you. (Police student, male)

> After five years study in the university they have their own lifestyle and go to work in the police station and have many experiences. In Vietnam, they have no experience except from high school. When they make a simple mistake, their manager will tell them how to do it, they will get a warning. After two or three warnings they will have to report to the

> manager. They will only be reported for serious mistakes. (Police officer, female)

Overall, there is a complex interplay between managing relationships, work experience and individual personalities which influences a person's motivations at work.

Asking superiors advice as positive interaction

Going from the Academy to a police station was described as nerve-wracking and exciting. A female described her experience and how she approached fitting in:

> When I was a junior officer I was new to everyone. What I did was getting as much conversation with other officers in order to know them more and introduce myself. When we are working together it brings us closer together and strengthen our bonds. That is how we fit in with the team. In Vietnam, most senior police are very open in terms of work and junior police often do not hesitate to ask a senior officer what to do. The role of senior police is to create an environment for the junior to prove what they can do and then if the junior works well, if they see your potential they will be more open. (Police student, female)

An experienced officer said that when students come to do their internship at the station they are considered like a 'brother' and that it seemed colleagues also felt good about the arrival of junior officers (Police officer, female). A junior officer talked about her experience at a police station as being positive:

> My boss and the senior officers really cared about the students and especially the females. Even with much work to do with the criminals and complicated things we do together. The police were really friendly. It was a good experience. (Police student, female)

I explained to a male student that a tendency in Australian policing was for junior officers to 'keep their mouth shut' and not ask too many questions of senior officers so as not to annoy them, and asked him whether it was similar in Vietnam. He seemed surprised at this notion and responded that it was normal to ask experienced officers questions and that he had not felt uncomfortable in doing so during his internship. Though this may indicate a difference in the way new officers are included in the workplace in Vietnam, the broader cultural tendency to respect elders and defer to authority may mean junior officers are careful to ask questions in a way that is not perceived as disrespectful or a challenge to authority. Rather, it shows agency and being active in building relationships.

Party membership

Police are required to be Party members. As there are benefits to membership of career advancement, police as Party representatives are expected to be good role models and to strictly follow Government regulations. This can limit some personal choices outside of work, for example, restrictions on the number of children (contravention may result in a fine or limiting promotional prospects), who one can marry, and restrictions on travelling abroad. An officer reflected:

> When I joined the police almost 20 years ago, it was very hard to get into the Party. But now, they require everyone to join. I think that there are fewer people who want to join the Party and so now they need more people to be accepted. Being a Party member has benefits but also there is less freedom. You have to follow all regulations. (Police officer, male)

A younger officer explained his view on justifications for the regulations:

> Mainly because of the need to keep policemen following the government and the Party. They need to devote everything. For example, a spouse who is a foreigner might clash and change [the officer's] mind about the government and Party. Christianity is linked to Western ideas. Police can't travel abroad because the Government are afraid the police will

> have contact with the idea of multiple [political] parties and come to have a change of heart and then the police will not devote completely to the Government and Party in Vietnam. Ideally, you have to devote fully but even if you can't really devote you still have to follow [the ideology and regulations]. (Police student, male)

There may appear to be a contradiction between the fact lecturers can go to the United States to study at the University of Maryland and the Party's concern with outside interference. There are many examples where Vietnam is trying to balance or strategically use 'foreign' ideas or technology where they are politically useful. Some of these are explored in more depth in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has described aspects that shape both the field and habitus for police in Vietnam. It reveals that, despite some similarities, there are distinct differences in the policing field compared with the dominant discourse of policing in the global North. Notable differences include the connection between policing and politics, and the status of tertiary education among police. Additionally, the structure and content of police education (and post-education deployment) facilitates hierarchies and sub-cultures pertaining to different police functions. The fact that students commence their training knowing that they will study a specific major, may also mean that sub-cultures are initiated and entrenched earlier than in police organisations where generalised training is undertaken by all recruits. These differences mean that the capital associated with certain aspects of policing and police culture differs for symbolic, social and economic reasons. The component of training which included a month-long homestay also marks a difference from police training in the global North. The broader societal appreciation of tertiary study means it is accepted or indeed expected that police should have a degree qualification. This contrasts to some Western countries where the question about whether police should be degree qualified is debated (as is the question of who pays for it).

There are also differences in how the concept of 'culture' is constructed which is relevant to our understanding of police culture. Academy activities for the purposes of socialising students into the organisation, such as contests, provide an opportunity for students (and staff) to practice and express loyalty and solidarity. These activities, along with formal instruction on ideology, are designed to cultivate in police a notion of higher moral purpose as well as to afford a means to assess their external characteristics and expressions. That police should aim to develop a higher level of morality than that of the general community has been reported in the Chinese context (Jiao, 2001). This attribution can be sourced to an ideology that 'emphasizes the interpersonal integrity of cultivated individuals', as suggested by Martin (2014, p. 475) in his description of a 'policing by virtue' model in Taiwan (and East Asia more broadly). The emphasis on cultivating morality as something to be learned and experienced, rather than an application of 'logic' (Wong, 2012, p. 61), may explain the tendency towards the requirements for tertiary civil service (and police) education which differentiates some East and Southeast Asian approaches from Anglo-American.

Western police might also view themselves as inhabiting a higher moral ground. This position is routinely conceptualised as a justification for certain behaviours and as delineation between good and evil. Claims to higher standards of morality are reflected in comments in this study where police are described as having higher standards of morality than the general public and where distinctions are made between us and them. Participants in the study were, however, consistently able to hold multiple ideas around morality, acknowledging that there are good and bad people in the police and in the community. Though global North and Vietnamese police forces may each claim moral superiority, the paradox remains that, where Vietnam might be considered a collective society, morality is an internalised pursuit. In contrast, Western police 'high-mindedness' was a judgement about one's moral position in relation to others (Crank, 1998).

The research shows there are hierarchies between, for example, police functions (e.g. Criminal and Investigation Police) or roles (e.g. lecturers and students), which were subsequently accorded different characteristics or status. This resembled research from other countries regarding the existence of police sub-

cultures because there are different positions in policing which shape the field and habitus for officers differently, for example, management cop versus street cop (Reuss-Ianni & Ianni, 1983) or detective work (Ericson, 1981; Hobbs, 1988; Young, 1991). In spite of different political systems, there are also parallels with new recruits in other countries and how they try to fit in with their new environment in different studies.

However, in analysing the data regarding how officers described specific roles, especially roles they were not doing themselves, there were notable differences from the international studies. Police officers were rarely, even when pressed, critical of other officers or the organisation. This was a marked difference especially in regard to the study by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) where officers openly expressed an antagonistic relationship between patrol officers and supervisors. Granted, there may be methodological explanations and concerns regarding confidentiality and possible consequences to such openness, and there were instances of critique; however, there is an overriding cultural tendency in Vietnam (Kerkvliet, 2005; Lucius, 2009), and in policing as a subset of society, that values harmony over being critical of others which is different to individualist cultures. Stability in professional relationships was valued over disruption which was also reflected in justifications for patronage. These examples highlight the importance of understanding the wider political and social context in which police operate and the determinants of value in police culture.

Crafting an organisational identity for police has roots in a historical sense and is constituted in the present by those who are given entrée to the occupational domain. Recruitment and selection practices are important because they speak to what attributes and characteristics are valued by an organisation. Learning to become a police officer at the Academy is influenced by both history and current politics. We see socialist links, as exemplified in Lenin's quote about striving to learn, while at the same time a greater engagement with developed countries, including former foes such as the United States. Foreign engagement has positive and negative capital. There is a tension in engaging with (some) foreigners due to attendant limitations. For example, as stated, police cannot travel overseas without Party approval (for work or leisure) and cannot marry a

foreigner or a Christian for fear of infiltration or weakening loyalty to the country vis-à-vis the Party. The attractiveness of policing as a career depends on a trade-off with other factors, including remuneration, compared with alternative, less dangerous occupations in the given economic environment and perceived status of police.

Chapter 7: Bamboo, boundaries and benevolence: police culture, norms and practices in transition

Introduction

Around the streets of Hanoi, police presence is marked by the numerous ward police stations *(công an phường),* painted the colour of pale daffodils, dotted amongst narrow shopfronts. Stations are branded with large red and yellow signage, a red lightbox with the police logo, even a letterbox bolted to the façade for receiving anonymous complaints. Some police stations have an enclosed front workroom where the officer on desk duties benefits from air-conditioning amidst steamy weather, but many do not. Street-facing front offices are typically rooms with wide-open frontage giving the impression of public accessibility to the nation's police force, if only to their lowest rung. These open spaces are a visual marker, the lax security indicative of what is to be understood by outsiders as a low risk of serious confrontation. The other notable feature is the large, dark timber desk. It sits mid-office, clear of any technology or hardware, allowing full view of the occupant perched behind it in sartorial green and red epaulettes with gold trim. Around midday, as the day hits full heat, it is not uncommon to see people sleeping; they lie slung across a row of chairs at the entrance. Sometimes those napping are wearing police uniforms.

The informality and simplicity of ward police stations provide a particular picture of Vietnamese policing. It would, however, be unwise to draw from this picture more extensive conclusions about the inner workings of the nation's police force. Understanding the complexity of Vietnamese police means looking deeper into what it means to be a police officer in a force often accused of abusing its power and criticised for lacking accountability.

This chapter investigates a range of ways officers perceive their function in society and what influences the ways they go about their work. My investigation examines the relationship between the police and the community, most significantly how police discretion may both improve or damage their relationships with the community. It explores how police balance their local relationships with their accountability to superiors and the system. Maintaining

this balance requires considerable finesse but it is a critical strategy used across Vietnam to ensure minimal disruption to organisational and social harmony, and political stability. Why is the role of police so important to maintaining harmony and stability? When the police function includes navigating political systems that punish dissent, the way police operate at the lower levels is an important arena for state-society relations.

Social order and local policing

Though the formation of a public police force in Vietnam is relatively recent, the functions of policing in terms of regulating social order have existed since pre-modern times. Sovereign power was exercised by monarchs who oversaw land-holdings, markets, education, tax collection and the acquisition of soldiers (Taylor, 2013). Overseeing social order was largely decentralised at local levels, giving rise to a common (and still current) idiom, *Phép Vua thua lệ làng* (the King's influence stops at the village gate). As one of the research participants said: 'Imagine long ago, villages were surrounded by bamboo making it difficult for outsiders to get in. They were like independent communities'. The dynamics of village life were maintained by low population mobility, homogeneity and a communal ethic to ensure social order. Whilst the collective created a form of equality among villagers, it existed within an underlying rationale (*lý do/*reason*)* for a hierarchical social structure to sustain the natural order – that there was a proper form of all relationships (Jamieson, 1993). The social structure was a patriarchal system in which filial piety (*hiếu thảo)* emphasised the primacy of male blood ties and, consequently, the subjugation of women. In Vietnamese culture, village-level independence meant local customs and conventions *(hương ước)* took precedence and centrally-made laws and policies might not be treated as significant or binding (H. Q. Nguyen, 2010). This enabled local village elders to 'dispense contextually relevant forms of justice' (H. Q. Nguyen, 2010, p. 362). Despite increased urbanisation and population migration, localised relationships remain an important factor in modern Vietnam. Indeed, a police officer reinforced the contemporary importance of connections by saying: 'In Vietnam, if you have no relationships you can't get anything done'.

In urban areas, interaction with the ward (modern day village) police is one arena where police-community relationships are shaped.[64] The local policing model and the broad functions police undertake (e.g., fight fires, protect the environment, approve travel papers [National Assembly, Ordinance on Commune Police, 2008, Article 9]) result in a certain level of familiarity and frequency of contact with the public.[65] These relationships do not always reflect vertical hierarchies but, instead, mirror complex social ecologies.

One student described how she felt after seeing people she had arrested:

> Firstly, I feel very sorry for [people I arrested] because they are just businessmen, so I tried my best to reduce their punishment … Some of them are poor and so I felt pity for them. [My internship] was for four months. I practised at the same police station [as a previous internship] and met the same people again – even the people I have arrested. I felt a little shy [seeing the people I arrested before] because what they did was not very serious, and they have to earn a living and I feel sorry for them. (Police student, female)

The sentiment expressed by the student shows she was sympathetic to the economic deprivation experienced by people she arrested for what she considered to be minor offences. Familiarity between police and local constituents has been reported as a mediating factor for police to be lenient, and documented especially in respect of the policing of illegal street vendors (Koh, 2004b, 2006; Turner & Schoenberger, 2012). This has a number of consequences: communities may 'get way with' minor infractions while police may gain access to information and even offenders. For example, although the

[64] In rural areas, wards are referred to as communes and are less likely to have police educated at the Police Academy in senior roles, or indeed, at all. Whilst the need for commune police to be better trained has been acknowledged, progress has been slow (People's Police Academy, 2013a).

[65] Ward police stations are a mixture of Academy and College trained staff. Only Academy staff are qualified to hold the position of Ward Police Chief and are more likely than their College trained subordinates to hold portfolio positions responsible for specific issues, which may also include overseeing a small crew. While the hierarchy can shape the nature of duties undertaken by officers both Academy and College staff work closely with communities.

household registration system has become more relaxed and its enforcement may vary, residents are required to report to police to register any overnight visitors, including relatives or friends. The *hộ khẩu* system facilitates a specific police-community interaction; when they visit residents under the guise of a *hộ khẩu*, check police are able to elicit information about a neighbourhood.[66] A male police officer said the population of his police zone (ward) was approximately 10,000 residents. He was responsible for managing the *hộ khẩu* of 1000 of them. Another, different police officer joked that the informal nature of their networks meant they didn't have to go on patrol; the police just waited in the station for the community to report transgressions or suspicions to them (Police officer, male).

The police in Vietnam described types of patrol that included riding a motorbike, driving in a 'small truck', and foot patrol. There were different ways 'frontline' or 'street' policing was undertaken.[67] Though there may be variations in how police stations execute their duties, one officer explained that 'patrol' meant doing a street sweep in a small truck two or three times a day – in the morning, afternoon and evening. During these sweeps, police could look out for visible signs of crime, stop and talk to people in the street, and also act as a deterrent to would-be criminals who see them – similar to Western practice. With respect to foot patrol, he explained how it involved going inside people's private residences:

> They only go on foot at night when they visit families in the neighbourhood to hear about their problems and to get some information on how things have been going around like, "Do you see any strangers wandering around these days?" If you do, tell me, we'll see to it. [We go at night] because it is only at night that most people are home. By doing that, police in the ward level have a very wide range of intel. Like a thousand eyes system. Each police officer is assigned with a neighbourhood and mostly go by themselves to their specified neighbourhood … For

[66] The *hộ khẩu* system went partially online after completion of fieldwork for this study which may reshape police-community interactions to an extent.
[67] Even referring to 'frontline' or 'street' police is not a neat translation to the Vietnamese context.

> example, when police visit a family, apart from asking if something is not right, that police officer may check if there is any person paying a visit to that family. Normally, the act of informing police of someone visit your home may [now] be done online, but police officers must be very careful, online informing [only] is not enough. Officers would want to see [for] themselves who this guest is.
>
> There was a case that a wanted criminal went to his cousin's home to hide but the cousin didn't tell the police both online and offline. If the officer had not paid a visit the criminal would have been safe and got away later. By doing this day by day, police officers are able to know every single person in the assigned area. Talk to every single one of them. Even if there is hundred or a thousand of them. Each day an officer may visit four or five families. I can't really tell how often a person would talk to an officer, but if they have issues they may visit the ward police station during day and ask to see that officer in charge of their area. It is the act of preventing crimes and not letting crimes happen and then go solve it because there are crimes which are so severe the consequences could be dangerous. (Police officer, male)

Consequently, community expectations of what the police do, and if, when and how they might encounter police can vary. The fact that police frequently have reason to enter the private homes of residents may change the conception of public and private space compared with contexts where police do not perform this function. This social and administrative role has been associated with corruption and intimidation of residents (McKernan & McWhirter, 2009) and can mean if residents upset the local authorities, police may withhold their services in oversight of the household registers, affecting access to other social services, such as education.

Police expectations of residents include 'obligations' to participate in community safety, described by another officer as: 'Each civilian is a security officer of the community, so they have a responsibility to provide information [to police] and this is why Vietnamese police can deal with problems very fast and very effectively' (Police student, male). This responsibility is enshrined in Article 46 of the Constitution (2013) which states that citizens have a 'duty to obey' and to 'join in the safeguarding of national security, social order and safety'.

Community participation in crime and social control occurs at various levels, blurring the formal–informal and public–private mechanisms in Vietnamese society. For example, Street Knights *(Hiệp sĩ đường phố)* are volunteers (although they may be paid through informal arrangements by ward police) who have no official training or equipment but who carry out neighbourhood patrols to prevent crime. The model was first recognised in Bình Dương province (near Hồ Chí Minh City) in 2003 in response to concerns about rising crime and was adopted several years later in Hồ Chí Minh City (VietNamNetBridge, 2018). The program's implementation has evolved slowly and the Street Knights continue to be regarded as upholders of law and order, although there are questions about how effectively they perform this role. In Bình Dương province, the Street Knights model came under the supervision of the head of the Commune Police. In May 2018, an incident occurred in Hồ Chí Minh City where two Street Knights were stabbed and killed while intervening in a robbery (BBC News Tiếng Việt, 2018). Reports about their deaths raised issues about their role: some saw them as necessary for public safety (partly because there were not enough police) whereas others saw them as unaccountable and untrained (BBC News Tiếng Việt, 2018; VietNamNetBridge, 2018). In response to the incident, a Street Knight in Hanoi proclaimed he would continue his work protecting the community despite the fate of his southern 'teammates' (Báo Lao Động, 2018). He described an incident 10 years earlier in which a robbery suspect threatened to infect him with HIV to evade arrest. Undeterred, he struggled with and arrested the suspect despite getting covered in blood in the process. As a result, he had to undergo preventive medical treatment for HIV exposure and 'hide' from his family for three months. He did not contract the virus and continues to work as a Street Knight. This performance of righteousness accords with the Confucian ideal of Yi (義/),

associated with righteousness or justice, and is reflective of the influence of traditional Confucian ideas on aspects of Vietnamese police culture.

The concept of non-enforcement and moral education have been described in this study as key features of policing and social control reflecting a broader cultural tendency to avoid conflict. However, there is little empirical information available on its effectiveness in terms of preventing crime and reducing recidivism.[68] Whilst police officers and students cited flexibility *(linh hoạt)* as an ideal approach, there may be alternative explanations for such practices, such as limitations on police resources. In his study on youth offending in Vietnam, Le (2017, p. 275) referred to 'under-vigilant policing' and reported:

> a sense of under-enforcement and mismanagement, a lack of interest in policing regulations regarding the handling of alcohol consumption, management of games and the internet, management of firearms, weapons and other support equipment and handling of crimes and other illegal activities … Instances of domestic violence were ignored; school violence, gang affiliation, games addiction and the availability of drugs and firearms were similarly not seen as priority areas of policing. It could be argued that policing, in a sense, had failed in this regard.

A senior male officer said that, in the past, police made decisions about whether to prosecute a crime, by referring specifically to three factors: professional police skills, political implications, and the law.[69] The officer went on to say that this approach to policing was no longer relevant for modern Vietnam and that the law should be the only consideration behind police action. Nonetheless, Fe (2010, p. 201) has noted that China and Vietnam have similar practices which limit the separation of 'public governance and private human relations', in part 'due to the

[68] Cox (2010) has discussed the concepts of non-enforcement and moral education in the context of juvenile crime.
[69] This reflects the sentiment regarding 'contextual decision-making' reported in China (M. R. Dutton, 1992).

common practice of allowing special considerations on differentiated human relations to play a role in public decision-making processes'.

Despite the rhetoric of the rule of law is being promulgated in Vietnam (Nicholson, 2010; Sidel, 2008), police officers and students in this study maintain that the use of discretion, typically phrased as *linh hoạt* (being flexible), was essential to their decision-making. It is useful to note that discretion and the rule of law are not inherently opposed (Herman Goldstein, 1963). Ideally, discretion should be about police making choices within those that law makes available. Nevertheless, the breadth of scope for interpretation can sometimes create ambiguity about what constitutes strict legality, and community expectations of what the police (and authorities) should do (where community expectations are contrary to the law) can, in turn, influence how they respond or resolve concerns (Salomon & Vu, 2010).

Questions about discretion were met with responses describing it as natural that decisions were tempered based on empathy, compassion and benevolence.[70] This may include *nhận,* or the inclination to go beyond rules to do good or kindness, and *tình,* whereby rules are exercised subjectively and unpredictably (Jamieson, 1993). Being flexible meant avoiding formal sanction altogether or going beyond rules to reduce a punishment: for example, writing out a fine for an offence other than the most accurate reflection of the transgression – but with a lesser financial penalty – so as not to impose a severe levy.

> It is important to be flexible every time with the citizens because otherwise it might not create good relationships. They may have no knowledge [of the law], but they expect that the police must be helpful. Police should not be perceived as being inflexible and the people think that is what police should do. (Police student, female)

Good relationships with the community were described as paramount for policing which reflects a shared view from Western policing despite the very different

[70] Although half the interview sample comprised students, most had experience working in the community for at least short periods through internships at local police stations.

political systems. For example: 'If the community trust us, the job will be easy and effective' (Police student, female). And: 'It is tradition in Vietnam to work together so the work of the police is for security and safety and that is why we should keep good relationships with locals' (Police student, male).

Police as educators in an evolving legal environment

Vietnam's rapid development and evolving legislation have been cited as reasons why people might not be up to date with current laws or deliberately flout them given their susceptibility to change (Koh, 2004a). Reflecting on a visit to Singapore, a senior male police officer noted the lack of flexibility there with the remark, 'I learned that rules are rules. You can't change'. He said in Vietnam there were exceptions to rules where political issues were concerned, but that it was only a matter of time for the country to upgrade and improve legislation and the public's knowledge of it.

Knowledge of the law was not only central to the police role in enforcement but, in the words of one police student, also important so police 'can explain what people are confused about to better solve civilians' problems' (Police student, female). In interviews, police officers and students emphasised their role in educating people on the law, for example, if people were not aware of the law it was important to give them a 'second chance', especially for minor offences. A male police officer drew attention to what he saw as a difference in legal knowledge and community expectations of police in Vietnam compared with those of Western countries:

> For example, rural criminals do not understand the law … some of the criminals come from the rural areas and they do illegal behaviour, but they believe it is legal behaviour. If police prosecute them like in a Western country, there would be a backlash in the community. First, we have to give propaganda[71] and give the criminal a warning that they may be sent to jail if they do it again because they are misunderstanding the government policy and law.

[71] Education and information.

> Development must go along with the knowledge of the residents. It means that if you bring Western police to Vietnam, they have no ability to do the work in Vietnam. The knowledge of the residents is different. It is different knowledge and different culture. (Police officer, male)

Police in Vietnam spoke of their country's unique context and the specific challenges they face. A difference to Western policing approaches was also evidenced by police perceptions of their role as educational or rehabilitative, even when a person was not charged with a crime, let alone found guilty and convicted: 'If we lack evidence to charge a suspect, we still make them write a regret letter, then we help them to find a job' (Police officer, male). In overseeing the process of suspects writing 'regret letters', police positioned themselves as having a higher morality than the community. Knowledge of the law was important to police not only in performing their 'propaganda' functions, but also as a way to navigate how to do things:

> You need to know the law to explain it to the people and your boss. Also, by knowing the law you can break it and then find the right way to explain it … Flexibility on duty is important. If you follow the law, it can be hard to prove a case (Police officer, male)

Vietnam's regulatory environment is evolving and can be a source of frustration for those working within it. The inherent tension between social harmony and social stability has seen the police force juggling multiple and even contradictory policy approaches. Policy approaches in terms of disconnect in legislation and a lack of codification (e.g. see the quote below "[Environmental crime is a] new field, the Criminal Law is not written very clearly"). Consequently, ambiguity or unpredictability can be symptomatic of interpretation as much as cultural factors (e.g. social harmony) as well as tensions between legal and moral imperatives in a practical sense. Gainsborough et al. reported on commentary that sometimes legislation is drafted quite deliberately to render it ineffectual against 'vested interests' (2009, p. 404). In contrast, two participants mentioned that enacting laws to legitimise some of the covert police tactics used to investigate high-level

crimes was best avoided because to do so would reveal to potential suspects the extent of 'professional measures'.[72] One officer described how the law could be an impediment for successful investigation and prosecution of serious criminal cases:

> You know in my country it is quite hard to deal with a lot of [environmental] crime. But now it's hard because of the law. [Environmental crime is a] new field, the Criminal Law is not written very clearly, punishment is not serious enough and they can continue [to break the law] because the law is not serious enough. But now we have new laws. The environment is related to high people in Vietnam. A lot of people are 'Big Sports' and it's quite hard for police to [investigate] because we have to follow the law. (Police officer, female)

Police officers' knowledge of the law gave them a form of cultural capital. This was not always used for the benefit of the public or to improve police practices, but it did create a sense of the police as morally significant. On the one hand, being more informed than the public provided them with a greater sense of morality. Their job entailed sharing their legal knowledge and educating others about correct behaviour and this gave police a position of literal and ethical power. On the other hand, intentionally withholding legal information about police tactics and refraining from promoting legislation in order to keep the public uninformed meant that police were ethically compromised. Legal knowledge and control over how it would be disseminated, if at all, provided police with cultural capital that built their reputation and reinforced their strength. An example of this might be as simple as a failure to explain the law to an offender but to punish them anyway (e.g., a traffic violation). This was seen as reprehensible because, as one female student remarked, it might result in police getting a bad reputation. The act itself was less problematic than the potential loss of the moral high ground. Claiming the high moral ground could be a source of symbolic capital as

[72] This phrase was often used by research participants as a catch-all for investigative tactics. When asked for further explanation as a general rule it was rarely forthcoming.

per Bourdieu's (1990a) conceptualisation where individuals struggle for power (including status) in the social order.

The position of the police officer is complicated by notions of flexibility. Flexibility covered a range of acceptable behaviours from avoiding applying the law in order to be lenient and build good relationships to going beyond the rules (illegality) in some more serious cases; for example, to prosecute a suspect where, despite the available evidence being patchy, police were convinced of their criminality. This latter practice has been reported widely in Anglo-American policing, sometimes described as 'noble cause corruption' whereby police justify using illegal means to achieve the 'moral' ends of arresting or prosecuting a suspect (Seumas Miller, 1999). Flexibility creates a moral intersection which relates to conflicts for the police in both enforcing the law and withholding knowledge. Furthermore, there is the perception within the community of police using knowledge as currency and in self-interest as well as officers' own internal moral issues about their duty and integrity.

Principle of non-intervention: protected values or pragmatism?

In Vietnam police retain a monopoly on coercive force. Maintaining their (and the Party's) position of power is a constant process of 'control' and 'mediation' (Koh, 2006) and requires money, time, networks, political jockeying and of course finely tuned knowledge of social and political situations. The role of police in mediating people's experience with the law can also be used to garner support for (or repress resistance to) the police's monopoly on coercive force (Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). Decisions about whether to follow the law or not can depend on how one justifies a particular course of action (Bittner, 1970, 1974). The concept of 'protected values' provides a rationale for understanding decision-making processes (Lucius, 2009). According to Jamieson (1993), a broad cultural characteristic among Vietnamese people propels certain actions within normative social structures based on a sense of duty, justice, righteousness and calm rationality (*nghĩa*). It includes the pursuit of strategic social roles regardless of individual preferences. As one police officer (male) says below, maintaining 'harmony' is valued over potential for conflict:

> There is the principle of non-intervention in Vietnamese culture. To keep harmony among the people is to not blame anyone and say one person is at fault, but to negotiate and keep everyone happy. (Police officer, male)

In practical terms, harmony was not the only reason for non-intervention. Police referred to justifications for non-intervention for a number of other reasons, including public safety. One officer explained: 'If there is a village with a big family, if the police prosecute one person there without the agreement of the head of the village, there would be anger in this village; it is about security'. The security of the community as a whole may, under certain conditions, be a deterrent to enforcing the law. The situation cited above is a typical example of communal needs dictating appropriate responses to crimes. In these circumstances police tend to prioritise the community's needs over the rule of law highlighting how the law itself is only one source of justification for police intervention.

The term 'non-intervention' may refer not to a passive process but an active process, for example deciding to pursue an outcome which conforms to a higher protected value. One male student put it this way: police 'must have flexibility. We have to choose what is the best solution to get. We must be active and decisive to be professional'. The pursuit of the 'best solution' or harmony is not, however, always straightforward. Interpretations about what constitutes harmony, or pleasing everyone, may mean different things to different people. For example, cultural characteristics associated with a strong sense of loyalty (*trung*) to family, extrapolated to authority and hierarchy, reaffirm conformity and status quo as indicators of harmony (Jamieson, 1993). Other indicators of harmony can be seen in a range of cultural values; their interpretation is influenced by personal agency and collective interpretations.

Hiếu thảo (filial piety) determines who merits certain types of behaviour or attitudes, usually understood as obeying, respecting and honouring one's parents and acting with virtue and humility to elders. Social contracts require younger 'brothers' to respect, obey and support older brothers and, in turn, older brothers teach, nurture and protect their younger brothers. A senior officer said police should 'never' arrest a person (usually a male) for domestic violence for a first

offence, which reflects the typical police response described by Perkins, Cotrel-Gibbons and Nguyen (2017) . The officer said they should always get a warning first, regarding such a matter as more of a conflict than a crime. A common response to reports of domestic violence was for a husband and wife to be invited to the police station to discuss their problems with police and to be told to stop fighting (Police officer, male). A female officer said police would involve the local Neighbourhood Head or civil security officials to speak to the family to find out more about the conflict, but indicated this would not necessarily be with a view to progressing the incident to a criminal investigation, which would depend on its seriousness and whether it was recurrent.

Whilst police discretion was described as essential, as demonstrated, how it was enacted could be problematic. Another instance of discretion as being potentially problematic was the unpredictable and on occasion unfair use of leniency. Several police officers referred to situations where if one citizen was shown lenience and another denied it based on an officer's discretion, it could result in negative community attitudes building towards the police force overall. This reputational damage was further enhanced by the impression that some police benefitted, even financially, from choosing who to charge and who to let go.

> For example, if there are six vendors, [the police] let four or five go but stop one and give a fine … Other vendors may not follow. Also, if the police follow the rule 100 per cent it will be fine, but they don't want to because they will not get advantages, for example, small money. (Police officer, male)

Interestingly, even though discretion or flexibility was justified in terms of promoting harmony in the community, some police conceded common complaints about them were due to slow responses or inaction on their part. Reasons for this may include the importance of taking into account any detrimental or unforeseen implications of police intervention. Additionally, anxiety about causing problems, or upsetting the established hierarchical order, creates a culture where seeking advice and approval from superiors before taking action is extremely common. This practice was identified among police in Japan (Bayley,

1976). However, formal mechanisms of accountability, as described by Bayley (1976), may increase efficiency in the Japanese context. In this study, two police officers described the importance of consulting with colleagues to get approval prior to making an arrest. One officer said it was important to avoid arresting someone in case they were already wanted by an officer in another ward. The other officer highlighted the role of the supervisor in this situation:

> Police can't action an arrest by themselves without the boss's approval. They must wait until they have a direction or order from the boss. It is illegal to arrest someone without approval [from the boss] even with evidence. In an 'emergency' situation you can arrest. For example, a murderer who uses a gun to shoot is seen by police [as someone] they can arrest … to immediately stop them. (Police officer, male)

Police officers emphasised the importance of crime prevention over detection and investigation. One officer said: 'The main job is not to catch [arrest] people but to prevent crime' (Police student, male). Statistics on crime are not readily available in Vietnam, and several officers indicated that fewer recorded crimes may be construed as a measure of good performance. It may also be the case that consultation with supervisors about whether to make an arrest could contribute to a reluctance towards formal intervention. Given the police's dual subordination to their direct supervisors as well as Party officials, consultation about intervention may be complex. A senior police officer said one of the most difficult parts of police work was having to negotiate the occasional competing expectations of police superiors and the demands of the People's Council and People's Committee, especially where the latter tasked police with jobs outside the official police remit. One example of this was the unexpected police role in Hanoi's urban expansion, an important project for the Party, which brings economic and social development to the capital. The officer imparted that, although the development was welcome, it also brought more drugs and crime to deal with, précised as 'More people, more problems'. Consequently, the police had to respond to the

crime-related problems and tasks for local Party officials which increased their overall workload.

This section has focused on ways that police mediate responses to social order concerns and criminality, particularly ways in which flexibility is used to avoid law enforcement. It has also highlighted that police tolerance for transgressions may be applied differentially depending on circumstances. One female student told me that community expectations of police were changing and that improvements were necessary: 'The police deal with problems related to the [policing] of citizens so they have to be more transparent and follow the law and respect human rights'. One area where transparency was particularly difficult to enforce was crimes relating to political dissent. Political crimes can be prosecuted and punished harshly. Although this topic was not within the scope of this research, on one occasion I asked about the role of police in investigating people who might be critical of the government and was informed the topic was 'confidential and classified and so I don't want to comment' (Police student, male).[73]Similarly, the scope for exploring police investigations and interrogations in this research study was limited.

'You can't be a stranger in your own society': the informal economy

Vietnam has a gift-giving culture where gratuities are given and received as social custom. Sometimes gifts are in the form of cash (often in small envelopes) for Tet (Lunar New Year), anniversaries or special occasions. Offerings are also referred to as 'appreciation money' which can be given as a sign of respect or gratitude. Vietnam's history includes mutual support groups or collectives where money may be pooled and given to members on an understanding that the benefit will be returned later if in need. Cash may also be given with an expectation of favour or benefit that would otherwise not be forthcoming, or it might be extracted coercively.

[73] Media reports demonstrate dissenters can be prosecuted and sentenced (Reuters, 2018) but studies show that, even within this sensitive area, there is also room for flexibility, negotiation and tolerance (Kerkvliet, 2014a).

Though the police were ranked as the country's most corrupt institution (Transparency International, 2013), other sectors are not immune. In 2008, 85 per cent of citizens perceived 'serious corruption' in central health services, and 65 per cent perceived 'corruption' in health services at the local level (General Statistics Office Of Vietnam, 2013). The education sector was also viewed as most corrupt (second only to the police) by respondents surveyed in 2010 (Transparency International Vietnam Programme, 2011). In this context, it may be argued that police behaviour conformed to normal societal standards. But their reputation as corrupt and the prevalence of payments from citizens to police concerned some members of the force because the police are the institution charged with a statutory obligation to deal with corruption and they also claim to operate to a higher moral standard.

Several officers felt helpless to improve practices around informal payments. One officer captured the relationship between one's environment and perceived obligations within it and the inclination to follow the 'rules of the game' through the expression: 'You can't be a stranger in your own society'. The following response also highlights the interdependence of income and expenses across sectors:

> I might not agree with the way people work in Vietnam, but I have to adapt … It is not our culture [to give and receive money]. It is a practice that has developed. It is necessary to survive. My wife and I are middle-income [earners] but we have so many expenses … I understand that it is not right to pay or get payment for some things in our work, but it is about balance. I have to pay teachers and doctors. I can't do that on a police salary. (Police officer, male)

In Vietnam, low salaries for public servants have been given as one reason for the existence of an informal economy (Gregory, 2016; UNDP, 2009). In 2016, the Government indicated 'public employees, teachers and doctors' may get a pay rise, in part because low incomes could increase corruption (H. Nguyen, 2016). This was confirmed by an officer who described inadequate salaries among those working in the public service as a source of empathy from the broader community,

eliciting tolerance for informal payments for those in public office (Police officer, male). Another police officer said, as his police salary was inadequate, he had to work a second job to make ends meet. He lamented this extra work made him tired and that if he was paid more he could focus more on his official duties. Another police officer resolved the dilemma of informal payments in the following way:

> Even though [some police officers] get black money; we try to make a balance between our salary and the way we get more income. We have conflict in our minds about this and so if somebody is innocent then we will not ask for money from them because they haven't done anything wrong. (Police officer, male)

I presented the possibility of police needing to supplement their salary to another officer who countered, 'I think the salary is enough for police to live on and so they don't need to take money from the people' (Police student, male). Despite this view Gainsborough et al. (2009) explain that:

> corruption in Viet Nam is not primarily an ethical issue: most people in Viet Nam are thoroughly decent people who nevertheless operate in a system which requires certain kinds of behaviour of them if they are going to survive in the system, to provide for their families, and to get things done.

One police officer conceded he received informal payments but also explained that he and his wife gave financial support to a local single mother in their neighbourhood, so she could send her young daughter to school. In this way, the informal economy circulated money, which could benefit the disadvantaged.

A senior officer said he was aware of Western interpretations of the 'cultural' practice of giving an 'offering' or money in 'appreciation' to others and confusing this with corruption. He said this misunderstanding often deterred Vietnamese from discussing the issue with foreigners. This already intricate situation is further complicated because police 'requests' for money are not always from people who have committed crimes. Sometimes money is requested from residents or

businesses as a regular or annual 'fee'. Such requests are not necessarily explicit although they can become a taken-for-granted procedure, which some people participate in willingly in order to 'speed up' a slow bureaucracy, or to keep good relations with the police in anticipation of prompt future service. Often these payments are made reluctantly but with an acceptance that making them is part of the broader system. This is exemplified by on-the-spot payments in lieu of paying formal fines. A female officer noted that Traffic Police might have a bad reputation because they give out infringements to traffic violators. She noted that 'often people want to pay immediately to the police officer', instead of going to the revenue office. It is a practice sometimes referred to as giving the police 'coffee money' whereby a smaller amount is paid on the spot – unofficially – and instead of lodging formal payment in person and where the convenience of online payments was not yet available.

Although the practice of informal payments can be used by police to extract money from drivers, it can also be more convenient and cheaper than the official process (only of course if the accused agrees they are guilty of the alleged transgression). During my research, I had the following encounter which demonstrates the normalcy of such practices:

> The young guard outside the police station looked in our direction as our car approached the driveway. The small carpark was not quite full. A sign said it was reserved for official use only. The driver told me to wind down my window. He yelled out to the guard: 'Can I park here?', pointing to the street directly outside the large, city police station. The guard looked at us blankly. Again, 'Can I park here?'. The guard nodded – sort of. At the time, I would have said he nodded, but in hindsight it was perhaps a nervous response to seeing a foreigner visiting the offices of a national-level police department. After I finished my meeting it was a surprise to myself and my driver to see police in green uniforms about to attach a paper notice to the car windscreen – a fine for parking in that area during a prohibited time. Why did the guard say we could park there? We were only there an hour. These questions went unanswered as the guard in question was at lunch.

The driver's polite protestations to police about the guard indicating the parking arrangement was OK upon arrival did nothing to have the fine revoked. The police officer handed over the paper notice saying, 'It's too late. It is already written'. The police officer pointed to a sign clearly stating there was no parking at that time – which both the driver and I had clearly missed on arrival and a currently absent guard's nod was no endorsement for our parking request. I can't be sure at which point the group of police saw me – a foreigner – accompanying the driver. It seemed the officer with the fine responded with 'It's too late' before he turned to see me, but it is possible a colleague mentioned it without me hearing or understanding in the dialogue that was taking place. It may even be an irrelevant point, but, after being told the fine would stand the driver took out a ₫500,000 note (a substantial fine. Approx. AUD$25) and held it down low whilst reaching over to the officer, smiling, in request to withdraw the fine. The officer closed his folder and turned and began to walk away. The driver politely asked him to reconsider, pointing out we had been at a meeting with an officer ranked among the most senior in the country and that the guard told us we could park there. Still, he did not change his mind.

At this point, my presence was obvious, and I decided to engage with one of the officers who had been observing the exchange with his colleague. I asked, 'What's going on?'. The officer adopted a big grin, I assumed at the novelty of a foreigner speaking Vietnamese, he said cars could only be parked in that section of the street at night time or they get towed away. I said, pointing toward my driver, 'Why can't he pay the fine now?' – in full knowledge paying cash to police on the street is illegal. Still smiling, he said the fine had to be paid at the revenue office around the corner, waving his hand over his head in vague direction; the fine was already issued. He asked how I learnt to speak Vietnamese and we had a brief chat before the group of police continued their street parking supervision further along.

> The interaction between the 'finers' and 'finee' had been a friendly affair; a kindly protest by the driver claiming an innocent mistake due to relying on the apparent approval of the guard instead of checking the signage ourselves; the officers were not posturing or intimidating – physically or verbally – and in my view engaged with the driver suitably enough to acknowledge his pleas but moved on to indicate a change of mind was not forthcoming. What is instructive, though, is the normalcy apparent in the attempt to circumvent the official penalty of what I later found out was đ800,000 by offering the reduced amount of đ500,000 on the spot. Not only was the driver seeking a discount, but he expressed his annoyance at the inconvenience of having to go to the revenue office to complete the payment (which we did immediately) that added insult to whole affair. Moreover, the visible attempt to bribe the police occurred outside a major police station, by someone with a close police connection, in front of a foreigner (also with a policing background), in the course of research about police. (Reconstructed from fieldnotes, 2016)

My observation of the driver offering 'unofficial' money to the police could be a reflection of the findings of a World Bank (2012, p. 46) report which showed Traffic Police (and local and Economic Police) are more likely to be offered unofficial money than to ask for it. In Vietnam, corruption in the form of informal payments or bribery can speed up a slow bureaucracy (World Bank, 2012). Nguyen et al. (2016, p. 361) found that, in business, the more common informal payments were in conducting commerce in specific areas, the more prevalent they were. They became integrated into normal business activities. But in policing this was not always the case. Individual police demonstrated agency by finding ways to navigate around practices they personally felt to be unethical. For example:

> Some years ago, I thought I have to follow the common way, for example, make relationships by offering something. I learnt in many ways, for example, the most important thing I think I learned is from Buddhism and other

> religions such as Islam, for example, I should not follow bad things like drinking, corruption or hurting people. (Police officer, male)

Police in Vietnam are simultaneously citizens, government actors and Party members, and as they are only one of many sectors undertaking these practices, they cannot be singled out for their role in the informal economy. Where police can be singled out, however, is the power they wield over the populace in an environment with limited avenues for complaint. However, in a World Bank survey, the highest proportion of respondents indicated having made the most unofficial payments in the previous 12 months to the healthcare sector (World Bank, 2012, p. 53) to which restricted access can have life-limiting consequences.

Embracing and resisting change

Progress for the PPF requires balancing the tension between a national identity rooted in its resistance to prolonged foreign invasion and occupation and a desire to learn from international experience and technological advances. It is a question of how to be open and closed at the same time:

> There are advantages and disadvantages. We have relationships with other countries with more experience and knowledge which we can apply, but as we open our house we can get more light from outside there are more international criminals that come into our house. (Police officer, female)

Students and officers viewed the challenges of policing in terms of technological capability and transnational crimes (or at least these were challenges they regarded as suitable to describe to a foreign researcher). The Vietnamese police share these challenges with other police forces trying to adapt to changing global conditions. For example, foreign aid to upgrade technology at the Police Academy came from the South Korean aid agency Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) which had developed systems deemed more culturally suitable for sensitive issues in Vietnam than Western countries (Police

officer, male). Notwithstanding a preference for regional support, a male student said possible sources for lessons for improvement could come from America's Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as well as Russian expertise in forensic science and technology. Some police described budget restrictions as limiting their capability and that a lot could be learned from more developed countries.

> There are some characteristics we can learn from Western police to improve our organisation. I think in the west they have the budget of the government. I mean, the police have more investment in technology, tools, cars and fees to do investigations. In one case of the police in Australia, for example, if they successfully investigate a case, the government will pay the witness for providing information. In Vietnam, we don't do that. I told the AFP [Australian Federal Police] officer here, if you give me half of your money, I will use it very well. [laughs] In Vietnam, we are a developing country, we don't have enough money … The knowledge of Western police is useful because of technology … they have collection of data in high tech crime, and good professional knowledge on how to collect evidence. All of that should be necessary knowledge for the Vietnamese police force. (Police officer, male)

Overall, there was an eagerness to learn from foreign countries which stemmed from a recognition that Vietnam was less economically developed, for example:

> Now we are still a developing country and so the police force has some problems in running our force. We hope the police in other countries have good relationships to help us, especially in technology. (Police officer, female)

Vietnam's relatively recent integration into global markets and state control over the nature of that integration meant police also needed skill development to cope with the changing environment. In particular, foreign language capability was raised as a skill gap. The importance of foreign languages was linked to the need to respond to transnational crimes and 'learn more about treaties and agreements

Vietnam has signed internationally' (Police officer, male). Two officers specifically mentioned the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal.

During interviews with staff and students at the Academy, I routinely asked the question: 'In 10 or 20 years, what changes do you think will be made in the police force?' Most students replied that they didn't have a view on what the police might be like in the future, whereas several staff members indicated the police would have improved technology. It was brought to my attention by an officer at the PPA that there was concern this line of questioning may be seen as an invitation to elicit comments on changes to the political system more broadly. Given that police, by law, report directly to the Communist Party, and are required to be Party members, to ask about changes in policing implied changes to the one-party state system and, by extension, a pro-democracy narrative. Another male officer explained the implications of my question in the following terms:

> If asking police in Vietnam about possible changes in the future, it implies you are asking about changes in the government too. Because the police and government are so closely linked, a change in one implies a change in the other.

Thus, any discussion about change in Vietnam must be sensitive to the broad political agenda. Another officer spoke about how he wanted to inspire and encourage younger generations of police to 'embrace change':

> I want to inspire students to embrace change. Change is happening all the time. Nothing is ever staying the same. If we want to improve, we must change. But we only have control over ourselves. We can change ourselves, but we can't change others. To make bigger changes in the police, we must change the leadership. I don't mean the individual leaders should change, but that they should all help make change happen. I don't want to tell them "what" change they should make, just that they should pursue change because change is what makes our lives and country better. (Police officer, male)

Vietnam's history is one of constant change balanced with the maintenance of (at least a veneer of) societal tranquillity and harmony. To speak of change in Vietnam can be a fraught and sensitive subject. A participant recommending or simply raising the idea of change could have negative connotations as it suggests something wrong with current practice, which needed fixing. If something needed fixing then it could be an indictment on those police, likely senior officers, who had supervised practices to that point. Softer words such as 'upgrade', 'renovation', and 'renew' are frequently used instead of change. The reluctance to speak openly about change is reflected in ideas about accountability and blame. Several police mentioned that the cultural practice of not questioning elders or supervisors was detrimental to the country's general development. They felt that, as discussed earlier, it was more important to fit in and conform than challenge this norm:

> Vietnam's police need to improve both responsibility and accountability. At the moment police have responsibility to their superiors, not accountability to the people. A culture of not questioning authority holds back development of our country. (Police officer, male)

Reluctance to pursue change might also reflect a reluctance to disrupt the natural order of things imposed by *lý do* (rationale) in Vietnamese culture (Jamieson, 1993) and reinforced through the militaristic rank structure. In several interviews I asked students about their career aspirations; responses included: 'It is not really important to focus on promotion. I must focus on my study and professionalism and I don't think about getting promoted yet' (Police student, male); and, to achieve 'a rank below captain. [But] I don't think about what can happen so far ahead' (Police student, female).

To emphasise individual aspirations may be seen as stepping above one's station or an unwillingness to fit in. Jamieson (1993) refers to a cultural preference for harmony by applying *điều* (a reasoned approach) whereby a willingness to adapt or moderate one's stance acts to dissuade excessive behaviour such as greed, rigidity or over-assertiveness, which can bring about one's own downfall. When asked about whether senior officers were open to new ideas, one police officer

explained that good leaders were those who were open to suggestions, who have a long-term vision, and, importantly, did not create divisions within the community.

> A good leader must be a person who creates a democratic environment in the organisation. It means they have to listen to the recommendations [of others] and persuade other people if the recommendation is good and effective for the team. The people who have the long-term strategy will contribute to the development of the organisation and they can be a leader. A leader can see drawbacks. If I'm a good staff member, I can give advice to you about your management. But a negative criticism can make people hate other people or make a negative relationship between the police and the people. (Police officer, male)

> [I've learned from overseas teachers that leadership can be] taught as meaning 'influence'. In Vietnam, leadership means command and order. I think influence is better. If leaders want to influence someone they have to be moral, intelligent and work harder than subordinates to be influential. (Police officer, male)

To enhance police capability, officers suggested more openness could help. For example: 'Good policing has to be discussed and analysed so police are aware of the issues and fulfil their duty and feel comfortable' (Police officer, male). This officer added that proposals for change seen as oppositional or rebellious could be headed off with criticisms of 'Westernised thinking', which could dent the authority of an idea.[74] Whilst the 'West' was seen as an important source of ideas it was also seen through the lenses of history, culture and ideology, many of which retain strong negative connotations.

[74] Despite this, one senior male officer pointed out that Hồ Chí Minh was a great leader because he spent more than 30 years abroad studying 'leadership' in other countries. Also, the Declaration of Independence by Hồ Chí Minh on September 2, 1945, was modelled on that of the United States, highlighting that a charge of 'Westernised thinking' may be dependent on circumstances.

There were also reflections on what was suitable for Vietnam with reference to other Asian countries. For example, one student who went on a study tour to the Royal Thai Police Cadet Academy said he was surprised that the Thai students did little or no study in the evenings. Instead, Thai police students were expected to focus on exercise, and preparing their uniforms and polishing their boots for the next day. The student thought there was an overemphasis on fitness and appearance compared with expanding knowledge. He joked that Vietnamese police students were 'smarter' than their Thai counterparts. Other examples where Thai police students were highly disciplined included the way they have to eat during their first year of training. They have to keep their elbow at a right-angle at all times during a meal which makes it difficult to eat quickly. Due to the rigid movements required to eat, students sometimes are unable to finish their lunch in the allocated 30 minutes, or if they spill some food or relax their posture they are required to do push-ups as punishment. The student described this type of discipline as unnecessary and felt relieved that the PPA did not have the same requirements. The observation also highlights variations between police in the Asia region.

The 'good' police officer

Police perceptions varied in relation to their occupation and its status. Several students and officers said they were proud of their career choice and said they thought they were 'admired' and 'loved' by the community. There were also descriptions of policing as being a 'noble' and 'respected' career.

> In Vietnam, the people consider police work as noble … police have to sacrifice a lot of things to complete tasks. We sacrifice time for family and ourselves. The community know that and appreciate it and know we protect their life and maintain the security conditions and they can concentrate on working and getting a peaceful life. (Police student, male)

> Police in Vietnam is a respected job. They have a higher reputation. Everyone looks up to you. There is fixed working

> time and higher salary. We get weekends off. Many other jobs you have to work longer. In the war, the army and police were a big part. It was a big achievement for the army and police to win. Often, if parents are business people, they want their children to become business people too. Police parents want their children to be police. Children who live in the police environment in their minds want to be like their parents. (Police officer, female)

Others were sometimes reluctant to discuss community perceptions of the police, often by saying they didn't want to answer the question and to move on to a different topic. Some expressed that policing was a difficult job and that they were doing the best they could. One senior officer recounted how he was introduced by a friend in the following way: 'He's a policeman, but he's a "good" policeman'. The officer said he didn't appreciate the implication that by default, most police were 'bad'. Several officers felt that a minority of poorly-behaved police reflected badly on the majority. For example:

> Some people hate the police. When some people think about the police force in Vietnam, they tend to judge a small part as having not very good behaviour. It's just a small part but they apply it to the whole force. It makes me sad and disappointed. Even some of my friends don't think the police are good so it makes me sad and disappointed. (Police student, female)

An important part of PPA training was to ensure graduates could differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' practices in the field. Police study at the Academy for five (now four) years to earn a bachelor's degree. Academy students also complete three internships which are essential requirements for their degrees (a one-month homestay, and two internships at police stations, three and four months each). Students and staff were asked to reflect on the difference between what was learned or taught in the Academy compared with practice. Theory was sometimes used to refer to class-based activities such as learning how to fill in forms and procedures, as well learning laws and academic approaches to

policing. It also provided a basis for practical work and at times a contrast to the lived realities of on-the-ground police work. For example:

> Theory is a matter about research, law, criminology. Something we can summarise from the case so that in future we can't make again that error, that mistake. So, it will serve our practical work. (Police student, male)

Students expressed an appreciation for learning and respect for the teaching staff: 'The theoretical knowledge at the PPA was written by people who have high professional skills, including the books, to teach students' (Police student, male). However, when students reflected on their internship experiences they often felt that what was learned in the Academy required some adjusting in practice. In other words, theoretical underpinnings provided some structure for daily work but did not always reflect lived experience in the field.

> In theory there are many ways to get access to a suspect but in practice we use the same old methods. It is simple. Each case is kind of the same. In reality there is flexibility to apply a prior method to the task. The theory is too strict and time consuming. It will save time if we skip some of the phases. (Police student, female)

> To be honest, I don't see much difference between theory and reality. It depends on the situation. We have to learn to apply the theory we learn in the Academy in a flexible way to get the best result in reality. What we learn in the Academy is just general knowledge but the first step for my job in the future must be on the basis of theory. For example, I must obey the law and obey the regulations of the MPS [Ministry of Public Security]. (Police student, male)

> The practical work always changes because the context of society and work changes quite regularly so practical [experience] is like an addition to lessons in the Academy. There are some situations in practical work we never

> learned at the Academy. We never expect it or encountered it, so after practical lessons we can apply the theory after. (Police student, male)

Once students graduated they found themselves navigating between theory and practice, and trying to make sense of situations that required flexibility, discretion and the use of "professional measures". Each time police make a judgement call on the job they do so in the space between academia and professionalism. Even before they leave the Academy students learn how to enforce the law as it is written and as it understood in reality.

One senior officer indicated that students were taught to follow the law as correct behaviour:

> In here [the PPA] we always aim to teach them to follow the law so that you can still integrate and keep the good characteristics of your own. When you see the good thing you can learn it, or when you see the bad thing to stay away from it. I can tell you that in my own experience, I'm certain the students in the PPA have the ability to distinguish between good and bad. It's the most important thing a student can get after graduating. I can make sure the percentage of students violating regulations is lower than others. (Police officer, male)

The officer acknowledged that, in practice, police were often flexible in applying the law and claimed that Vietnam was transitioning to a rule-of-law system. But whilst the Academy teaches the law, it can be disrupted by what happens in practice. As described earlier, students and police reported a difference in theory and practice, and that taking shortcuts was sometimes necessary and modelled by more experienced officers. Therefore, one's peers become important for determining whether someone is doing a good job. This was further supported by the following response to the question, 'Who defines what being "good" at your job means?'

> Firstly, the boss, the leader will proclaim if a person is good or not depending on if they are good at what they are told to do. Second, they have to love their job. Third, all the jobs the boss tells them to do, they have to complete it. Also, the people who decide if a person is good at their job are their mates. (Police officer, male).

In contrast, it was noted that, 'a bad police officer is someone who can't gain the trust of the community' (Police student, male). The reputation of police could be marred by the poor actions of a minority:

> In the street, if they do something bad it can damage the image of the police … But we have a proverb: 'A person with bad behaviour will make the whole herd of people appear badly behaved'. I think they can have a bad image on the People's Police. (Police officer, male)

Criticisms of police were usually not mentioned until interviewees were prompted and asked to specify reasons why some people might complain about the police. The most common response was that people complained because police investigations took too long, although one female student said sometimes people are unhappy because the police 'cheat' them, specifically mentioning Traffic Police. A male student said, 'sometimes police use brute force and civilians think that police are bullies'. A different male student summed up some of the avenues the community could use to complain about police and described some possible consequences:

> For police officers in charge of part of the neighbourhood we regularly have a meeting between the police officers and neighbours of that ward. In that meeting anything that locals complain about will be mentioned and spoken of, so the police officer can think about it and correct their mistake and improve their work. Or the other way is that each police station has a mailbox and civilians who have a complaint can write a letter which can be anonymous and put it in the mailbox. When the chief of police station has a meeting with

> all the police officers of that station, all the mail will be read and spoken out loud so as to warn or notice those police officers who are not fulfilling their duty.
>
> The Vietnamese police force also have a variety of punishments for police who are not fulfilling their duty according to their level. We have a variety of ways people can complain about the police not doing their duty. There are three main punishments for police officers in a ward which are applied regularly those police officers [who] have bad behaviour. The first is the police officer will be moved to another division. Second, to cut the salary of the officer for about one year or a period of time, or lower the rank of that police officer by one rank. The third punishment is they may be removed from the police force.

When asked to reflect on a negative image of police in Vietnam as presented in a Human Rights Watch report (2014a), a young officer (unfamiliar with the report) responded: 'It surprises me that there is a bad reputation about Vietnamese police, for example, I thought bad police were like those in Syria' (Police student, male). A senior officer stated Vietnamese police compared favourably with some foreign forces, while making a joke about how the pursuit of profit is an activity preferable to inciting violence:

> Some say that the Vietnamese police are the best in the world. For example, in the US, the police shoot people. In Paris, why can't the police stop terrorism? In Vietnam, there are no such cases. Only bombing incidents happen from workplace accidents. Some people make a joke that 'Vietnam has no terrorism because if a terrorist has a bomb they will sell it before using it'. [laughs] (Police officer, male)

Some officers argued that Vietnamese police have a superior approach, as evidenced by a lack of terrorist activity. They critiqued the police capacity during the recent terror targets in Belgium and France.

A core characteristic of police culture in the literature relates to solidarity and the 'code of silence' in which officers close ranks and refuse to share information on their colleague's transgressions. The consequences of doing so could result in a person's exclusion from the group or a withdrawal of support (Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). Exposing the wrongdoing of one officer can be seen to reflect badly on the many. Participants who said the police were held in high regard may truly believe this is the case. It could also be that the consequences can be severe for negative commentary about others or the organisation (and Party). One male officer, remarking on the public security services, said they 'talk about how good they are but in the eyes of the public their image is fading. They know in their hearts that their reputation is not good, but they will not admit it'. (Police officer, male)

The nature of police work everywhere means police may not have a good reputation among some sections of the community. In Vietnam, the reputation of the police is built on community relationships, shared favour and interactions with the public, both positive and negative. How participants reflected on their ideas about reputation was indicative of the tensions under which they work every day, and the dissonance between personally-held beliefs and the limitations on speaking freely.

Conclusion

Though police in this study promoted the importance of benevolence and compassion in addressing criminality, these claims may also be a pretence for lacking capacity to be more focused and effective (The World Bank, 2013).

In the West, community policing approaches were adopted in part in response to the perceived failures of professional policing which emphasised maintaining a distance between police and the community (Sklansky, 2011). The approach was to increase police-community engagement and resolve problems through consultation and consideration of local needs and defined as being a partnership where police can be held to account by the community. It has also been shown to be vulnerable to political influence and special interest groups who may be more influential or have access to resources to sway police decision-making. Police responses in this study do not align with the historic veneer of bureaucratic,

‘professional’ law enforcement in the manner reported in early studies in the global North. For example, the emphasis on village independence remains, and the notion of ‘flexibility’ shows that police learn during their training and that policing is not mere law enforcement but rather an active decision-making process about whether enforcing the law is appropriate. To that extent, police responses reflected that a cultural capital is associated with being seen by the community to be understanding and compassionate. In addition, the emphasis police officers placed on being educators (legal or moral) means police perceived a cultural capital with having acquired legal knowledge which they could disseminate to help people solve problems rather than relying on enforcement of the law. This may reflect Wong’s (2010) distinction between Western problem-oriented policing and his social resource theory in terms of understanding the relationship between the police and the public in China. In Vietnam, police perceived their contribution in terms of their being a resource for information, rather than intervention. Future research could examine the circumstances as to why people in Vietnam elicit police support and their expectations of police involvement.

The current study focused on the uniformed public police, largely those who were studying or working at the PPA or who had done so previously. It revealed police in Vietnam work within a conceptualisation of public and private space which differs from Western understandings. The interactions across the formal and informal networks that enforce law and order are understood and enacted in both superficial and highly complex ways. One example is the extent to which neighbourhood patrols, such as those undertaken by Street Knights, are directed by the police, and how they can be held accountable with respect to misconduct. Consequently, local police stations function as an important intersection between where the state ends, and the people begin and thus are a site for further exploration between the population and the law.

The historical roots of the communal approach to social order means a community response to policing in Vietnam already exists, although it differs from the Western conceptualisation in several ways. Despite the communist ideology of equality, the Confucian patriarchal social structure still underpins much of

Vietnamese culture. This means that power relations, including gender hierarchies, are sustained and are difficult to dislodge in a broader system where litigation against discrimination has been uncommon. The Communist Party structure is instrumental in maintaining the Confucian social structure which, in turn, reinforces a rigid, though often unwritten, hierarchy of control and power. This means communal policing efforts based on local needs can be disrupted by top-down influence. Furthermore, whether police decide to be flexible may be subjective or politically motivated and lack fairness, meaning the rights of the less powerful are not structurally protected and may be under-enforced and dependent on the 'flexibility' of individual police. The lack of accountability structures and power imbalances may also result in limited checks on whether interpretations of community policing benefit vested interests. Furthermore, the Vietnamese populace do not have recourse to an independent media who are in a politically powerful enough position to expose poor police conduct. Whilst the expansion of social media has filled this gap to an extent, complaining about police via the digital realm can have consequences. This thesis does not examine the role of social media in challenging police behaviour but over the past decade there has been an example reported where complaining about police on Facebook has led to the complainant being jailed (Voice of America, 2015). The upshot of this enforcement of strict censorship when it comes to public denunciations of police behaviour is that there is little recourse for those who feel they have been mistreated or not taken seriously.

The pervasiveness of discretion in policing can also be read as necessary, even desirable, because it enables police to respond to the constant and capricious occurrences warranting police intervention and because 'individual and social' interests in some cases cannot be reconciled (Dixon, 1999; Kleinig, 1993). Despite the strictures against complaining about police, it was clear from my interviews that police regarded themselves as having an important role in community life and saw themselves as holding a responsibility to solve community problems. Thus, the concept of education and close contacts with the community complemented local understandings of what police work entails. Community policing approaches are sometimes defined by the proximity and availability of police to engage with local communities, for example, the Koban

stations in Japan (Bayley, 1976), the *paichusuo* (PCS) in Taiwan (Cao et al., 2014), and formerly the Neighbourhood Police Post System in Singapore (Ganapathy & Cheong, 2016). Though there are a range of mechanisms for police-community engagement in Vietnam, a marked difference from Japan and Singapore is the extent to which the community can complain about police action or inaction, or, indeed, too much surveillance.

Studies on the lack of enforcement of motorcycle helmet legislation (Sidel, 2008), policing the sex industry (Koh, 2001), policing street vendors (Koh, 2006), and drug law enforcement (Jardine et al., 2012; Khuat et al., 2012) have highlighted discretion as commonplace.[75] These studies indicate that discretion is a core element of policing functioning within the broader Vietnamese culture whereas in policing research in the United States in the 1960s the discovery of discretionary practices was identified as a crucial scientific insight (Sherman, 1984).

Responses in this chapter also highlight individual officers' (publicly expressible) views about policing in Vietnam using references to 'the West' or other countries as a comparison. Officers saw the difference in terms of development, and access to resources such as technology and equipment, between Vietnamese police and those in the global North as a major contributing factor to different policing styles. It was notable that, while Vietnamese police felt they were technologically under-resourced to prevent and investigate crime, they did not mention wanting access to technologies routinely used to improve police accountability in other jurisdictions, such as mobile data terminals, global positioning systems or body-worn cameras (for example see Ganapathy & Cheong, 2016). Whether this discrepancy was the result of lack of knowledge about these systems or the belief that they would not be useful in a Vietnamese context was unclear. What was clear was that Vietnamese officers were adept at balancing the unique power and social structures in which they operated and felt that navigating those structures was inherent to effective policing.

In the context of liberal Western democracies, interaction with police patrol officers has been described as the site at which the community confronts the 'body politic' (Van Maanen, 1973). In Vietnam, forms of capital available to police

[75] Albeit often alongside petty bribery.

include: symbolic capital related to legitimacy, integrity and morality that came with being associated with the Party who were responsible for reunifying the country and implementing policies for economic growth; social capital associated with flexibility and showing benevolence to people who may have committed an offence to build good relationships; and economic capital associated with informal payments or bribes for non-enforcement. As we have seen these three, overlapping and often-competing, forms of capital, provide the baseline for police motivations, behaviours and operations. The acquisition of all three requires considerable finesse and in that process, police find themselves positioned between the Party and the people. They are responsible for how official policy is implemented and, to the extent to which implementation of a centralised political agenda reflects its intent, can be mediated at the street and lower levels (Lipsky, 1980).

Some forms of corruption have been described as a result of structural flaws in legislation where police extractions are used for regulatory purposes rather than instances of individual deviance or venality (Dixon, 1999; Koh, 2001; Manning & Redlinger, 1977). Dixon (1999) argues that not all corruption is negative and can, indeed, have positive functions (he describes drug policing in Australia). Western notions of transparency and anti-corruption interventions cannot be simply applied to Vietnamese police. Though abuses of power do occur – as they do in all police forces – the specific cultural, philosophical, political and institutional circumstances in Vietnam have resulted in and continue to result in ways of policing that follow different imperatives to Western-influenced security models. This is not to say that corruption should not be addressed but, rather, to understand that what constitutes corruption must be understood through a Vietnamese lens.

Police in the global North were initially deemed monolithic and bureaucratic. However, this may have been due to presentational strategies of police organisations or just poor research rather than a reflection of reality. The ways Vietnamese policing is represented may also focus too heavily on a limited reading whereby the presentational strategy is reflected in images of police in Vietnam, and discourse emphasising authoritarian aspects of the political and

public security regime (Thayer, 2014). However, there are also studies of Vietnamese society which highlight space for dialogue and negotiation between the State and its people (Kerkvliet, 2003, 2014a). Vietnamese police interviewed in this study placed a value on non-intervention (referring to formal legal intervention) over action-oriented and enforcement approaches. This represented a different way of approaching policing than that previously presented as core to the policing identity in Western studies. Analysing policing under an authoritarian regime, where the potential for heavy sanctions can apply, can lead to assumptions that law enforcement is strict and unforgiving; however, police staff and students expressed the importance of flexibility, crime prevention and educating the public on points of law as key aspects of their role.

Chapter 8: Matriarchy, mobilisation and modern women in Vietnamese policing[76]

Introduction

In the 3rd Century, Triệu Thị Trinh (225-248AD) defied the plight of her peers and seized her place as a military leader in Vietnam. Near the beginning of her homeland's protracted campaign to wrest sovereignty from Chinese invaders, she famously declared, 'I will not resign myself to the lot of women who bow their heads and become concubines'. As a young warrior of 19 years, she was persistently depicted in battle wearing feminine headdress, brandishing a sword and commanding her army (of mostly men) into combat. She did so from atop an elephant signifying her mastery over an animal many times her size and strength. Her bravery was further revealed by her pronouncement, 'I wish to ride the tempest, tame the waves, kill the sharks. I have no desire to take abuse'. Later designated Bà Triệu (Lady Trieu), she fought over 30 battles by the age of 23. When facing defeat, she chose to commit suicide rather than have her life snatched by rivals who had her surrounded.[77]

The story of Bà Triệu provides us with a model of the iconic Vietnamese woman. She is capable in leadership and unencumbered by fear. She is unconstrained by physical limitations in warfare and exploits the weaponry at her disposal. In the case of Bà Triệu this meant a sword and an elephant; in contemporary Vietnam, security equipment and tactics have shifted. The history of Vietnamese women features not only strong female roles, but also matriarchal practices around lineage and land rights (Yu, 1999). However, this robust indigenous history has been significantly impacted by colonisation and patriarchal Confucian ethics (Duong, 2001) which influenced Vietnamese culture, including social

[76] This chapter formed the basis of the following peer-reviewed article: Jardine, M. (2018a) Gender equality and the role of women in policing in Vietnam. People's Police Magazine. Ministry of Public Security. Hanoi

[77] Tales of Bà Triệu include that she was 9 feet tall, had a bellowing voice and breasts three feet long the latter characteristic described as an affront to invading Chinese at a time where women wrapped their chests to flatten their bust.

norms which deter women from pursuing higher education rather than current or prospective male partners (ISDS, 2015).[78]

Notwithstanding, contemporary Vietnamese women have cleaved space within male dominated realms of government, business, arts and social justice. In 2016, Đặng Thị Ngọc Thịnh was appointed Vice President of Vietnam, the highest position ever held by a woman. In the same year, Nguyễn Thị Kim Ngân was elected as the first woman Chair of the National Assembly for the 2016-2021 term. It is fitting then that, in 2016, ancient Vietnam's early warrior, Bà Triệu, was the inspiration for a compilation of stories about modern women leaders in Vietnam. The authors of *Bà Triệu's 21st Century Daughters* (Ohler & Do, 2016) describe commonalities among the women portrayed as 'their resilience, their industry, their energy and grace in spite of the challenging circumstances many of them face'.[79] These qualities demonstrate women do not have to abandon femininity and grace in order to play a dominant role alongside men in society. However, this multi-faceted and highly gendered list, may place unrealistic demands on how women fulfil professional and personal expectations. Tài (2001, p. 176) asserted that 'Vietnamese cultural expectations regarding women's proper place and responsibilities were so varied and mutually contradictory as to allow women to assume military duties while holding them to unchanged standards of feminine decorum'. Accounts of women fighters in the Communist-

[78] Importantly, this social norm is not confined to societies with a Confucian past and occurs in the West.
[79] Read more at http://vietnamnews.vn/sunday/features/344733/crashing-through-the-bamboo-ceiling.html#rYyqBTTKYYFUlCrt.99

led campaign are on display at the Women's Museum in Hanoi.[80] [81] and these further illustrate the crucial role women have had in Vietnam's security and in fighting against waves of invaders.

Vietnam's long history of invasion and revolt is a contributing factor to the complex nature of women's integration into contemporary public security. This is very different from the dominant discourses in the global North. Anglo-American policing scholarship documents women joining the police ranks under stable governance and a focus on internal security. In Vietnam, women who pursue employment in policing have traditionally followed in the footsteps of others who were ready to protect national security from foreign intervention.[82]

As contemporary Vietnam has become more settled, women's integration into policing has shifted. After almost 40 years of peace and little scope for actual fighting, women's contributions to the national agenda have also been re-mapped. This shifting terrain has not been entirely beneficial for women in general and for women in policing in particular. Whilst Vietnam's economic development has substantially decreased poverty since *Đổi Mới* (Economic Renovation) in the 1980s, a parallel story exposes an increase in gender inequality. Vietnam recorded a drop in its international ranking on gender equality from 42 in 2007 to 83 in 2015 (World Economic Forum, 2015) with a slow

[80] Nguyễn Thị Minh Khai was one of the first female members of the VCP, traveling to Hong Kong and the USSR to represent the Party between 1930 and 1935. 'In 1940 as a member of the VCP Committee in Cochinchina and secretary of the Saigon – Cholon section, she was arrested during a planning meeting for the Cochinchina uprising. She received the death penalty and was shot in Hoc Mon in 1941 at the age of 31' (Women's Museum). Hà Thị Quế (born 1921) was a military leader in Bắc Giang province and member of the provincial VCP who led the political take over in Yên Thế as part of the August Revolution in 1945 (Women's Museum). Nguyen Thi Chien, a 'guerrilla war chief' known as 'Woman who captures the enemy unarmed' is recognised for capturing four French soldiers, including an officer, whilst unarmed at the age of 21. 'In 1952 she was the first recipient of the title 'Hero of the People's Armed Forces' awarded by the state' (Women's Museum). Kan Lich, from the Pako ethnic minority group in Thua Thien Hue, was the Assistant Chief of the Armed Forces in A Luoi directing female guerrilla force at 18 years old. 'In 1968 she was honoured for having participated in 49 battles, killing 150 soldiers and bringing down an American Dakota plane' (Women's Museum).

[81] General Tran Van Tra (1988) wrote of the contribution of the 'long haired army' (female cadres) to the military success (cited in G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 472).

[82] It should be noted that in the post-1954 period, North Vietnam characterised war as against a foreign enemy, largely, the Americans, whereas in South Vietnam it was portrayed as a civil war. See Tài (2001)

recovery by 2017 to 69 (World Economic Forum, 2017). This disparity in opportunities is mirrored in the public security arena.

Whilst this sector attracts the highest base salary of Government positions, women's access to this field is limited by the official policy of the Ministry of Public Security which was last revised in 2016. The policy embedded a 10 per cent and 15 per cent cap on female entrants to public security tertiary institutions (Bộ Công An, 2016, Article 3).[83] These small percentages serve to institutionally enforce the sector's status as a masculine arena. Vietnam's Labour Code (2012) and associated regulations (Thông tư, 2013) prohibit employing women in some occupations or undertaking specific tasks 'to suit the health of female workers' (Article 3.2.). Whilst some of the provisions aim to protect women during pregnancy from strain or exposure to chemicals, which may cause them and their unborn child harm, in practice the code entrenches gender stereotypes and limits women's access to work. But just as the landscape of policing is not static, change is also imminent around employment. The Labour Code is currently under revision with proposals to remove sections, which limit female participation in the workforce, for example, the earlier retirement age which is between two to five years earlier for women than men as outlined in Table 4 in Chapter 5.

This chapter explores historical events, folklore, policies and practices which have influenced the position of women in Vietnam today. I highlight how women are situated in the broader culture and through observation and interviews explore the experiences and presentation of female police. I conclude by summing up differences and similarities in the field of policing for women in Vietnam compared to what has been documented in the global North.

[83]Article 3 specifies a 10% limit on women in professional police and 15% limit for women in political branches, engineering, logistics and foreign languages. Here, 'professional police' can be understood to mean types of police (or security) work that are operational or considered specialist. This thesis refers to 15% as the quota limit although it should be recognised that this is an upper limit for women on entry and that different roles and functions may have more or less than this in practice.

Geography, gender and a touch of grace

Vietnam's geography and political history have resulted in differences between the country's north and south – as described in Chapters 2 and 4.[84] Northern Vietnam has retained more cultural influences from neighbouring China. Northern culture tends to reflect a Confucian style and demonstrates a form of conservatism associated with hosting Government and Party offices. This Confucian legacy is associated with masculinity given 'its role as a source of bureaucratic and political manpower' (Tài, 2001, p. 182). The southern region had greater exposure to other southeast Asian cultures, including some with more matrilineal and matrilocal practises (ISDS, 2015; Mai Thi Tu & Le Thi Nham Tuyet, 1978), and has retained patterns of consumption and trade that were originally influenced by the French and Americans. The different characteristics associated with the north and south of Vietnam have been described as embodying masculine and feminine attributes respectively (Tài, 2001). Whilst this characterisation provides a lens through which to understand the cultural dissonances between north and south, it does not accurately describe the way gender equality is enacted across the country. Until reunification in 1975, the country's approach to gender equality was split across north-south lines. The Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam established in the 'Confucian' north in 1954 promoted gender equality in a structured way (see below), compared to more amorphous liberal French and American influences in the south. It is important to remember here that the interview data for this thesis was collected in Hanoi and from interviews with people principally from the north.[85]

Vietnamese folklore is critical to the creation of the complex feminine ideal in both the north and south of the country. Within this construction, geography is a central metaphor. The tale of the 'Founding Parents' of ancient Vietnam, the Fairy Bird *Âu Cơ* (mother) and Dragon King *Lạc Long Quân* (father) is one that illustrates the history of Vietnamese constructions of gender roles. The story describes the

[84] Although mentioning them can be politically sensitive because it detracts from the unified vision authorities prefer to project

[85] A similar study in Hồ Chí Minh City may reap different results and have an altered focus. However, many of the documented prominent early women leaders were from the north given that is where battles with Chinese invaders took place. Furthermore, in line with the view that history is written from the perspective of the victors, anti-Communist women fighters may be overlooked in the official history.

separation of the founding parents and equal division of their 100 children. The separation, referred to as a 'reconciled conflict of a divorce' (Duong, 2001, p. 209), of the Fairy Bird and Dragon King has various interpretations in its re-telling. Some versions reflect a matriarchal and feminist viewpoint of a mother – a pioneer – taking charge of her offspring's destiny, while others emphasise the patriarchal and decision-making role of the Dragon King's initiation of the divorce. Other accounts tell how the Fairy Bird (reflecting the ocean) and the Dragon King (reflecting the mountains) separated and took up residence in their opposite's realms. The story becomes an evocation of the creation of an equal, mutually beneficial, but clearly delineated relationship between land and sea. Vietnamese mythology features the country's mountainous landscape and extensive coastline. Through the association of motherhood with the ocean and fatherhood with mountains, the feminine and masculine are represented as inherently distinct and eternally inter-dependent. The masculine mountains resemble a static and stable presence while the ocean's ebb and flow is emblematic of the nature of women's equality in Vietnam. A sea that flows forward in times of national need and foreign aggression (into the frontiers of battle) and recedes from the front as danger wanes and women take up their role in the home which has the colloquial designation, *Nội Tướng,* or General of the Interior (Tài, 2001, p. 174). This undulation need not be characterised as a binary choice but rather the slow movement of the tide and a recognition of multiple possibilities. Possibilities which can be read as constituting the natural state of woman ranging from protector of national security to primary nurturer of family and home.

According to Duong (2001), features of early Vietnamese folklore assign women admirable traits in contrast to the Confucian model which was a strict patriarchy where gender was distinguishable by sex category (attributed by male or female sex organs); the possibilities for participation in society were distributed accordingly. The key differences in attitude to women's roles are demonstrated in Vietnamese folklore that sees women as multi-dimensional and capable of great feats of courage. Vietnam's founding mother, Fairy Bird, characterises indigenous Vietnamese womanhood with not only 'strength, productivity, creation, and repair, but also for the tragic and straining notion of self-sacrifice and human struggle' (Duong, 2001, p. 210). The folktale of Princess Tien Dung

(which came from the Hùng era between 2879 (29th century BC) to 258 BC) represents indigenous women's freedom of choice through her refusal to follow convention and marry. Characteristics of resilience and perseverance of the Vietnamese woman are recalled through generations with 'The Story of the Awaiting Wife' (Duong, 2001). According to the legend, she waits so long on top of a mountain gazing over the South China Sea for her husband to come home from war, she turns into a limestone statue, demonstrating how the 'strong will of Vietnamese women could defeat time, capable of turning the perishable flesh and bone into the more permanent formation of rock' (Duong, 2001, p. 212). This echoes the story of Penelope in Greek mythology (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2014). Both myths suggest possibilities for women's behaviour that go beyond strictly gendered guidelines. Both the 'awaiting woman' and Penelope are role models who demonstrated persistence and resilience and have influenced strong female behaviour and attitudes for centuries.

Confucian influence

Despite various uprisings, there was an 800-year period of uninterrupted Chinese rule which enabled entrenchment of Confucian values in Vietnam. Women's property rights were looked upon as a backward characteristic of the Vietnamese society. In *Hồng Đức thiện chính thư* (Book of Good Government of the Hồng Đức Era, 1471), the wording of an article for regulating moral codes indicates a departure from a practice where new husbands would live with the woman's family for three years after marriage. Specifically, Article 6 states:

> After the fiancé's family has conformed to the demands of the marriage rites and delivered the marriage gift, the fiancée shall, on the wedding day, go immediately to her husband's house to live. No one shall adhere to the corrupt ancient custom of compelling the husband to live and work in the fiancée's house for three years. (Nguyễn, Tạ, & Trần, 1987)

The Article's reference to the 'corrupt ancient custom' implies contempt for the indigenous practice. In more recent centuries, it has been more common for the

daughter-in-law to move in with her husband's family as the likely result of patrilineal and patrilocal requirements. The Book of Good Government of the Hồng Đức Era, 1471, also stated:

> Article 2: Duties of brothers toward one another: mutual respect, love, and harmony. They should not listen to their wives at the expense of (male) blood relatives; if they do, they would attract shame on their family and shall be punished. (cited in G. E. Dutton et al., 2012, p. 110)

Despite Confucian influences Vietnamese women have not remained silent. As recently as the 18th century, Hồ Xuân Hương recited her poetry in public denouncing male chauvinism (Duong, 2001). She felt that Confucian ethics were in tension with the 'indigenous culture that accorded women more freedom and respect' (Duong, 2001, p. 213). Earlier Vietnamese society saw examples where the daughters of monarchs could reign and hold positions within the court (V. K. Nguyen, 2002).[86] In contrast, the Chinese system was a strict patriarchy where gender was distinguishable by sex category (attributed by male or female sex organs) and the possibilities for participation in society were distributed accordingly.

Mobilising women: exploitation or empowerment?

Vietnam's visual history is laden with images of female warriors and martyrs who fought alongside men for the collective security of the nation. Amidst recurrent foreign and civil wars, a confrontation that has not yet taken place in Vietnam is a battle between the sexes (Duong, 2001). Duong (2001) argues that equality for women has been only acceptable in terms of their contribution to nationalism or the collective good. This theory has been demonstrated above; but there are examples in the early years of the 20th Century where gender equality was part

[86] In addition to Bà Triệu's legacy, other women are recognised for their military prowess who managed to be effective in battle notwithstanding gendered limitations including, the Trưng Sisters (Hai Bà Trưng) who, in 40AD, fought against the Han Chinese with the elder sister Trưng Trắc becoming Queen. In 1789, Bui Thi Xuan, the female General Commander-in-Chief for King Quang Trưng, fought in a victory against 290,000 Qing Chinese invaders as head of the elephant mounted troops. In more recent times, women have been heralded for their leadership in the Communist-led campaigns against French, Japanese and American incursions in museums in Hanoi and Hồ Chí Minh City (Tài 2001).

of the national project as determined via socialist objectives. The Vietnamese Communist Party, established in 1930, founded the Women's Emancipation Association, later *Hội Phụ nữ Việt Nam* (Viet Nam Women's Union). The Women's Union is a major branch of the Vietnam Fatherland Front whose charter is as follows:

> The Vietnam Women's Union (VWU) was established in 1930. As a socio-political organization, the VWU represents, cares for and protects the legitimate and legal rights and interests of women from all walks of life. The VWU participates in building the Party and in State management. The VWU's rights and responsibilities are regulated by the Constitution and laws of Vietnam (Vietnam Women's Union, 2018).

During the campaign to unify Vietnam through military action in the south, the Women's Union mobilisation platform between 1955-1975 included 'Three responsibilities' of its membership, '1. To take charge of industrial and agricultural production, 2. To manage all family affairs; 3. To take up arms when necessary' (Vietnam Women's Union, 2018).

The socialist work ethic championed by Hồ Chí Minh after the August Revolution in 1945 expanded women's participation in employment and public space (ISDS, 2015, p. 19), and saw a rejection of individuality associated with colonial French bourgeoise. The pervasive inequality experienced by women around this time is made explicit in the following statement by Hồ Chí Minh, 'What equality really means is a thorough-going and difficult revolution because contempt for women dates back thousands of years…If this large-scale revolution is to be successful, progress will have to be made in every field: political, economic, cultural and legal' (Mai & Le, 1978 cited in Oxfam in Vietnam, 2016, p. 10). However, even though women joined the labour force, they were still expected to fulfil their domestic roles according to Confucian values (ISDS, 2015). A line of critique follows that women were mobilised by Hồ Chí Minh and male strategists to help with the war effort but the Party's commitment to gender equality diminished after driving out

colonialists leading to criticism that women were exploited in times of national need – a trend seen in other post-war and post-colonial societies (Duong, 2001).

Notwithstanding the overlap of wartime in the founding and early years of the formal police organisation in Vietnam, some draw a distinction between modern policing and military action. The interviews with police in this study highlighted many of the competing dimensions of women's roles, including roles ascribed to them by men. One policeman said women's roles in war and policing could not be considered the same because the former demanded their involvement due to the proximate sovereign threat whereas policing in peacetime does not warrant the same response, adding that the 'psychology and mindset' is different (Police officer, male). This argument seeks to explain differences between the sexes in that the exceptional circumstances of wartime saw women embody an unnatural role also reflected in the interpretation of the idiom *Giặc đến nhà đàn bà cũng đánh* (When the enemy is at the gate, the woman goes out fighting) as not to be confused with feminist empowerment (Tài, 2001, p. 174).

Whilst male strategists were criticised for demanding women's contributions to war, the Women's Union has equally been under fire for their manoeuvring to promote women's standing. Women's Union campaigns depict exemplary female roles as being an 'Excellent contributor to the country, great homemaker', and that there are 'Three traits of a good female worker and three home making responsibilities to be fulfilled' (Cited in Oxfam in Vietnam, 2016, p. 21). Whilst women's war-time participation and access to labour has been uneven, their fulfilment of their domestic charter has remained a constant feature of Vietnamese culture. These two needs have sometimes led to women's inclusion in conflict roles where youth and fertility were exhausted for nationalist exigencies (Turner Gottschang & Hao, 1998). In other word women's 'holy' purpose of producing children and homemaking has sometimes been sacrificed even to the point of infertility borne out of martyrdom for country. This narrative underscores the notion that Vietnamese womanhood as it relates to national survival constitutes 'self-sacrifice and human struggle' (Duong, 2001, p. 210).

According to Swartz, ‘Individuals and groups draw upon a variety of cultural, social, and symbolic resources in order to maintain and enhance their positions in the social order’ (1997, p. 73). Thus, the legacy of Vietnam’s military victories and women’s role in them are actions from which women can petition merit alongside men. Some analyses of Women’s Union activities claim they have fought for status (Chiricosta, 2010, p. 124) but not power, consequently entrenching male authority through misplaced emphasis on women’s domestic roles (Waibel & Gluk, 2013).

The Women’s Union sits under the umbrella of the Fatherland Front, which in turn serves the Party. In theory the union’s branches, which make up a mass organisation of many millions of women stretch down to the commune level and their input feeds into executive resolutions. In reality, the political positioning of the union, placed as it is within an unassailable hierarchy, primarily serves the needs of the Party, signing off on decisions made at the top. The framework lends itself towards a top-down approach to policy making. The national committee of the Women’s Union takes charge of setting the agenda and ‘norms’ at the lower levels – an approach criticised for dictating terms bereft of nuance essential for meeting local needs (Waibel & Gluk, 2013).

The Women’s Union branch at the PPA celebrated International Women’s Day in 2017 with a campaign to promote the role of women in the Public Security Forces as embracing, ‘discipline, creativity for national security, building happy families’ (People's Police Academy, 2017e). This is a continuation of the dual roles that have marked public engagement for women serving both country and home. Policewomen experience another duality. As compulsory members of the Women’s Union they are subject to the dual subordination of the Government, under the Ministry of Public Security, and the Communist Party, under the Women’s Union. This means if they take an alternative view to the Party of issues facing, and opportunities available, to women it may invite undesirable repercussions. One officer while not speaking directly to the issue of gender said a good leader must work towards change without creating disunity (Police officer, male). This approach is likely to support the highly gendered status quo and embed power dynamics in favour of men. In a culture which tries to avoid division

and appease the sensibility of others for the sake of harmony (as described in Chapter 6), some instruments typically used to progress social change and draw attention to unfairness may not be available. For example, industrial action or some forms of awareness raising such as the 'fledgling' #MeToo movement (L. Le, 2018) can be unsuitable or difficult to create social change in Vietnam. In this climate it becomes socially or politically risky to pursue restructuring of gender relations. Even a strategy of withdrawing unpaid labour at home to participate in more paid work while potentially effective on an individual domestic level might invoke broader social repercussions if women did not fulfil their gender role as described below:

> Women have so many things to do for the family that it is hard to do the same job as men in the police. For example, we have to take care of the children and the home. We have to take care of our parents and our parents-in-law. Also, women must pay attention to other extended family relatives. If someone is in hospital, the women must visit them. We have to take care of so many things because if something happens to our family or we need support, people will not help us if we have not helped them when they needed it. People will think we are a bad wife and don't care for the family and so we will be excluded from the others. (Police Academy staff, Female)

Here, women are attributed status not only through the 'social accomplishment' of fulfilling their gender role (Miller, 2002) of a 'good' wife, mother, daughter-in-law etc, but also through their compliance and endorsement of Ministerial and Women's Union expectancies. Feminism's 'double bind' (Carland, 2017) in the Vietnamese context may be the trade-off between projecting a unified voice in a one-party political system and giving voice to 'not just intersecting but competing forms of discrimination' for individual women (Carland, 2017, p. 108). Furthermore, in Vietnam's pursuit of liberation from colonialism, Duong refers to the conflation of nationalism, socialism and gender equality as the 'fallacy of the trio' because it renders one form of oppression (colonialism) as warranting more

attention than another (localised patriarchy) (Duong, 2001, p. 283). Duong goes on to say 'Gender equality must mean more than equality in self-sacrifice for the name of the country' (2001, p. 284). As such, 'The challenge of the Vietnamese woman in the 21st century, therefore, is to combine international feminist objectives with the authenticity of her diversity in advocacy for the goal of gender equality in Vietnam' (Duong, 2001, p. 326).

Whilst the Women's Union has been criticised for emphasising women's duties in the home (Oxfam in Vietnam, 2016), some men interviewed in this study asserted what they thought looking after the family was what was good for women or what women wanted. The following quote delivers the burden of family wellbeing squarely on the shoulders of women:

> In Vietnam, women have the main job to look after family, even if they're good at their work. If their family is not happy, it is not the thing that they want. Husbands in Vietnam often don't want their wife to work late, because in Vietnam, taking care of the family is the main job of the woman. (Police officer, male)

In a conversation over lunch, one policeman instructed me that leaving women to manage the household tasks was, in fact, an act of respect. We ate a large meal of snails, using toothpicks to flick their soft bodies out of their now redundant armour, and chewing on the meaty thighs of barbequed frogs. Despite our best efforts, when we had finished, there was plenty of food left over. My companion suggested, rather than wasting it, that I take it home. Given he had paid for the meal (approximately AUD$5), I thought he should give it to his family. However, my companion said that 'as a man', he could not possibly insult his wife by taking leftover food home because it would be impolite: 'Vietnamese women love to think they are the best cooks and prefer home cooked food to eating restaurant food' (Police officer, male). When I told him that, in Australia, a woman would be very pleased if a man brought food home as it would make less work for her if she was usually responsible for food preparation. He said it was acceptable for a Vietnamese woman to accept food cooked by other women or if they specifically ordered it from a restaurant for home delivery, but he was adamant that a 'man's

role was not to intervene in food!'. This view was confirmed by a policewoman who described her sense of pride in domestic labour:

> In each family, every woman is proud of doing housework, any guest that enjoys the food cooked by the woman and says it is delicious, there is a lot of pride for that woman. Only some women feel disappointed about being limited to housework. I like doing the housework. I cook, it's my habit. I love it. In Europe, it is different, some women don't want to do housework. Working in the PPA I feel stressed, but when I go home, and my son is happy with dinner it makes me feel very happy. In Vietnam, women don't feel disappointed about house work because they feel good about being with their children. (Police officer, female)

From this perspective, the kitchen can represent a domain where women exercise control, inhabiting a subject position from which they derive a sense of authority eluding them in other decision-making spheres.[87] Furthermore, while Women's Union's campaigns claiming that home-making is the realm of women have been described as unhelpful (Oxfam in Vietnam, 2016), it remains a significant realm of influence. If it is the sole sphere where women exert tangible influence, challenging this ideal carries with it the danger of losing already limited status.

Whilst women continue to take on more responsibilities outside the home, they might benefit from de-emphasising domestic tasks as 'women's work'. Gender specialist, Dr Khuất Thu Hồng argues for a way forward, 'I think it's time to change and to influence men. Policies, actions, programmes and interventions should target men, forcing them to change their awareness, thoughts and behaviours. Here, I would like to emphasise that support should continue to be given to women, but men should also be "rescued"' (Việt Nam News, 2016). This notion of raising men's awareness is used consistently in Western behaviour change

[87] Whilst the burden of domestic roles is often associated with women's subordination to a male partner, Connell (1995) indicates women's monopoly in this sphere can disrupt this power structure, particularly in relation to child care.

programs – for example domestic violence prevention campaigns which focus on male responsibility – but the idea of rescuing men is an interesting approach to a contested space.

To say food preparation is the sole domain of women in Vietnam is also not entirely true. It is possible for men to choose to inhabit the kitchen if it is something they enjoy. In one case where I joined a meal with the relatives of a police officer: the cook in charge of preparing the entire meal for a large group was a man in his 30s. I watched him working quickly in the kitchen, smiling cheerfully, explaining how he cooked for his family every day. Not only did he attest he was a good cook, a claim endorsed by family onlookers, he was radiant whilst saying he enjoyed his self-appointed post. Family members chuckled at the novelty of a male being the family cook but at the same time appeared to thoroughly appreciate his voluntary uptake of this responsibility. The novelty associated with the male cook is an example of an exception proving the rule – that cooking is usually women's work.

Femininity and agency

Vietnamese women's national dress, the *áo daĭ*, features prominently in official and formal ceremonies (and informal settings), including at functions under the MPS. Made of silk and in two parts, it comprises a long flowing dress with splits to the waist up each side combined with long pants worn underneath. The pants swirl voluminously at the ankles and are often in a contrasting colour for visual effect. The long splits permit the front and back sections to flow independently around the legs evoking a graceful and willowy feeling. A tightly fitted upper section which clings to the ribs, chest, neck and shoulders reveals the feminine frame. At police academy events including graduations, talent contests and other performances, the *áo daĭ* is commonly worn by women who may also change into and out of, the green police uniform. Female police students (and staff) draped in colours dance with silk scarves and large feathered fans as well as marching or mingling wearing the official 'superman green' (see more regarding this description below) livery alongside their male counterparts.

On closer inspection, the male and female uniforms provide some clues about the differences in the nature of police work for policemen and policewomen. Students of both sexes must attain a basic standard of martial arts in order to pass their training.[88] Women are at a marked disadvantage in this and other physical tests due to the regulation one-inch heel on their shoes. Their male counterpart's shoes have a flat sole, better for running, maintaining balance, or indeed, standing or walking for long periods; all activities routinely associated with police duties, particularly those in the field. Whilst the regulation shoes are not the reason for the differences between male and female police roles, they indicate attitudes to women's policing as a more sedentary occupation than men's policing. It is hardly surprising, in this context, that most policewomen undertake far more administrative, desk-based functions rather than operational or emergency responses. But, of course, the feminisation of police women is more complicated than their standardised kit. Only two interview participants, both women, said they wanted to become police so they could wear the uniform – possibly because it gave them higher status in the community than women might otherwise have; perhaps because it was associated with authority.

Issues of uniform are also complicated by the ways policewomen engage with the way it is worn. In some instances, female police have a role in reinforcing traditional ideas of femininity. During my time at the PPA, I trod many buildings, hallways, stairwells, walkways, offices and dining areas taking photos where possible of signage, slogans and images around the academy.[89] I was particularly struck by a framed series of photos in a stairwell stipulating the Ministry of Public Security guidelines for male and female hair styles whilst in uniform. The photographs showed the universal and characterless front, back and sides cut for men, whilst women had the option of restraining their long hair in a bun pulled back from the face or neatly trimmed sitting above the epaulettes on the shoulders. The photographs and regulation hairstyles were not themselves

[88] I observed students wear casual styled clothing rather than their uniform while doing martial arts classes at the academy.
[89] I did ask whether it was permissible to take photos and was encouraged to do so in regard to official signage although other times it was discouraged.

noteworthy, but it was the non-compliance by women at the academy that I found notable.

Women wore the regulation, though impractical, heeled police-issue footwear but chose to flout the practical hairstyle rules and instead wore their hair long and lithe, meandering down their backs, or with a fringe like a curtain lingering above their eyes. This is entirely consistent with an endeavour to embrace femininity at the same time as performing a non-traditional role. It is a containment strategy; an attempt to maintain the status quo, to be police women but still women; to fit into the male dominated police community without disruption, without undermining society. It also represents an expression of individuality often discouraged among military and para-military forces, not to mention a deliberate act of rule-breaking by a minority risking punishment. Women, in their collective though perhaps not conscious power, have weighed the risk and performed a calculated action. In the broader context, this shared rebuff of official rules reflects one of Kerkvliet's three possibilities for state-society relations (2003). If the academy is viewed as a 'small society', the women's conduct represents a bottom-up approach to policy making. A male student observed, 'If someone breaks a rule and doesn't get punished for it, then more people will follow. Eventually so many people are breaking a rule that it is impossible to enforce' (Police student, male). When I pointed out my observation of women's non-conformance to another male student he posited an additional view:

> …the proper hair style for women is so ugly. Who would want to look like that? I went to the Royal [Thai] Police Cadet Academy and the women there had their hair tied back so tightly it made their faces ugly. I'm glad the women at the Academy don't do that.
>
> (Police student, male)

A female student said women felt more comfortable when they could wear their hair in a way that suited their face shape which meant a non-regulation style was appropriate if so demanded by their physical criteria (Police student, female). The emphasis on appearance is notable given the average age for women to get married in Vietnam is 22 (25 for men) (ISDS, 2015, p. 63), thus, time spent living

on campus provides a prime opportunity for relationships to flourish.[90] The academy is a crucial marriage market-place.[91] Marriage is a social accomplishment in Vietnam with 90 per cent of people surveyed by ISDS having been married at least once (ISDS, 2015, p. 63). Most marriages are initiated based on love (80%), but importantly, 12 per cent of marriages occurred due to people having reached an age at which it is deemed socially requisite to have started a family (ISDS, 2015, p. 64). This is usually mid to late 20s and by this age there is very strong pressure from family, society and even workplaces for people to find a mate. This pressure coincides with a perception of female students' lack of focus on career aspirations due to the desire to find a husband. A young male student put it this way:

> It's interesting because most of my female friends already have this idea that they're going to be settled and don't want to climb that ladder. They talk about how they're going to get married and take care of the children. (Police student, male)

Indeed, criteria for entry to the PPA includes being 'no more than 20' years old, unmarried and without children which narrow the demographics of applicants and their life stage (Bộ Công An, 2016, Article 6.2). A male officer suggested the reason there were so few females pursuing police functions that requires hands on investigation, arrest and interrogation was: 'Where women become Criminal Police, they may take on masculine traits. No man would want to marry a woman like that' (Police officer, male). This perception partially explains why the academy turns a blind eye to hair infractions and why female police continue the pursuit of this version of femininity despite the risk of punishment. For many young police women, being worthy of the social accomplishment of a husband and family is simply more important than breaking the institution's rules.

Although most women's tasks as police officers are administrative, the fact they pursue employment within the security sector highlights women's pragmatic

[90] Despite regulations against such behaviour though reportedly usually overlooked.
[91] The Circular on Regulations on Admission to the People's Police (Bộ Công An, 2016, Article 6.2) stipulates students are not allowed to be married or have children.

pursuit of the tangible benefits of being in the police force. Police (and other security functions) are the highest paid of all government departments in Vietnam. Their salary and social security payments are dependable and good value compared to many other jobs. For example, women working in family farms or businesses are less likely to have comparable entitlements or may have to pay them out of their own pockets (ISDS, 2015, p. 149). One officer described women's reasons for joining, or staying in, the police in this way: 'Women do not try to be the same as men, they don't necessarily want to do the same work as men, but they do want more equality in terms of higher salary' (Police officer, male). Concerns shaping women's career paths are reflected below in response to the question, 'Would you like to do the same police work as men?':

> Of course, I don't want to do similar work to men! It is very dangerous and time consuming. Women in Vietnam not only have to work but have to take time off to look after family and children, so I won't have time to do the work a policeman does...According to tradition in Vietnam, the main role of women is to take care of the family, working is the role of men. (Police student, female)

Women were aware of the expectations of them at home and saw their limited role in policing as an advantage in managing their overall workload. They did however recognise that they had similar capabilities as men if given the opportunity:

> At first, I would have loved to be a detective or investigator of criminals. But, after a time of working and experience and family guidance working in traffic or administration, I think even for men working with criminals is very stressful. It is common sense in Vietnam that men do hard work and women do easier work, so we feel very grateful for that. (Police student, female)

> In Vietnamese culture, the men can choose to do housework or not. But the female police have to spend more time to work at home and [this] is why they do not take

> part in serious crime [duties]. If there was more support at home, many Vietnamese women would do as the men do. (Police officer, female).

Women participants demonstrated that working in administration has its advantages. They are adept at using the flexibility it provides especially in relation to parenting responsibilities. One example is being able to leave work to pick up children from school. Here, encouragement of women's domestic role at a society level led to different standards and expectations associated with women's policing. A male officer said his female colleagues refused certain tasks if they interfered with family obligations, for example, going to teach a short course outside of Hanoi, but added that 'their husbands would not allow it' indicating restrictions on women's choices (Police officer, male) This statement is also indicative of a perception that women were able to turn down undesirable tasks with an irrefutable excuse. This was linked to the notion that in some cases females receive preferential treatment, for example:

> Female police are different from the male police at the PPA. The females receive encouragement from the security industry, for example, we receive a small amount of money for buying bras or towels, small benefits. Vietnam has many special days for women, but not men. Females also get a gift from the department on their birthday, but not men.[92] (Police officer, Female)

Following a lecture I delivered at the Police Academy in July 2017 on the topic of this chapter, a female student approached me and said, 'I joined the police because I want a stable job, so I can get married and have a family. I don't want to do police work outside the office. It is not the reason why I became a police officer'. The student considered work as an integrated part of her life. Work should be carefully pursued based on how it related to and fitted in with other life choices. In other words the job was important for its contribution to her whole life and not as an end in itself. Given the age limits on police applicants (no older than 20),

[92] Vietnam celebrates International Women's Day (March) and Vietnam Women's Day on 20 October – the date the predecessor of what is now the Women's Union was founded in 1930.

women in particular appeared to be considering the impact of employment conditions on their future family responsibilities whilst still in high school. Whilst this may seem early to the western reader, it is only really since the 1960's that marriage in the West has routinely happened over 30. And while the importance of marriage relates of course to the couple who are marrying, young or old, marriage in Vietnam, is also significant to a broader, ever-present network comprising family, community, work and society. These multiple arenas mean that young people have to meet a continuum of needs, not only their own, and this is a significant pressure amid the many other pressures of becoming a police officer.

There are however some outlets at the PPA for the young people to let off steam. At the academy, men show off their talents through singing, dancing and playing in a band. Competitions for women place greater weight on appearance and comportment, with women gaining recognition or status from talent and beauty contests often held in the confines of the university. One example is the 'Excellent Local Women Cadre' contest (Hội thi Cán bộ Phụ nữ cơ sở giỏi) (People's Police Academy, 2015a) which aims to improve communication skills and confidence, opportunities for development.[93] This activity was organised by the Academy's branch of the Women's Union and described as a 'political activity' with 'practical experience'. The contenders were judged over four rounds in the following categories: 1) Graceful Women - Self-Introduction; 2) Self-confident Women – Learning knowledge; 3) Talented Women – Talent; and, 4) Shining Women – Eloquence.[94] In 2016, another beauty contest titled, 'Charming of Criminal Justice 2016', judged female contestants on their *áo dai* performance, (Western style) evening gown parade, talent and eloquence. This event was reported as a tribute to the PPA on its 48th anniversary and 'to honor the beauty, elegance, confidence, bravery [and] knowledge of female students of [the] Criminal Justice system of the PPA' (People's Police Academy, 2016). But not all stage performances by

[93] Contests are held for different activities and can include staff and/or students.
[94] 1) Graceful Women - Self-Introduction (Phụ nữ duyên dáng - Tự giới thiệu); 2) Self-confident Women - Learning knowledge (Phụ nữ tự tin - Tìm hiểu kiến thức); 3) Talented Women – Talent (Phụ nữ tài năng - Năng khiếu); and, 4) Shining Women – Eloquence (Phụ nữ tỏa sáng - Hùng biện).

women involved the demure *áo daĭ*, refined evening gown, or, sanctioned uniform.

Prior to their big day, 2016 PPA graduates showcased their talents to families and friends whom had travelled from across Vietnam's northern provinces to the capital. The opening included a video on the history of the police, and a production including in-uniform patriotic performances, as well as solo and group musical and dance compositions. About midway through the evening, a troop of young women emerged on stage dancing hip-hop style to the 2014 song 'Bang Bang', a music chart topper by a female trio comprised of American pop artists, Ariana Grande and Nicki Minaj, and Britain's Jessie J., all renowned for their skimpy outfits and evocative swagger. Two of the three female police students on stage sported short black hotpants, trendy white sneakers and a combination on top of black T-shirts and flannel shirts, the latter having churned through the 20 years or so fashion cycle to be in vogue again. Although falling short of the sexualised performances of the song's original vocalists, the students' dancing was redolent of the suggestive style imported from 'Western' influences. Whilst senior PPA officers were at the ceremony, it did not have the formality of the following day when the VIP and Ministerial guests were present. The event was an opportunity for students to demonstrate their skills, and maybe even sense of humour, as well as their loyalty and professionalism.

As we have seen, the Academy is a place of multiple uses and desires. It serves as site of paramilitary discipline, and as host to a large community of youngsters who engage in recreational activities to while away their five years living on campus. The night before graduation ceremonies are an outlet for some of this energy and enthusiasm. The informal mood was set by a senior officer who opened proceedings, as apparently he usually does annually, with his own rendition of a Vietnamese song. This was greeted with much applause and encouragement from the students. The more relaxed air of the night-before graduation granted flexibility for a range of student performances, including the semi-seductive one just described. It is not surprising that female students might explore diverse forms of expression – within certain parameters – as do students of other universities exposed to worldwide trends seen online or on television.

Whilst performing 'Bang Bang' may be read as contemporary female expression, or even revolutionary in the context of the PPA, when considered in a framework of standard female roles it is entirely in line with the normative ideas of femininity reinforced by the 'Excellent Local Women Cadre' and the possibilities enabled for female policing in Vietnam.

Motherhood, iced tea and the death penalty

It was a hot day when I was sipping iced tea and interviewing Quynh.[95] We had two fans to keep us cool, one fixed above us on the wall, and the other on the floor beside our chairs. Quynh had worked at a busy police station in Hanoi and I was excited at her enthusiasm to help me understand more about policing in Vietnam. Equally, she saw me as a useful resource; the first thing she asked me was why do foreign tourists make false reports to police about having their belongings stolen? She was grinning, but with her eyes fixed on me for a response and her brow furrowed, I felt the question was underlined by a strong sense of annoyance. She went on to explain that in many cases, tourists would report their mobile phone or other items stolen, but when the police checked the CCTV cameras they saw the story could not have taken place as described and was, thus, a fabrication. At the thought of being lumped in with these tourists solely on the basis that I, too, was a foreigner, I felt my cheeks flush in embarrassment. There was an unspoken accusation I could be a criminal sympathiser due to my shared 'foreigner' status with these liars. In that moment, the impact of generalised microaggressions of *real* discriminations towards minorities at home in Australia was not lost on me. Still, I offered up the first thing that came to my mind. Perhaps the true targets of the deceit were insurance companies who often compensated travellers for items *only* if they were stolen, and *only* if accompanied by a police report. So it was quite likely that the tourist had lost their phone, iPad, camera or valuable whatever just not necessarily in the way they were reporting. I queried whether her concern was due to the impact this fraudulent behaviour had on crime rates? Quynh confirmed it was her concern explaining that it made the police look like they were not able to

[95] A pseudonym

adequately control crime. The conversation highlighted the importance of statistics as a common global measure of police performance.

During my meeting with Quynh, she regularly returned to the theme that she was worried about her six-year-old daughter: that her health was not good, that she could do better in school, that she was very shy. I wondered whether Quynh was overly worried about her daughter's shyness because her own personality seemed quite the opposite. Quynh was confident, engaging and spoke authoritatively about her police work. Her anxiety and apprehension over her daughter's wellbeing demonstrated a frailty and it felt important that she could be vulnerable with me and significant that vulnerability related to her mothering and not her police work. Other than to reassure her that she was a good mother, I did not know what else to say and we continued to discuss policing, sipping our iced tea, comparing ideas between my policing experience in Melbourne and hers in Hanoi. We inevitably arrived at the subject of illicit drugs. Quynh presented it as one of the biggest problems facing local communities. She was concerned about both trafficking and 'drug addiction'. She saw that drug traffickers were trying to prop up their trade by preying on vulnerable children who were perceived as willing to partake in risky behaviour. She understood those already addicted to be thieves, murderers and perpetrators of family violence. When Quynh said she thought Vietnam should legislate the death penalty to execute people for *all* drug offences I was taken aback. So much so, I had to ask her to repeat herself and explain it to me again to ensure I had accurately understood her. She said that drugs caused so many problems for families and the community. She was disappointed the prescribed quantities for drug possession were so high before it was possible to institute a charge that might carry a death sentence. Despite her disappointment, she was matter of fact. She explained it to me in geo-political terms: more and more amphetamines and synthetic substances were being trafficked into Vietnam from China, drug addiction in Vietnam was fuelling crime but due to political commitments to human rights treaties and the influence of America, Vietnam was no longer able to execute people without intense international scrutiny. Vietnam's status as a 'small country' rendered it easily subject to pressure by the Americans to follow their version of human rights. She lamented that China was a bigger country and was able to function independently

without submission to United States demands and could, therefore, execute more drug criminals. This was another example of how I found police in Vietnam ready to view themselves in relation to others, as an occupation, organisation or state.

Justifications for increasing women's participation in policing and other arenas of political influence have often been on the basis that women are more caring, compassionate and sympathetic towards vulnerable people than their male counterparts (Heidensohn, 1992; S. E. Martin, 1980; S. Miller, 1999). Quynh's endorsement of the death penalty for drug crimes struck me as a deviation from this stereotype. However, as our discussion unfolded, her insight became more nuanced. For example, despite having frequently used the term drug 'addicts', she pointed out that an alternate phrase – 'people who use drugs' – should be used in a nod towards changing lexicon to de-stigmatise the drug using population. In a crude attempt to synthesise our conversations about concern for crime rates, the death penalty and her sensitivity to parlance referencing drug users, I asked if the police (including herself) were happy when a drug user died from an overdose because it meant they could not commit any more crime? She laughed and said, 'No way! We believe that each person can stop using drugs and become normal citizens and be good for the community'. This view underpins an approach to social control that individuals can be educated, rehabilitated or reformed.

The 'ideal' green superMAN

The uniform of the Vietnamese police is green because the colour is associated with justice and peace. Colloquially, the police are referred in the singular as *siêu nhân xanh* (green superman), a descriptor invoking imagery of a superhero, usually male, with a hulking frame and muscles. Police worldwide have used physical attributes, typically height, weight and strength, as criteria for selecting suitable candidates for the task of policing; in some cases, they have been revised in recognition they can be exclusionary of good candidates. Despite this, the belief that physical strength is a prerequisite for policing in Vietnam underpinned arguments from officers in this study (both men and women) as to why women's participation should be limited to 15 per cent. The emphasis on physicality also dissuaded some young men from pursuing certain policing roles,

for example, one student said, ‘I’m very thin and my strength is not good. It would pose difficulties for me if I worked with criminals outside [the police station]’ (Police student, male). Whilst compulsory martial arts training obliged minimum standards for strength and agility through participation, height and weight requirements are stipulated in a Circular from the MPS which necessitates policemen be 1.64cm tall or above and weigh 48kg or more, and policewomen must be 1.58cm tall or above and weigh 45kg or more (Bộ Công An, 2016).[96] A female student described her struggle at having to gain 3kg to meet the minimum weight requiring her to eat a lot more than she would otherwise, and, in spite of the fact she faced a career demanding a level of physical exertion associated with clerical work.

The caricature of superhero police officers was also reflected in descriptions of police work as being action-oriented and requiring ‘bravery’. Thus, specialised areas in Criminal Investigations and the Criminal Police which had high levels of interaction with criminals, were perceived as more dangerous and were regarded as high-status roles. The degree of danger meant these roles were suitable for not only men, but brave, strong men. For example, a male student opted to study a major which did not involve confronting the public saying, ‘Combatting crime requires bravery and I admit I don’t have that and it’s not suitable for me’ (Police student, male). The social artefact of ‘the manly man and the womanly woman’ (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 23) limits both men and women’s participation in policing and more tightly defines and circumscribes their roles (Chan et al., 2010, p. 426). Another male student said he enjoyed going on patrol by motorbike with a colleague to search for criminals and suspicious people. He preferred this type of work because ‘going on patrol means I don’t have time to get stuck with paperwork and I get to do real police work and I have a higher chance of preventing crimes’ (Police student, male). The sentiment that ‘real’ police work entails being outside and on patrol as compared to being inside and doing paperwork reflects S. E. Martin’s (1999) point which divides tasks into masculine and feminine, with the former eliciting higher status and prestige among police. Whilst the purported masculine domain of outside police work is also in reference

[96] Students from ethnic minorities in each gender can be 02 cm shorter in height and 02 kg less in weight than the standard

to the potential for danger, in Vietnam, women are also capable in undertaking physically demanding tasks. In addition to their wartime contributions, in everyday life in Vietnam, women do a lot of outdoor physical labour, especially in agriculture (ISDS, 2015) rendering the physical requirements associated with masculine identity as essential to protect national security more myth than necessity.

A consistent theme among interviewees both male and female was the recognition that men and women are different. The term 'limitations' was used in almost every interview to describe women's capacity, it was never used to refer to men. This language makes explicit the perception that the domain of policing is a masculine enterprise: whilst women can play a role, their role is one of deficit compared to men. Limitations were described as both physical and psychological. Given the entrance exam grade was a key determinant of entry,[97] [98] if women and men perform equally well in these exams, women admitted to the police would have to have achieved higher grades to fit into the smaller allocation of positions for their sex category (at the time of fieldwork in 2016 this was reported to be a score over 28.5/30 compared to males 27/30). Consequently, limitations in terms of intellect were never mentioned. In fact, it was widely acknowledged that women who gained entry to the PPA were academically superior. Instead, emphasis for women's unsuitability was located in their lack of physical strength, and whilst psychological limitations were noted, it was often in reference to women being distracted by their family obligations rather than an incapacity to carry out the work. Some participants mentioned women were more emotionally fragile than men, which meant they were not mentally equipped to cope with the danger or trauma of policing (Police student, male). In summary, the 'ideal' police officer was someone who embodied strength over smarts. Although office work was regarded as of lower status than 'outside' police work, it did have its advantages for women, and indeed, those men who did not want to engage in the more public facing police roles, for example:

[97] After being screened for moral, political and physical suitability. See Chapter 5.
[98] Although it was not discussed specifically in terms of gender or the examination, several male interviewees indicated that the recruitment and selection process could be undermined through granting of favours. As an outsider it was difficult to probe this in detail and self-censorship for reasons outlined in Chapter 4 was of concern here.

> For administrative work, it can be hard to get a job because they have high standards, but it's in the office and so many people apply for that career because it is an easier job for the same pay. (Police student, male)[99] [100]

One student reflected on what she saw as male perceptions of women in her class of Traffic Police. She said some men thought women should not choose Traffic Police as their major because there were other 'more suitable' police jobs for women such as Administration, Social Order policing and the English language major. On the other hand, some men appreciated learning from women and their support towards their academic studies. The student said she thought women's (generally) superior academic ability meant it encouraged men to do better in order to compete with them and get better grades overall, effectively pulling men upwards to a higher standard (Police student, female). Sometimes being the only female in a class had advantages. One student was pleased her male counterparts didn't expect her to clean or take responsibility for unlocking the door to the classroom. She described how her classmates recognised her notetaking skills and sought her help after classes to exchange information to help their study. Another female student said, 'Females are rarer than males in the police and therefore, are more respected by men and cherished'. Whilst both male and female police referred to physical strength as an important capability in policing, there were perceptions of differences between female and male attributes, for example:

> Females are softer than males and they can fulfil a task. Maybe the male needs to be stronger, but females can solve problems that require communication and emotional intelligence….I feel that women are more sensitive than men and they can resolve a psychological problem faster than men. In some cases, maybe a female can reach the, approach the issue and can be gentler, then a female can

[99] Other police mentioned 'outside' work gave more opportunities for informal income through more interaction with the public

[100] Some administrative roles where men are more represented include overseeing the household registration system which involves interaction with the public and possibilities for informal income through payments to 'speed up' processing of documents.

> connect better than men and can get and give sympathy to people... Women play an important role in crime prevention… Women's skills in communication can prevent a situation from getting worse. A female officer has influence in domestic violence they get information faster than men. (Police student, female)

Whilst some other interviewees were supportive of women in policing, there were still some perceived limitations which were both practical and cultural as follows:

> The majority of work of a police officer has to do can be done by a female as good as a male. Only minor parts of work which requires a good physical state and when a sudden situation happens a female is not capable. (Police student, female)

> I don't think people have to be tall and muscular to be police, but they must meet requirements of height and strength. Some specific tasks of police, for example, anti-drug and criminal police can require more muscular strength (Police student, male)

One female student claimed males and females were equally capable, 'If a man can do it, a woman can do it'. In contrast, a male interviewee indicated going to crime scenes may be psychologically difficult for women and so is not suitable for women. One policewoman said more women in traffic police was 'to create a good image with foreigners and local people' although said if a 'man came with bad behaviour' towards a female traffic officer then her male colleagues 'must have an immediate reaction [to protect her] otherwise the male officer will feel shame in his mind because he couldn't react immediately'. This meant that protecting the male ego became as important for the female policewoman as doing her actual job. The gendered communication and people management skills highlighted earlier in this section were seen as inherent to female policing and a core skill for their success.

Promotions, paperwork and progression through the ranks

Career pathways in policing had a range of bottlenecks for women. Initially, an applicant must seek endorsement from their local police station to have their family and criminal history checked and to ensure they have the correct political credentials. Recruitment policies favour applicants who are the offspring of police or public security officers through provision of extra points on the entrance scoring system.[101] Some research participants said it was easier to pass this process if you already had family who were in the police, but being female was a barrier because decision makers at the provincial level were also limited by the 15 per cent quota (Police officer, female). Due to the strong familial culture, many police (male and female) expressed a desire to return to their home province or city after completing their training in Hanoi. Since women police were seen as primarily appropriate to fill administrative roles, local police may be reluctant to forward their applications to the next stage out of concern that in four to five years too many female police graduates may be allocated to return to their home town. There was a fear that accepting too many women could lead to a dearth of returnees qualified to fulfil 'real' policing duties. In other words, women could potentially be taking the jobs of men and crime might get out of control. This situation is further complicated because the centralised planning model, reminiscent of socialist allocation, requires flexibility and adaptation. Training takes 4 years, meanwhile circumstances of the student or the police station may change.

Women's limited opportunity to engage in *real* police work also limits their prospects for promotion. If women are largely represented in office-based work, it reduces their visibility and potential for relationship building necessary for career advancement. Also, if women were not working in public-facing positions

[101] Article 11.b) Priority Score: Along with the implementation as stipulated by Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Public Security object plus point priority admission into the following points:
- Plus 2.0 (two) points to the offspring of the police officers on the payroll (working, retired); employee labour contract does not specify the duration of the People's Police and Public Security officers have early retirement, transfer industry, demobilized or died but continuous working time in the police for 15 years above.
- Plus 1.0 (a) points to the offspring of the head and deputy head of the Commune Police are working, school, deputy commune police chief retired, died, transferred but joint working time police keep communal forces from 15 years or more. Heads, director of police units and local responsible for the accuracy of this object.

it may limit their capacity to earn additional income crucial for securing support for sought after positions. The association of higher status to roles that involved interaction with 'criminals' with greater risk of encountering danger and potential use of force or coercion also inhibited women's access to promotion. Police engaged in crime-fighting found it easier to demonstrate competencies to be considered for promotion. A female student said it was difficult to be promoted because some methods of police work were 'more suitable for men', for example, surveillance roles of male suspects often involved covertly pursuing them into male dominated domains such as some restaurants or *bia hơi* (small bars or beer halls with cheap draft beer) where women would be easily exposed. In addition, if the surveillance activity turned into an opportunity for arrest requiring physical strength or coercive force, a female would be at a disadvantage. However, women police could work covertly when investigating 'prostitution crime' because they could be more easily disguised (Police student, female). She also said that more women entering into traffic policing outdoors would give female police the chance to prove their abilities compared to men (Police student, female).

Even where women took on male-dominated police tasks, they accepted they did not do the same work as similarly trained males. Whilst this was described positively with respect to the short-term benefits, the lack of engagement and visibility may limit career advancement over the long term. For example, one of the seven females out of 64 people studying Criminal Policing, said during her internship at a police station the senior staff were 'caring' towards the interns, 'especially the females' (Police student, female). This preferential treatment was explained as being due to 'limitations' of women which meant they spent more time doing paperwork and were given 'priority' to only work official hours and could go home on time. whereas the male students would have to 'guard and patrol at night' (Police student, female). She went on to say traffic policing 'needs more men because it has outdoor work and that women in traffic policing only serve as document writers' and work in the office. Whilst she looked forward to the diversity of the role of Traffic Police, she said she didn't want to work on the street for long and eventually would prefer office work.

As police are promoted, the requirement for physicality on the job diminishes because management tends to be more desk-based than field-based. Within a framework that emphasises women's strengths in administration it is possible that moving into management might present a real opportunity for female police. The playing field could conceivably level in management and women might find themselves equally suitable for promotion. However, as women are promoted to higher ranks they face a different type of masculinity which Silvestri (2007) has referred to as 'smart macho'. Silvestri (2017) notes that in Western developed countries increased focus on management and productivity can disadvantage women where in a competitive environment, women's commitment to work may be questioned. This is because they may be unable to devote similar hours alongside men to be seen as 'present and ever-available', and thus, not an 'ideal' worker (Silvestri, 2017, p. 297). In 2017, a mere 5 per cent of students specialising in High-tech crime at the PPA were women despite perceived physical limitations being irrelevant for this skill set. Even in managerial roles, women may experience disadvantage as exemplified by this quote:

> The guy who got the position of …was unsuitable. The female applicant was definitely more qualified than the guy who got the job. He lacked the basic skills for the job and was not a good leader. I don't know why he was promoted over her, but it probably had something to do with her being a woman. It is upsetting because it is obvious people aren't promoted based on their qualifications and after a while it was clear he wasn't even interested in the job. (Police student, male).

There are other examples where being female in a managerial environment attracted negative capital. According to a female lecturer the two highest status jobs in Vietnam, are teacher and police officer. Working as a police trainer combines these into one proud position that female officers may aspire to, as it is primarily indoors and relatively safe work. Some officers are required to travel to teach in rural areas and this was seen as incompatible with women's domestic duties (Police officer, male) and there are perceptions of women being

overlooked for promotion due to them being perceived as stepping outside the feminine realm (Police officer, male). This results in barriers for women's promotion even in the Police Academy. Despite this potential for discrimination the Academy remains a site where women are perceived to be more likely to be promoted than outside it.

> We [in Vietnam] are doing very well in gender equality, but police have specific criteria and some jobs can't have that balance. In police we have to meet requirements of strength, time and strong physical health but if you're a woman you have to be a mum and are so busy and it is difficult for her to do what is required. However, in PPA it doesn't have the need for strength, so women numbers are higher. There are so many women they can become a scientist, to become Vice President of PPA, but in future maybe. (Senior PPA officer, male)

Vietnam's National Strategy on Gender Equality 2011-2020 (Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, 2010) seeks to close this gap through increasing women's political participation, access to finance and employment, education – especially tertiary level, access to healthcare, reducing gender bias in media representations, reducing gender-based violence, and gender mainstreaming issues in legal documents. The strategy, endorsed by Prime Minister Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, also aims to reduce sex discrimination in the education sector by 'Increasing the proportion of Master Degrees held by women to 50 per cent, and PhDs to 25 per cent by 2020'. For police, women's retirement age is between two and five years earlier than men depending on rank (National Assembly, 2014). The shortened career span coupled with the fact women take time out to have children, often means investment in women's education is not prioritised and subsequently limits their prospects for promotion (ISDS, 2015).

Despite the structural limitations on women's recruitment and pathways for promotion, there were ways women could pursue non-traditional roles. Some interviewees said that while women had limitations, that they had opportunities similar to men if they tried hard enough. For example, 'It depends on [the female

police officer's] passion. If they are really passionate, it is likely they can make it work' (Police student, male). A female student said she applied for the Criminal Police Major, but she was allocated to Administration. Whilst completing her first year of study in her allotted field she found a male student who would swap with her: the swap was approved by Academy staff, and she was able to pursue her preference. Whilst these examples demonstrate women can pursue different career avenues, these efforts centred around an individual's persistence rather than a proactive strategy.

Views on official policy and women's integration into policing

Interviewees were aware they would be asked about the role of women in the police and may have primed their views and prospective responses prior to interview. Anticipation of questions regarding official policy, specifically, whether the Circular on Regulations for recruitment for the People's Public Securities (Bộ Công An, 2016) limiting women's participation in policing could affect the openness of dialogue given criticism of government policy may elicit rebuke. The fact that enforcement of laws or policies regarding commentary on Government in Vietnam is uneven means responses can be determined by an individual's analysis of risk and perceptions of agency. There were differences of opinion regarding women's participation in policing among female students, for example, 'No, there are enough female police. It would not serve any better to have more women', and, 'Yes, we should encourage more women to join the police'. A female student was asked if she thought the 15 per cent quota for women should be increased. She responded, 'No. There is enough quantity. It is the regulation'. But, when asked if the policy may change to include more women in the future she responded, 'Yes, I think it will expand.' This draws attention to methodological issues where a one to two-hour interview with police staff or students in Vietnam may not provide the best circumstances in which to elicit possible disagreement or even critical engagement regarding official policy with any nuance. However, there were a range of topics where expressing discontent with the status quo was possible. When asked whether the regulation limiting women cadets to 15 per cent should be changed, a female student exclaimed:

> Of course! [Do you know if many others agree with you?] From my point of view, I would love to have more women to join the PPA but there are not many who agree with me. Many leaders of the PPA think the PPA needs less women. (Police student, female)

Other responses deferred to authorities about what was considered appropriate apportioning of men and women in policing. For example, two male students stated, 'It depends on the decision of the Minister. I can't answer this question', and, 'I think 15 per cent [women police] is enough. Most women probably do the job of administration. In future, I don't know if it will go up or down. It will be a decision for the Ministry of Public Security'. A senior police officer at the national level drew attention to the quota for police recruitment – affirming it the realm of higher-ups – compared to the internal allocation of officers, he said, 'I do agree with the 15 per cent quota because it belongs to the Ministerial rate for having enough force personnel. I don't know about other departments, but we have 30 per cent women in the anti-narcotic department. We have undercover officers, investigative and technical officers. Many females do undercover work buying drugs from smugglers'.

Some difficulties in analysing interview responses, particularly from women, relate to potential difficulties for individuals to articulate their views within socially acceptable responses. For example, people may try to adapt to or conform to fit in, rather than take a view that might set them apart from others. However, this is not necessarily true as I found when I gave a lecture to a class of 50 staff and students at the PPA in 2017. One female student stood up in front of the whole group and spoke in support of women's abilities to be police, indeed, she said women could be *more* capable than men. In contrast, another female spoke to me quietly after the presentation and indicated she did not want to do police work other than office-based tasks. That one student made a declaration to a large group with a view to dispute gender roles in policing shows conformity can be challenged. Being supportive of change to the quota on women's entry to policing could be seen as challenging authority and disrespecting elders. In most cases, the interpreters were male of varying seniority (students and academy staff), it is

not clear what impact this had on female interviewees openness. In cases where women did object to the quota, the interpreters were male and so it is unclear if male interpreter's presence influenced responses. Interviewees' endorsement of the 15 per cent quota for women seemed to stem from a view that women do not have the physical strength or time (due to family obligations) to be police. Restructuring how police organisations worked to better accommodate women was not generally seen as an option despite a female officer saying, 'Everyone wants a higher position in society. Many are active, open, and, have ambition to get a higher position'.

Conclusion

The field of policing in Vietnam has many differences from the major studies in the global North where policing emerged as a male dominated occupation under stable governance. Vietnam's protracted history of colonisation has given rise to mythologies and examples of women leaders engaged in violent battle as well as more recent roles demanding physical strength, endurance and mettle demonstrated in the American War. Vietnam has documented role models who demonstrate that women are physically capable of the physical demands of protecting society. The changing field from war to peace has seen a change in attitude to women warriors. During peacetime the attitude is that women in Vietnam should not be burdened with domestic policing as national security is no longer in peril. Conversely, in the West, it was during peacetime that women fought for inclusion among the ranks of police. Whilst the struggle for inclusion alongside men was imperfect, it was assisted because western women had recourse to the law to litigate against discrimination (J. Brown, 1997). Connell and Pearse (2015) note the extent to which a localised social institution allows for gender expression may be variable. Thus, the avenues available for women in Anglo-American policing may not be used by policewomen in Vietnam. Local approaches are adapted to local needs and Vietnamese women may manoeuvre to positions of power in a manner that does not cause conflict or disharmony to the gender hierarchy. For example, to rail against men's domination within certain police functions could be counter-productive where a woman could be seen to take on masculine traits rendering her unmarriageable.

The field for policing in Vietnam, including official policies for women's recruitment also differ from the global North. The 15 per cent quota acts as a ceiling which makes it more competitive for women applicants is a departure from trends in the West where some forces are pursuing targets of 50 per cent female recruitment. In many cases, these targets are difficult to meet. In contrast to the cap on women in Vietnam, the nature of specialised police work may mean more women are attracted to policing because the reasons for joining do not rely on one's acceptance that operational work involving shift work and street patrol are not likely to be confronted.

Susan Martin (S. E. Martin, 1980) drew a distinction between POLICEwomen and policeWOMEN: the former reflects how women try to fit in by adopting occupational role norms in line with the male dominated sub-culture, whereas the latter term accentuates 'WOMEN' through capitalisation to emphasise the contours (or limitations) of orthodox female possibilities (Rabe-Hemp, 2009). In this study, most female interviewees expressed that they did not want to be treated the same as male officers or do the same work as men. Consequently, women did not have to compete with men and did not see themselves in a manner which accords with Martin's description of POLICEwomen – the adoption of masculine characteristics to facilitate fitting in. Martin's second category, policeWOMEN, reflects the emphasis the female police placed on accountability to their gender stereotype by prioritising current or future family commitments. Rabe-Hemp (2009) referred to the possibilities of alternating between POLICEwomen and policeWOMEN depending on stage of career, role, personal circumstances. However, the extent to which the training structure and operational opportunities are limited to women in Vietnam, they have limited room to occupy the full range of police functions. Given such broad functions within policing, it supports the manner in which police culture has been conceptualised as having multiple possibilities.

Modern Vietnamese women join the police for similar reasons as men: family tradition, status, stable employment and a good salary, yet they are limited in the breadth and depth of tasks available to them. In a graduation ceremony I observed, in one awards category there were seven female recipients out of a

total of 16. Women, therefore, accounted for 44 per cent of award recipients despite the annual intake being capped at 15 per cent. The lack of gender diversity in cybercrime is a case in point: Why are 95 per cent of students male despite this crime-fighting discipline lacking the usual justifications (e.g. physical limitations) to explain why women are unsuitable? This example is further evidence of contradictory attitudes to women's policing; on one hand they are recognised as academically superior to male students, yet their predominant role in doing necessary paperwork, was still seen through the lens of inadequacy. This is especially galling given the high representation of women receiving awards for academic merit. Whilst women have good maternity leave entitlements the roles they undertake are typically on the periphery and in roles not readily valued for promotion to senior ranks.

Women in policing in Vietnam have retained their status as women first and foremost, then as police. Experiences from other jurisdictions may not apply, for example, an Australian police officer said, 'You're not employed as a *female* police officer, you're employed as a police officer so you should have the same rules and same regulations, the same accountability' (Chan et al., 2010, p. 432). Within a masculinised police culture, being female was sometimes associated with a negative social capital (Chan et al., 2003).

Given the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a young country established in 1975, and, the recency of policing institutions, it is beneficial to explore current perceptions of hegemonic masculinity in Vietnamese policing in the broader historical context of national security. It would be remiss to forget that the first three military leaders flighting Chinese invasion in ancient northern Vietnam were women: Bà Triệu and the Trưng Sisters who fought almost 2000 years ago. Although the folklore surrounding these women is exaggerated, a fictionalised mythology doesn't change their gender and the crucial role of women in the shaping of Vietnam. The hyper masculine aspects associated with policing such as aggressive behaviour, physical strength, and solidarity (Crank, 1998; Garcia, 2003) seen in Bà Triệu and the Trung Sisters are interwoven with indigenous feminine traits of 'creation and repair' (Duong, 2001, p. 210), strength and resilience that does not labour to compete bluntly with men but which seeks to

carve a pathway to equality through preservation of gender difference. The extent to which this is an effective and politically useful strategy remains a vexed issue (Waibel & Gluk, 2013).

This study was undertaken among police in Hanoi who may not represent women's views in broader society. The extent to which women in the police want to navigate into roles dominated by men may vary across occupations, locations, ages, marital and parental status, education and class. Women police in Hanoi may represent a particular northern conservative view. One that is satisfied with the status quo or at least a context which does not threaten official policy but may allow for some changes. It is possible women employed in the private sphere or in business may have other views about how women can pursue gender equality. Police women are also bound by their compulsory membership of the Women's Union. The Union aims to represent women's collective views and membership may mean that, individual action is discouraged. Within this top-down paradigm the needs of policewomen may not be best represented because they are may be unable to determine their own strategy for advancement.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings and elaborates on some of the themes developed in the previous chapters. Traditional scholarship has privileged assumptions about the central characteristics of policing and police culture from the global North, especially Anglo-American perspectives, as the norm from which other variations are regarded as deviations. The study found that assumptions in scholarship on policing and police culture in the global North do not always apply to circumstances elsewhere and argues that the field of policing, if broadened to include the global South, can be read as a potential site for a diversity of institutional forms, priorities and cultures. It is often assumed that progress runs from north to south. However, this thesis contends that indigenous forms of social control (notwithstanding they are often a blend of influences) outside the global North may provide important lessons for Anglo-American policing.

The research set out to answer the following questions:

4. What are the historical, political, economic, social and cultural influences which shape policing and police culture in Vietnam?
5. How do structural and cultural influences affect the nature of women's inclusion in policing in Vietnam?
6. What are the theoretical and policy implications of the findings?

This research used an ethnographic approach with Vietnam as a case study to explore the implications of Southern theory (Connell, 2007) for policing scholarship. Data presented show the field of policing in Vietnam is very different to those reported in Anglo-American studies. These differences were explored through the broad categories of the political system, police education, police-community relations, societal culture and gender relations.

The research faced ethical and methodological issues due to limitations on access and requirements for confidentiality. The results are subject to the proviso that it is possible participants were concerned about speaking freely with a

foreigner which may impact on the reliability of the data in certain respects. This risk was recognised from the start. While it could not be eliminated, action was taken to mitigate it so far as possible. The experience of researching Vietnamese policing cannot be the same as that of researching English or Australian policing. Nonetheless, the findings provide clear insights into Vietnamese students' and police officers' perceptions of policing in Vietnam which reflected broader understandings of social relations.

Chan's framework was useful in the current study for analysing policing in Vietnam. A crucial element of what Chan (1997; Chan et al., 2003), drawing on Bourdieu (1990a), calls the 'field of policing' encompasses state-society relations which have been examined by Kerkvliet (2001). Police are key actors in this field. In this context, actors' positions are overlapping as they are simultaneously citizens, police and Party members. Police operate in a field where political affiliation is assumed. Professional education includes political ideology (a continuation from primary and secondary curricula). What distinguishes public and private space is blurred. This study has shown that concepts drawn from Anglo-American policing scholarship cannot adequately explain policing in other contexts with differing political systems, histories and economic trajectories. A Southern Policing perspective draws attention to possibilities for new forms of analysis in the policing field, which can broaden our understanding of policing and police cultures elsewhere. Policing and its cultures and core characteristics may be understood differently if considered using an inductive logic framed in the global South.

The following sections will look at issues that arise from the methodological approach of this study set within the field of policing more generally. It will be suggested that we can learn from shared experiences and differing perspectives in the tasks of understanding and improving policing. The focus will be on: this study's contribution to police ethnography; policing in a changing field; features stabilising the field of policing; state-society relations; women in policing; and theoretical contributions of a Southern policing perspective

Contribution to police ethnography

Fluidity of researcher positionality in police ethnography

In police ethnography, Brown (1996) suggested that researchers could inhabit four 'positions': inside insiders, outside insiders, inside outsiders, and, outside outsiders. These categories have been adapted by Westmarland (2011, 2016) and their impact on research outcomes questioned (Davies, 2016). Reflecting on these categories, I find it easy to confirm that I do not occupy the position of 'insider insider', however, I can potentially place myself in the other three categories. The 'outsider insider' category includes former officers but indicates they research their former colleagues in a domestic, national context (J. Brown, 1996; Westmarland, 2016). In my case, as a former police officer, I studied police in another country which has a culture very different from my own. In Chapter 4, I queried whether a former police officer researching police in a foreign country was an 'outside insider' or 'outside outsider'. Though I could also be 'inside outsider' given I had 'official' access, I would not suggest I was 'treated as being on the same side' as the Vietnamese police despite their official support (Westmarland, 2016, p. 165). These complexities show that the positionality of a police ethnographer is fluid and that it is possible for researchers to transition between the various insider/outsider categories. Furthermore, the four categories outlined by Brown (1996) may not be the only categories available to researchers: Davies' (2016) emphasis on reflexivity of the researcher is important irrespective of whether one identifies as a particular type.

In commenting on Nordic policing research, Holmberg (2015) lamented the lack of cross-national research. He suggests there has been a sort of 'homeliness' where researchers (former officers or not) usually study police in their home country (Holmberg, 2015, p.43; Punch (2015) shared this view). Holmberg (2015, p. 55) sees this 'nation-centric' approach as a missed opportunity for gaining new insights into policing:

> Fieldwork in the police must be dependent on the researcher's person, but the fact that almost all fieldworkers share national background with the officers they study may

> influence their outlook and reduce their ability to question and explore what is taken for granted – the unspoken values.

In his study of police in Australia, Dixon (2011, p. 232) suggested his English background meant he could feign ignorance on some issues or ask 'naïve questions about local politics and current events' to garner insights. Consequently, there are possibilities for expanding Brown's (1996) categories, for example, 'occupational insider/cultural outsider' or 'occupational outsider/cultural insider' etc. But, these too can be simplistic given the variation within occupational and national cultures themselves. What is crucial is that researchers reflect openly on how who and what they are affects their work. Ethnographers also need to be reflexive about their position in academia given they have been socialised into this field too (Chan, 2013).

Appreciative inquiry

This research used ethnography to study police in a one-party state. Other scholars of Vietnamese society have addressed the inaccuracy in popular discourse of referring to Vietnam as 'authoritarian' and 'repressive' (Koh, 2001, p. 279) and indicated that it has more variation than outsiders (i.e. foreigners) often allow (Hayton, 2010). My intention in this research has been to capture some of the strengths of policing in Vietnam, for example, a notion of community engagement which goes beyond the slogan of 'community policing' in Western countries.

Examining policing from a problem-focused approach which assumes knowledge of what the problems are and seeking to criticise what is 'wrong' can be misleading and, consequently limiting prospects for meaningful change. In addition, I did not want to impose a Northern frame of reference onto policing practices in Vietnam (though I note in Chapter 4 that I sometimes found this challenging with respect to gender issues). An appreciation of the 'holistic system or set of structures' which produce police practice (including misconduct of various sorts) is necessary in order to have access to information which may help prevent such behaviour in future (Celermajer, 2018, p. 151).

In some ways, this approach resembles 'appreciative inquiry' (AI) which seeks to understand a community or system in its own terms and to harness the energy of its positive aspects in order to change it (Elliott, 1999; Liebling, Elliot, & Price, 1999; Liebling, Elliott, & Arnold, 2001). Furthermore, Liebling et al. (2001, p. 161) argue that AI is a 'fair and inclusive research approach' which engages participants in a meaningful process. Indeed, there are policing approaches identified in this study from which we can learn, and which might stimulate possibilities for policy transfer from global South to North. It also has the potential to avoid the pitfalls of exploitation through data extraction which Connell (2007) describes as comprising much Northern/Southern research by emphasising the exchange of learning.

For example, some studies of police misconduct or corruption characterise such behaviour as 'moral disengagement' (Wahl, 2014, p. 819). In Wahl's (2014, p. 820) study of police violence in India, she argues that police who use violence may not be 'disconnected from moral beliefs' but that they may be functioning under 'alternative moralities'. In order to understand their practices, we must try to see them through their eyes, not categorise them as deviant according to our norms. Similarly, the dynamics of the relations between police and citizens in Vietnam provide insights into how police perceive what constitutes a 'good' police officer. Predominantly, building or maintaining 'good' relationships with the community was important. Using Wahl's conceptualisation of 'moral engagement', this can apply to situations where Vietnamese police enact their professional role through bypassing rules (e.g. which make it illegal to receive bribes) to achieve the aim of (a version of) harmonious relationships (e.g. reducing inconvenience for citizens). Wahl (2014) points out that understanding the source of motivations for police misconduct or corruption as being facilitated by, rather than, disconnected from a moral stance presents an opportunity for reform advocates to target messages for change accordingly.

Using an appreciative inquiry approach can be useful for researchers who occupy the position of cultural outsider, particularly where international experts from the global North are employed to review policing approaches in the global South. As

Rothman (1980/2002, p. 11) suggests, '… to appreciate the dynamic is to be able to recognize the opportunity to affect it'.

Conceptualisations of 'culture'

With respect to police culture, Westmarland (2016, p. 163) asserted that '[r]esearching a topic that is seen as the "cause" of so many problems for the police is fraught with difficulties'. This view is based on the assumptions from Western literature that police culture was a negative influence on policing (for example Holdaway, 1983; Rowe, 2004) (with exceptions, for example, see Chan, 1997; Chan et al., 2003; O'Neill & McCarthy, 2014; Waddington, 1999). Police culture in Vietnam needs to be understood in a broad historical context. In Vietnam, the fight for a sovereign and independent nation meant political and literary elites actively set out to construct a national culture to mobilise and unify the population (Ninh, 2002). Even today, this is an ongoing project at national, provincial and local levels where both tangible and intangible (heritage) cultural products are contested, where local communities or organised groups seek official endorsement for legitimation (Salemink, 2013). Cultural products can bring economic, symbolic and social capital when, for example, a location or customary practice (e.g. folklore) becomes a tourist attraction bringing wealth to an area. Salemink (2013) describes 'appropriating culture' as a political process in Vietnam: the Government simultaneously sought to modernise the country whilst having a nationalist pursuit of identity founded in local customs and traditions.

A contribution to police ethnography from this study is the recognition that 'culture' – even among police – is not necessarily a concept that warrants concern, but one which police themselves actively used as a tool to reflect on and draw upon to explain their own perceptions and behaviours. The approach to constructing culture was evident in current police practices, for example, building 'cultural spaces' and hosting 'cultural performances' at the Police Academy. In this study, there were many dynamics at play: for example, I believe approaches to constructing culture in Vietnam coupled with my being a foreign researcher meant to talk of 'culture' provided an accessible reference point for police to provide an account of a topic which relates to both police culture and Vietnamese identity.

This enabled a form of what Giddens (1979, p. 5) described as 'discursive penetration' referring to the degree that people can understand and articulate the social systems in which they participate. Whilst I am suggesting that some police in this study had a high degree of discursive consciousness (Giddens, 1979), this also requires some qualification. Given Vietnam's ongoing project to identify cultural products, it may be that engaging in a 'verbal act' or giving a 'verbal account' (Mathieu, 2009, p. 180) about culture has become part of taken-for-granted aspects of culture that it more closely resembles a practical consciousness, rather than a discursive one.

Whilst symbolism and rituals are part of other police forces, it was the frequent use of the term 'culture' which makes explicit that it is understood as both a product and the invisible, taken-for-granted mechanisms to cope with police work. This means that attempts to reform the police in Vietnam can invoke the concept of culture as a tool for change and to harness positive aspects of culture without necessarily having negative connotations.

The field of policing: the dynamics of change and stability

The field of policing is changing. Internationalised markets, migration and technology are contributing to increased globalisation and interaction (and possibly conflicts) (Karstedt, 2001). The introduction of New Public Management techniques, such as performance indicators, emphasised the police function as one of crime control, but also a service-oriented perspective (Van Dijk et al., 2015). The approach focused on the quantitative measurement of police activities to enhance accountability (including financial accountability though value for money) to government and the community. Terrorism and transnational crime have produced new units and requirements for cross-border collaboration, and workforce diversity has become more valued as a source of legitimacy and accountability as well as a new challenge for managerial oversight (Van Dijk et al., 2015). However, these changes are not evenly felt across all countries nor are the social and political responses to them consistent. Consequently, these and other factors (for more examples, see Van Dijk et al., 2015, pp. 23-30) function in relation to global and local dynamics which contribute to change and stability in the field of policing. Importantly, changes in some aspects of the field

may have unintended consequences and so these factors are not determinate. The following sections examines some of these factors in more detail.

Change

The title of this thesis is 'Policing in a changing Vietnam'; but which aspects of policing and Vietnam are changing? In Chan's (1997) critique of theoretical frameworks to explore police culture, she argued that the field of policing had been underestimated in its impact on shaping police culture. Importantly, the policing field is only one field of power which interacts and overlaps with others in a struggle for power (Swartz, 1997). Thus, the field is amenable to change.

In Chapter 7, I noted how police tended to talk about possibilities for change in terms of technological change or changes in crime patterns (e.g. transnational crimes). This may indicate that changes to police culture and practice are more likely to come from global changes, rather than internally. For example, Vietnam had to make major changes to its legal institutions to be accepted into the World Trade Organization in 2006 so it could benefit from international trade (World Trade Organization, 2006). A nation's economy is one aspect shaping the field of policing that scholars must consider when researching police. Vietnam has been identified as one of Asia's strongest growing economies. In the coming decades, this increased prosperity will change the field for policing with both opportunities and challenges.

Differences in economic development and infrastructure shape the way policing services are delivered, in Vietnam, this includes the ability (or lack of) for both police and the public to purchase cars for transport. Ericson (1982, p. 6) observed that a reason for the distance between police and the community was the fact officers patrolled in cars with little interaction with the public. In 1982, cars were barely a feature in Vietnam given the American War had only ended seven years prior. The country was subject to US-led embargoes on trade cutting them off from manufactured imports. Cars were uncommon at the time and typically the property of international agencies providing aid. Vehicle ownership in Vietnam increased rapidly after economic reform in the mid-1980s, though this was largely of motorbikes (scooters), rather than cars. In 2010, Hayton (2010) reported that

98 per cent of vehicles were motorbikes. Although car ownership is increasing it remains unavailable to most of the population due to cost. Whilst police have access to small trucks and cars they are usually the property of District level police stations, rather than allocated to local ward stations. Incomes in Vietnam are not high, and it is one country among many countries in the global South whose local economy (society and culture) have been disrupted by colonialism.

The extent of economic development and the availability of resources are not necessarily an indicator of the nature of policing in a particular place. Police priorities intersect and interact with politics and broader cultural values which affect how policing is organised and carried out. Increased access to technology does not mean jurisdictions will apply it in the same way, for example, to the policed or to themselves. Chan et al. (2003, p. 664) described how technology can alter the field of policing through its use as either 'resource' or 'constraint'. Where access to advanced technology is used as a resource, it can have extremely negative consequences if the resources are deployed in ways that unfairly target individuals or marginalised groups. For example, increasing the capability of police in the USA by providing excess military equipment such as weapons and vehicles was later overturned due to backlash about their deployment on black Americans (Delehanty, Mewhirter, Welch, & Wilks, 2017). Delehanty et al. (2017, p. 1) found a 'positive and statistically significant relationship between [military equipment] transfers and fatalities from officer-involved shootings'. Conversely, limited resources may be beneficial where they restrain the potential for repressive or aggressive policing practices as was the argument for restricting military equipment to police in the USA (Delehanty et al., 2017). Modernisation and economic development are not pre-conditions to a linear progression to better policing. Technology can be used for both 'democratic or nondemocratic purposes' (Bayley, 1995, p. 89), and may in fact contribute to repressing minorities, the disadvantaged or political opponents.

In Chen's (2016, p. 30) study on frontline police officers in China, he says 'it is evident that the development of Chinese policing is following the trend of Western policing, from being politically-driven to independent, from non-professional toward professional, from crime-control-oriented toward service oriented, and

from traditional toward modernisation'. However, these dichotomies are too simplistic to characterise the variations in policing, not least because the crime-control to service-oriented trend has been reversed to an extent. It may be that China's expanding middle class are demanding better services and more accountability from police in major urban centres, but simultaneously Muslim minorities in western China are being interned by police and local authorities and 're-educated' as they are deemed a threat to political stability and Communist Party rule (Rauhala, 2018). Furthermore, technology as resource is being deployed against ethnic Uighurs whose DNA is being collected and stored by police as well as requiring their identification in the form of a QR code (similar to a barcode) imprinted on knives they purchase (Millward, 2018) in order to control dissent. Consequently, technology as resource in a changing field does not deliver a universally beneficial dividend to all communities.

Access to advanced technology can also change the field of policing in terms of acting as a 'constraint' (Chan, 2003). Studies on Anglo-American policing have emphasised that patrol police officers work under the least supervision and have the most discretion (Banton, 1964; Cain, 1973; Van Maanen, 1983). However, changes in technology have put street police under greater surveillance (Ericson & Haggerty, 1997), and increasingly so with mounted cameras in vehicles and on officers bodies. Ganapathy and Cheong (2016, pp. 332-333) reported that the introduction of Mobile Data Terminals and Global Positioning Systems in Singapore (among other changes) meant frontline police no longer operated in what Goldstein (1960) called a 'low visibility' environment. Technological changes, coupled with an organisational commitment to community policing and accountability revealed the possibility for changes to police sub-cultures (becoming more risk-averse) as a result of changes in the policing field (Ganapathy & Cheong, 2016). The specific nature of sub-cultural changes were described as a 'peculiar blend' of Singapore's '*authoritarian*ism' and '*democratic'* adaptations (emphasis in original) (Ganapathy & Cheong, 2016, p. 337). Importantly, the study challenged the notion of a stable and 'recalcitrant' police subculture, but highlighted the significance of changing the field in order to reform the occupational habitus (Ganapathy & Cheong, 2016).

In 2017, after I completed fieldwork for this study, the Ministry of Public Security announced budget cuts and a project for restructuring. I am advised the changes are still underway and the precise nature of these changes and their effects are not available to be included here. Notwithstanding, any changes arising from the budget cuts and restructuring appear to have come as a result of national fiscal policy rather than being initiated within the People's Police Force. Consequently, major changes in policing in Vietnam appear more likely to be driven by factors external to the police organisation rather than internal factors.

Stability

Whilst global changes and technological advances might create pressures for police to adapt, there are domestic factors in play that contribute to stability in policing and police culture. The explicit political affiliation of police in Vietnam is not found in policing in the global North, where a veneer of political neutrality is central to understandings of policing, especially in the Anglo-American tradition (Reiner, 2010, p. 32). Dror (2016, p. 3) addresses the 'cult of Hồ Chí Minh' (in the police and elsewhere) and the way that he was venerated after his death (against his wishes) in a way that was to provide a focal point for political legitimacy of the Communist Party. Political association is important in Vietnam, not just due to its symbolic purpose, but because it is a key criterion for employment as a police officer. Political loyalty is considered, and suitability assessed by the Party, at the initial stages of applying to join the police.

The political system and relationship between the police and the state have been highlighted as important domains for examining variation in policing (Banton, 1964; Bayley, 1976; de Maillard & Roché, 2018; Manning, 2005; W. R. Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2010; Van Dijk et al., 2015). Reiner's (2010) classic text *The Politics of the Police* addresses both the relationship between police and politics in the institutional sense (governments, legislatures, courts), but also the manner in which police are imbricated in English society and the power (im)balance inherent in these relationships. With respect to Vietnam, Chapter 5 outlined the current arrangement in which being a police officer requires loyalty to the ruling Communist Party, including membership of the Party. Hồ Chí Minh's '6 Teachings', first espoused in 1948, include being 'absolutely loyal to the

government' (for cadres including police and public security officers) (Hồ Chí Minh, 2000). The 6 Teachings remain a core tool for edifying police about morality and ethical conduct today (Lời Bác dạy giúp hoàn thiện phẩm chất người chiến sĩ công an, 2018).

Stability in policing in Vietnam is also shaped by the nature of the police hierarchy and current accountability mechanisms. Although frontline officers in Vietnam do not use the technology described above in Singapore, it does not mean they avoid scrutiny. For example, police intelligence networks were described as reflecting a 'thousand eyes system'. Presumably, these same eyes can report back to senior officers if they have concerns about police action, although the potential for repercussions for officers may vary. Officers consistently expressed the importance of consulting with supervisors prior to making an arrest (unless in an emergency). Indeed talking with one's superiors was considered commonplace in decision-making. Police discretion took place within a context of inspection and accountability that differs from Anglo-American studies. The Vietnamese scenario shares a similarity with police supervision in Japan where detectives had to seek approval to make an arrest 'even when they have a warrant in hand' and that supervisors would rush to a scene to take control (Miyazawa, 1992, p. 233). However, strong accountability mechanisms in Japan may lead to greater anxiety about the possible consequences of a wrong decision (Bayley, 1976). Western police reform advocates who are interested in interrogating the ways police determine how, when and why to enforce the law may find it instructive to pay attention to the dynamics of supervision in Vietnam. The fundamental concept of constabulary independence, as it is understood in the global North, is not applicable in the Vietnamese context. Whilst police may be trained in legal or tactical knowledge, it may be that navigating the expectations of their managers, Party overseers and the community is more important in determining how they do their job. These intersecting forms of oversight may also contribute to stability among policing because they create a version of order.

The structure of police education in Vietnam differs vastly from the Anglo-American model. Assumptions that police typically eschew tertiary education are

based on studies in the global North or Western countries (Bradley & Nixon, 2009; Lee & Punch, 2004; MacDonald, 1987). In Southeast and East Asia, a history of university qualifications to enter civil service has also shaped the nature of police training (Cao et al., 2015). In general, education and scholarship receive high praise and status in Vietnam. This is partly due to the Confucian ethic but also because education is seen as a way out of poverty. Police education institutions in Vietnam have consequently evolved with a strong focus on education with the People's Police Academy functioning as a university under the Ministry of Education and Training. Tertiary education of police in Vietnam is both a norm, and an aspiration for those wishing to have successful policing careers. Even lower ranked officers graduating from Police Colleges undertake two years of study, which is longer than the class-based component of many Anglo-American courses. The training means students go through a period of two to four years of socialisation which may contribute to stability of police culture.

In Vietnam, the prolonged program for a trainee population comprised of largely recent high school leavers experiencing university life, saw police students participating in social activities and groups on site in the evenings, including dancing, music groups and other special interests. Whilst these activities were encouraged to help build confidence of students, participation in the 'cultural' life of the Academy is also a way to demonstrate one's commitment to the police organisation. In contrast in Australia, the academy component of training is short (usually less than six months although this depends on jurisdiction) and may be undertaken at intervals with a longer period of supervised practical patrol work. Furthermore, in order to increase diversity most police forces have removed any upper age limit to attract mature adults. This approach means the life experiences post-high school is valued when applying for a job as a police officer.

An Australian study by Chan et al. (2003, p. 142) found recruits complained about the 'warm and fuzzy' aspects of their training especially topics aimed at increasing their social awareness about issues such as cultural sensitivity towards Indigenous populations which was regarded as peripheral to 'real' police work. Police students in Vietnam did not complain about their training in this way despite describing it as demanding and requiring a lot of study. The lack of

criticism could be due to the fear of potential consequences (including expulsion) for criticising the training, as reported in Chapter 6. Another explanation for this could also be a difference in expectation of new entrants to police in Vietnam and Australia. Tertiary education in Vietnam includes compulsory subjects on Marxism-Leninism and Hồ Chí Minh Ideology along with a specialised curriculum. Police students, therefore, can reasonably anticipate the theoretical, political and social aspects of their training. It could also be that curriculum regarding the policing of ethnic minorities differs from Australia. Nonetheless, cultural sensitivity towards ethnic minorities by police was not specifically explored in this study.

The Vietnamese police internship program provides additional information about the attitudes of police to their supervisors. Whilst this thesis does not investigate the socialisation experience of newly graduated police as they began work at their allotted station or office, the internship program itself enables students to reflect on experiences in the field. Studies have shown that new officers try to 'fit in' and emphasise the importance of bonding with experienced officers and building rapport (Chan et al., 2003). Police students in this study expressed similar sentiments. A point of difference worthy of further exploration may be that several students described their efforts at building rapport as 'getting as much conversation with other officers in order to know them more and introduce myself' and asking a lot of questions to show their eagerness to learn. This appears to contrast with the ethos of … 'not saying too much', 'keeping your mouth shut' when working with more experienced officers in the field and 'being seen and not heard' highlighted in Chan et al.'s (2003) study. The contrast can be understood by delving slightly deeper into Vietnamese cultural norms. It may be that Vietnamese students having been socialised into a broader culture of being deferential to elders were careful to ask questions or make comments in such a way that did not challenge a person's authority. This means they can balance both talking and not saying too much simultaneously. It also entrenches the stability of social hierarchy.

What constitutes 'professional' policing is contested (Chan et al., 2003). Manning (1977, p. 121) argued that professionalism was a way for occupations to 'achieve power and authority'. Professional policing has also been seen in relationship to

improved training and recruitment (Reiner, 1978). More recently, Stone and Travis (2011) described professional policing as encompassing accountability, legitimacy and innovation. Notwithstanding, professional police are typically expected to be relatively independent from politics (Bayley, 2006; Vollmer, 1971). On this measure, Vietnam's police would be immediately excluded. But should a conceptualisation of professional policing derived in the West be applicable to non-Western countries when assessing professionalism? In answer, it is important to note that in 2008, Neyroud (2008) argued that professional policing in the UK remained an aspiration. He pointed out that police did not have a code of ethics (at the time), nor was it a graduate profession with 'a well-established culture of life-long learning and reaccreditation' (Neyroud, 2008, p. 586). By these standards, Vietnamese police (at least those graduating from the PPA given the two-tier system of the Academy and College) could meet aspects of the definition of a professional ahead of counterparts in more developed economies where professional training does not require a four-year degree. Vietnamese police have codes of ethics/conduct which include a commitment to life-long learning (see Chapter 5) and they are tertiary graduates who undertake degrees acquiring specialist knowledge (see Chapter 6).

Principles defining professional policing are context-dependent and some features are more relevant than others in the development of police skills. Officers-in-training undergo a process of socialisation in the Academy environment which is followed by socialisation post-graduation in the field (Chan et al., 2003). Whilst Vietnamese police receive more training than police under the Anglo-American model, formal education is only one aspect of a range of influences on police professionalism.

In some police forces, attempts to improve or reform policing may be instigated externally through litigation for discrimination from employees or the public, robust investigative journalism, public protests or workforce strikes, as well as commissioned inquiries into police practices. However, many of these factors have so far been absent in the Vietnamese context. This may indicate that approaches to reform in the West may not be suitable for Vietnam.

Attempts to improve police organisational performance and accountability to citizens has been sought through increasing gender diversity among police workforces to better reflect the characteristics of the populations they serve (Corsianos, 2011). This view of accountability typically reflects multi-cultural societies including a range of sub-cultures, minorities and marginalised communities. To date Vietnam has not embraced gender diversity in the policing profession. Furthermore, there are limits on recruiting diverse populations including people with diverse ethnicities, sexualities, marital and parental status, and, age. One reason may be purely practical. It is conceivable that dorm living arrangements of up to 16 people in bunks in a room, for four years may be more acceptable to cohorts of predominately high school graduates and may even be a disincentive to older or marginalised communities. The structure of police training in Vietnam may also contribute to lack of diversity. Police graduate from the Academy as specialists. Depth of knowledge is prioritised through focusing on a Major subject. This means police are more likely to work their entire career within a narrow specialist field which creates stability and predictability. At the same time, it may reduce opportunities for staff turnover at work units while limiting police ability to adapt to new challenges.

If stability is considered more important than diversity, then training, recruitment and promotion will all be based on predictability rather than a focus on diversifying workforce make-up or workplace dynamics. Strategies promoting workforce diversity in order to increase organisational performance and accountability may also resonate differently under these circumstances. The emphasis on maintaining the current selection criteria potentially limits opportunities for non-traditional entrants to either join or thrive in the Vietnamese police force. However, entry to the police is connected to the national high school examination which acts as a filter for the academic aspect of the entry criteria. Decoding the barriers to diversity is complex, because even to understand this process as inherently 'limiting' indicates a Western sensibility. Ongoing empirical studies would enable a deeper reading of the nexus between change and stability in Vietnamese police recruitment and staffing and how these impact on the diversification of the workforce.

These research results suggest that strategies for police reform, include the theories, mechanisms or campaigns, for policy change in police practice, are not automatically transferrable across contexts. This is particularly significant between contexts where criticism is allowed or enabled, and others where criticism, or perception of it, can be punished. This research highlights the importance of understanding the social dynamics within a specific occupation, organisation as well as wider society because sometimes to suggest change (from inside or outside the organisation) can be seen as a criticism of the existing system. Furthermore, what is considered an acceptable proposition for change can depend on the subject matter (Lucius, 2009).

This section considered some aspects of change and stability in the policing field, however, what may be considered a stable feature at present may change over time and vice versa. The features are not static because the field of policing functions in relation to other fields which struggle for power (Swartz, 1997).

State-society relations

This study looked at state-society relations, including the implications of a high level of familiarity between police and the local community and the blurring of policing public and private spaces.

Unitary views of police culture were based on the simple idea that police… 'respond to similar audiences everywhere' (Crank, 1998, p. 26). If police culture is a product of the relationship police have with their 'audience' it follows that police cultures reflect their audience's general moral and social stances. Taking a broad view, social control in Asia tends towards a general pursuit of harmony as compared to the Western system, which emphasises an adversarial approach (Jiao, 2001; J. Liu, 2017; Wong, 2010). That is not to say that harmony between police and the community is not a goal in cultures outside of Asia, but rather that it can take on different forms and meanings.

Police officers and students emphasised maintaining harmony and non-intervention as important features of policing – at least for less serious crimes although people could warrant police attention if seen to transgress social norms. This was achieved through being flexible (*linh hoạt*) to protect or elicit good

relationships with the community – sometimes accompanied by an informal payment. In her study on rural and urban police in the UK, Cain referred to 'easing' behaviour on behalf of the rural officers who engaged in practices with a view to making their 'work or conditions more congenial' (Cain, 1973, p. 37). She describes easing behaviour as being non-prescribed and either licit or illicit. Easing behaviour facilitated an officer's acceptance into the community and she gives examples of hospitality through accept offers of beer, cider, tea or home-made scones (Cain, 1973, p. 37). Whilst these rituals were an expression of friendliness on behalf of the citizen, police could use the opportunity to 'exchange useful information about those living on the beat' (Cain, 1973, p. 37). Cain's research highlighted how the relationship between the police and community, specifically how 'reciprocal dependence' in rural areas shaped the way officer's defined their role (Cain, 1973, p. 105). As seen in the example in Chapter 7, when individuals offer a bribe to police to avoid paying a larger fine in person due to inconvenience, acceptance of the bribe by police could be viewed as a form of easing behaviour as the officer is aware people are trying to subvert an inconvenient process. Of course, an easing behaviour may not fit scenarios which reflect coercion or extraction on the part of police and may be more a form of 'backstage punishment' (Chan, 2000). In the pervasive informal economy in Vietnam, determining whether 'offerings' are voluntary, or the result of tacit coercion is of relevance if one wants to prevent or reduce behaviours perceived as misconduct by intervening in the complex system, which supports the practice.

When police enter private homes but with a view to fulfilling a public duty, the lines between public and private become blurred. In Vietnam we see this through the checking of household registers and in the UK in the easing behaviour of rural officers in Cain's (1973) research. Whilst these examples occurred in very different parts of the world, they share the duplicitous purpose of an opportunity to gather intelligence while having a legitimate purpose to visit people in their homes. Anthropologist Chuck Sturtevant wrote, 'Police all over the world take things from people. Whether legal or illegal, the practice often depends on keeping up a double meaning that provides cover' (Sturtevant, 2018). In the aforementioned cases, 'cover' refers to the information police take under the guise of a different purpose. But, similarly as Sturtevant (2018) describes the

payment of a bribe to a police officer in Bolivia, people pretend not to notice but everyone knows what is going on. What constitutes 'cover' could be an action, coded words or even legislation which allows the people or the state to act in certain ways that have different meanings (Sturtevant, 2018). A macro example of 'cover' can be found in post-war Guatemala, where Nelson (2009, p. 212) argues the State simultaneously claims 'to be the law but cannot (or does not) uphold it'. Indeed, she says, that in some cases police actions place people at more risk than the initial problem they confronted (Nelson, 2009).

Police perceptions of acceptable demarcations between public and private space are influenced by the broader culture. The 19th century English policing model sought to make officers 'agents of impersonal authority…free from local or class ties which would compromise their impartiality' (W. R. Miller, 1999, p. 26). The current study identified practices in Vietnam which would likely be unwelcome under the 'impersonal' English policing tradition. For example, the one-month homestay police students undertake in the community and the version of 'patrol' entail evening visits to enter households to check resident registration records. The latter provides opportunities to obtain intelligence and to expose wanted criminals evading police by avoiding their registered abode. This thesis has found that the exercise of impersonal authority is anathema to Vietnamese conceptions of policing. Perceived distance from community is considered problematic as it compromised police officers' view of their role in the community as authority and benefactor. This role is understood to contain elements of flexibility and power. In these circumstances, policing involves both coercion and consent, especially given police reliance on an omnipresent network of local informants (Thayer, 2014).

Despite police in Vietnam having far greater entrée into private homes and affairs than police in the UK, USA and Australia, this has not resulted in increased prosecution of domestic violence crimes. Police in this study emphasised an informal talk to a couple was a preferred response to domestic violence; these findings reflect findings by other scholars (T. Q. Le, 2017; Perkins et al., 2017).

Vietnamese society, including official policy,[102] emphasises maintaining family harmony. Consequently, police responses favour reconciliation rather than formal intervention (Perkins et al., 2017). Advocates for direct implementation of anti-domestic violence interventions from the global North to South have been forewarned that models for legal intervention developed in cultures with different characteristics of social relations may be ineffective and unethical if implemented despite being well-intentioned (DeKeseredy & Hall-Sanchez, 2018; Walklate & Fitz-Gibbon, 2018). This does not mean important lessons cannot be garnered from elsewhere, but that strategies to prevent or reduce domestic violence should be informed by empirical studies in the context in which they will be applied.

This section described some ways that state-society relations are an important variable for analysis because police culture is the result of a relational dynamic, including the relationship they have with the community. Community expectations of police can vary across and within cultures.

Women in policing

Although women in Vietnam have status and protection for their maternal role, their gender can be a source of discrimination. In policing, this is most visibly represented by the 15 per cent quota which limits the annual intake of women to commence police training. Legal limitations, including earlier retirement age for women public servants and prohibition from some occupations, have been justified as a protection of women (UNODC, 2013) and a paternalist precaution, rather than a refutation of their ability. One outcome of the quota is that women will never exceed 15 per cent of the force. Taking into consideration some attrition the overall proportion of female officers is possibly much lower, especially given that some areas have a 10 per cent limit.

Whilst no officers interviewed in this study mentioned financial constraints as justification for instituting or maintaining the 15 per cent quota, an increase in the proportion of women employees would likely lead to an increase in funds

[102] 'The State and society shall provide a favourable environment for the growth of the Vietnamese family which is prosperous, progressive, and happy; create Vietnamese people who are healthy, cultured, profoundly patriotic, unified, independent and responsible.' (Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Amended), 2013, Article 60.3)

allocated to cover maternity leave entitlements and other workforce implications arising from a mother's absence. The trade-off for maternity leave and flexible work hours in Vietnam may be that women are more likely to be in office-based roles, rather than operational positions. In Australia, women performing operational duties alongside men did not have their roles backfilled while on maternity and reported feeling stigmatised and discriminated against by colleagues for taking time out of the workforce (VEOHRC, 2017). A lack of flexible work options contributed to attrition of women officers. Subsequently, a policy of 'all roles flex' (available for both men and women) was adopted (VEOHRC, 2017). The example of maternity leave entitlements highlights the importance of empirical research to draw out the experience of policewomen in Vietnam, which has distinct cultural, organisational and legal differences. This is important for police reform advocates seeking to better understand the context for change.

The cultural space available for women to remonstrate against discrimination in policing is shaped by the broader political, social and cultural environment, thus, lessons from the Western experience may not be appropriate (Strobl, 2008). For example, in Vietnam there can be serious consequences for opposing State policies. The parameters for women to complain about sexual harassment are limited. These may be enforced unevenly but they coincide with social penalties for being divisive or causing disharmony. Although women in this study did not indicate they were concerned to report such incidents for fear of repercussions for their careers, it may be the case that the broader field of gender relations external to the police organisation affects the space for women to complain. The use of overt resistance including recourse to litigation employed by 'pioneering' women in studies of European policing as reported by Brown (1997) are not suitable advocacy interventions in the Vietnamese context. Vietnam requires an approach to change, which integrates political sensitivity, realism and long-term gains identified by Vietnamese police women themselves.

There are examples of positive change for female police in East Asia that have been the result of culturally sensitive approaches. Expanding women's integration in policing in Taiwan was at the direction of the newly elected President in 2000 (Cao et al., 2014). President Chen Shuibian enacted national

policies to increase the number of women police as well as increase the range of roles for which they were deployed. It was part of a broader campaign to promote women's 'right-to-work' and prohibit employment discrimination against women (Ministry of Labor (Amended), 2014). Despite the high profile and formal policy approach towards gender equality in Taiwan, Cao et al. (2014) argue that the Confucian patriarchal influence remains a strong factor in shaping space for women to pursue careers in policing. Moreover, Cao et al. (2014) suggest internal momentum for the 'gender agenda' waned, thus, limiting its effectiveness. Whilst the national push doubled the number of women officers over a 12 year period, it was still only 7.72 per cent (Cao et al., 2014; Gingerich & Chu, 2013). The government retain a policy for a 1:9 female to male ratio for police working at the neighbourhood level and a maximum quota of 18 per cent (which they still have not met) (Cao et al., 2014). The positive result of this change is that the numbers of women officers have increased, along with (qualified) acceptance of women in operational roles (Gingerich & Chu, 2013). But the expansion of women's roles also saw unintended negative consequences. An administrative department previously only staffed by women was opened to both genders. Where women were previously promoted up the ranks in this department, men came into the unit and took up more positions previously held by women; effectively limiting a former pathway to promotion.

In Vietnam being seen to be a good wife, mother, daughter-in-law and spending time focusing on family life was understood to be more important than pursuing a career. The importance of fulfilling correct gender roles was consistently reinforced in Vietnam by societal pressures including the possibility of social exclusion. Exclusion means loss of status, support and economic safety nets. This can lead to destitution or even death. The Women's Union can play an important role by promoting 'collective agency' which breaks down gender stereotypes and opens opportunities for individual women at lower levels to pursue non-traditional gender roles, thus 'chang[ing] the conditions of accountability of individual actions' (Connell, 2009, p. 109). A collective pursuit towards changing the 15 per cent quota might enable individual women at lower levels to pursue non-traditional roles which over time has the potential to lead to minimising the extent individual women have to their gender stereotype. It does

not force women to challenge stereotypes, but it does provide the space and opportunity for self-determined change. This process creates the conditions for an environment where a variety of expressions of gender are accepted. This change benefits men and women because neither are held to a norm which differentiates through gendered accountability. According to psychologist Janet Hyde (2005), this can increase opportunities for employment (added income), opportunities to experience success, perspective and buffering. This last factor, which is an interaction between two roles, enables the successes in one role to offset the failures in another.

In 300 AD, Bà Triệu sat atop an elephant, sword in hand, and went in to combat to protect her homeland. In the 21st Century, women can harness the opportunity to be on the frontline of national security, using contemporary tools. Increasingly, contemporary policing involves digitisation, analysis and creativity. Policewomen, who have proven themselves to be studious and of high intellect are well-suited to the frontiers of office-based scrutiny of cybercrimes. Furthermore, with advances in technology, women (and men) could work remotely and with flexible hours to juggle family and work demands.

Theoretical contributions of a Southern Policing perspective

The study of international policing is important because, as Bayley (1999, p. 5) put it, 'without international study it is easy to believe that local practice is not only inevitable but best'. When Connell (2007) laid out the foundations for Southern Theory, she not only looked to the potential for other ways of doing or being, but to raise awareness about the imbalance in the production of academic knowledge which can lead us to assume the inevitability of specific practices. Questions about criminological knowledge, and avenues for enquiry, become more visible with reference to 'Southern criminology' which seeks to make explicit the power dynamics involved in knowledge creation which underpins our theoretical frameworks for understanding crime and criminal justice responses (Carrington, 2016).

Understanding this broad North/South divide fits neatly into Chan's (1997; Chan et al., 2003) model of police culture which drew on Bourdieu's (1990a) concept

of the 'field' to facilitate analysis of the external factors which shape practice, and in Chan's research, specifically police practice. The necessary link or subjective relationships between researchers and the researched is further elucidated by Bourdieu (1973) who examined the field of work for academics. A relevant framework here draws on Chan and Bourdieu to analyse and account for change in the field and habitus of police, Connell (2007) extends analysis to include histories of colonialism and conflict which feed into Chan's concepts of field. Bourdieu's (1973; Naidoo, 2004) reflections on power dynamics involved in the execution of academic work all combine to produce varied and subjective accounts of social and cultural phenomena – a divergence from the objective pursuit of scientific knowledge previously presented.

Pathways to policing and academia are the product of a relational dynamic between field, habitus and capital and neither should be assumed to be apolitical. The emphasis on power relations extends to knowledge production within regions and countries as well. Scholars of criminology in Communist countries confront distinct hierarchies of knowledge production of their own (Xu, 2016); in Vietnam, for example, criminology is the domain of police who are simultaneously Communist Party Members which presents its own constraints and censorship. A Southern policing perspective seeks to engage critically with the processes which limit scholarship on policing in the global South as well as contribute to building theory that can speak to Southern-specific concerns.

Future research directions

The study raises many possibilities for future research to explore policing with respect to Vietnam and globally. An obvious domestic comparison would be between the north and south, but also urban and rural differences within these areas and border policing whether it be inland or maritime. Certainly, central Vietnam is a geographical region with its own history worthy of examination. Comparative analysis among post-Confucian and East and Southeast Asian countries with varied political histories and economic status, for example, China, Taiwan and Singapore (among others) could provide interesting perspectives on a range of dynamics to identify points of convergence or divergence.

The provision of Northern policing advisors and consultants, and, rule of law programs to the global South have been attempts to influence law enforcement approaches. The effectiveness of these have been questioned because outsiders do not necessarily understand the historical, political and cultural contexts of the place they seek to influence through developing policies or conducting police training. This means that trying to graft Northern approaches onto police practices in a different cultural context may not be sustainable or appropriate (Watson & Kerrigan, 2018). Research into the dynamics about why some attempts at policy transfer are successful and not others can provide important insights about the key ingredients for cross-cultural collaborations and processes of change for police reforms.

Overall, Vietnam has reduced poverty significantly since economic reforms, however, the benefits have not been felt evenly across the country. A range of geographical features, combined with official policies, have meant some areas have benefited more than others in terms of foreign investment, tourism and industry. However the positive economic effects of development may be offset by environmental degradation or pollution with a recent survey finding some citizens preferred environmental protection over economic growth in some circumstances (CECODES, 2018). This issue may increasingly become a point of tension and cause for protest in Vietnam which may be a source of instability in future requiring police to find ways to respond to high level policies and localised politics.

Future research may focus more narrowly on specific specialisations, stations or functions for a more in-depth understanding of policing. Given this is the first ethnographic study (in English) on policing in Vietnam, it aimed to broaden understanding of the police by focusing on aspects of the field. It draws on interviews with police who work or study across a range of fields from administration and office-based work, to crime investigation and emergency response. Some researchers may have chosen to interview police who were destined for operational policing, but this research was keen to explore gendered aspects of policing. This necessitated including women who may not be deployed operationally and so the PPA was a vital source for the interview sample.

Chapter 6 highlighted how the specialised curriculum and subsequent breadth of tasks undertaken across the organisation has further implications for understanding police cultures and the potential possibilities for reform. This is because police working in forensic science [e.g. ballistics, fingerprints, fraudulent documents] have different occupational influences than those working in prisons or in criminal investigations who interact with offenders, suspects, victims and witnesses. Although this study included students and officers across a range of specialty areas, their limited experience working in the field means their responses may differ from veteran operational officers.[103]

Police studies in the global North have a general interpretation of what is meant by police 'patrol'. This term does not neatly transfer to the structure of policework in Vietnam and it warrants further exploration. The multiple layers of policing and social control mechanisms were not explored in this thesis in-depth. However, the relatively recent emphasis on prevention and partnerships in the global North have been embedded in the social structures of some Asian societies for much longer.

The position of police in state-society relations could also be explored further especially in relation to how police exercise discretion and what community expectations are of police. Further investigations into the implications of technological advancements would also be useful including the implications of surveillance, including online surveillance and censorship in a one-party state.

Conclusion

The asymmetry of available literature on policing in the global North and South is the product of a range of historical power relations. With respect to Vietnam, London (2014, p. 3) noted the absence of 'social and economic conditions and processes' analyses in policy-driven social research due to politics being 'off-limits' despite such processes and conditions being inherently political. In Vietnam, politics invariably includes the police. My hope is that the Vietnamese police find value in opening themselves to external academic scholarship with a

[103] Police lecturers are required to undertake two-year operational appointments at intervals in order to stay up to date with practice in the field.

view to enhancing services to the community as well as the training and opportunities available to students and staff. There are many trade-offs and compromises when conducting research in sensitive political environments which evoke personal, political and professional complexities. Issues confronted included confidentiality, independence of the research, possibilities for censorship, written and unwritten rules, and, uneven transparency about the fact the research was being undertaken at all. Despite a raft of challenges, the study hopes to provide useful insights on and an original contribution to scholarship on Vietnamese policing and a framework to inspire thinking about policing in the global North and South in different ways.

The objective of Southern theory includes to draw attention to scholarship and practices from the global South so that we may expand our understanding of the world without relying on a skewed Northern frame of reference. This thesis seeks to contribute to advancing knowledge on policing through demonstrating a range of differences in the policing field about matters that were taken for granted among policing scholars until relatively recently. By acknowledging there is more diversity in the field of policing that previously assumed, we can identify more variables which form part of the relational dynamic (Bourdieu, 1990a) which produces police culture and practice (Chan, 1997; Chan et al., 2003).

In the opening paragraph of this thesis I referred to David Bayley's (1976) comparative research on policing in Japan and the United States. Bayley (1976, p. ix) said the importance of learning about other culture is that it helps us understand our own. In a conversation with a Vietnamese police officer about the translation of 'flexibility' regarding police use of discretion, he told me that police in Vietnam needed to consider every aspect before deciding to arrest a person. He referred, somewhat sympathetically, to the 'weaker' family connections in Western countries compared to Asia and we discussed broad social and cultural differences and the limitations of policy transfer for some policing approaches. Wrapping up, he said, 'But we can still learn from each other'. Indeed, we can.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The standards for soft skills at the People's Police Academy

The standard for soft skills are as follows:

3.1. Standard of Commanding Officer

Achieving the standard of commanding officers includes: practical command skills, leadership skills, advisory skills.

3.2 Standard of shooting

Handgun Shooting: Fixed shots (five rounds) and hidden shots (five rounds) must be tested and reaching a minimum of 70/100 points, with each test reaching a minimum of 25/50 points.

3.3 Standard of martial arts

Getting the People's Public Security's Certificate of martial arts, the Advanced Program (equivalent to the teacher of martial arts).

3.4 Standard of Military swimming

Achieving the Standard of Military swimming

3.5 Standard of driving

Having a motorcycle driver's license for A1 class and automobiles for B1 or B2 class. Particularly for students of "Traffic Police on Roads and Rails", students must have a A2 motor driver's license and a C-class for automobiles; Students of the Waterway Police Department must have a certificate of driving the People's Police Canoe.

3.6 Standard of Information Technology

Achieving the standard of using advanced information technology.

3.7 Standard of Foreign Language

Achieving the standard foreign language output level 3rd according to Vietnam's 6-level foreign language ability framework or equivalent.

Source: People's Police Academy (2017g).

Appendix 2: Major specialisations at the People's Police Academy

	Major specialisations
1.1	**State Management on Social Order and Safety** - State management in urban and rural areas; Public Relations; Criminal justice.
1.2	**Criminal Police** - The pursuit of the offender and the search for material evidence related to foreign elements; - Specialized dog used by police in the fight against crime of social order.
1.3	**Investigative Police** - Activities of People's Court, People's Procuracy in Criminal Procedures; - The role and activities of the lawyer during the investigative phase of the criminal case; - Use professional technical means in reconnaissance.
1.4	**Economic Police** - Accounting and auditing; Business management, finance, banking; Business administration and contract.
1.5	**Forensic Science** - Activities of assessors at People's Court; - New issues of criminal chemistry, criminal biology, drug and medical examinations – fire; sound inspection, DNA screening.
1.6	**Traffic Police on Roads and Rails** - Communication and behavioural skills of Traffic Police on Roads and Rails; - Solving a number of specific situations in the work of Traffic Police on Roads and Rails; - Criminal Justice.
1.7	**Police on Criminal Sentence Enforcement and Judicial Assistance** - Criminal Justice; Retrieving offenders from prison; The work of investigation of the Police on Criminal Sentence Enforcement and Judicial Assistance.
1.8	**Police on Narcotic Crime Prevention and Suppression** - Using specialized technique and dogs in Narcotic Crime Prevention; - International law and international cooperation on drug prevention.
1.9	**Armed Police**

	- Methods, tactics to suppress terrorists; - Dismissing tactics of disturbing public order, unlawful demonstrations and riots under the function of the armed police force; - Skills on commanding and advising for company, battalion and regiment.
1.10	**Student of English for Police** - "State Management on Social Order and Safety" profession; Reconnaissance in People's Police force; Theoretical issues of criminal investigation; English Interpreting Skills.
1.11	**Environmental Police** - Detecting, receiving, inspecting and handling information of environmental law violation by the Environmental Police Force; - Basic knowledge about environmental impact assessment serving the work of Environmental Police; - The handling of administrative violations by the Environmental Police.
1.12	**Police on Hi – tech Crime Prevention and Suppression** - Standardized skills using advanced information technology (3 modules: Advanced word processing, Image editing, Information security and confidentiality); - Criminal Justice.
1.13	**Police on Criminal Procedures Code** - Reconnaissance in People's Police force; Knowledge of "State Management on Social Order and Safety"; Specialized records of police.
1.14	**Police on Water Ways** - Reconnaissance in Water Ways Police force.
1.15	**Students of Chinese for Police** - "State Management on Social Order and Safety" profession; Reconnaissance in People's Police force; Theoretical issues of criminal investigation; Chinese Interpreting Skills.
1.16	**Police Advisory and Commander** - Skill of drafting some popular documents in advisory work; Skills of Police Commanders.

Source: People's Police Academy (2017b).

Appendix 3: Sample of Participant Information Statement and Consent Form

	UNSW AUSTRALIA | Law
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM Policing in a Changing Vietnam Professor Janet Chan	

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:		
Role	***Name***	***Organisation***
Chief Investigator	*Professor Janet Chan*	*UNSW Australia*
Co-Investigator/s	*Professor David Dixon* *Ms Khuat Thi Hai Oanh*	*UNSW Australia* *SCDI Vietnam*
Student Investigator/s	*Melissa Jardine* is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of New South Wales. This will take place under the supervision of Professor David Dixon, Dean of Law School, UNSW and Professor Janet Chan, UNSW	*UNSW Australia*
Research Funder	This research is being funded by UNSW Australia.	

What is the research study about?
You are invited to take part in this research study. You have been invited due to your professional or personal experience in the area of this research. I would like to ask you some questions with respect to the nature of policing in Vietnam and your ideas and suggestions about challenges and opportunities the People's Police Force faces in addressing community safety.

To participate in this project you need to meet the following inclusion criteria:

- Be a police officer, police student or professionally engaged, or have knowledge of public security and crime-related issues in Vietnam

The research study is aiming to be a resource to inform decisions about how to best equip Vietnamese police with necessary knowledge and skills to adapt to contemporary public security challenges. The research hopes to produce some recommendations for refining professionalisation efforts of police in Vietnam.

Do I have to take part in this research study?
This Participant Information Statement and Consent Form tells you about the research study. It explains the research tasks involved. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research.

Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. Before deciding whether or not to take part, you might want to talk about it with a relative or friend.

If you decide you want to take part in the research study, you will be asked to:

- Sign the consent form ;
- Keep a copy of this Participant Information Statement;

Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. Your decision will not affect your relationship with The University of New South Wales;

What does participation in this research require, and are there any risks involved?
This research project is not concerned with information that may be private, classified, or relation to specific criminal offences. You are requested not to disclose such information during the interview. If you feel that taking part in the study may put you at risk personally or professionally, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

You may experience some discomfort or inconvenience. These may include:

- anxiety caused by being interviewed; and,
- giving up time to participate in the research.

Although the researcher cannot guarantee that you will definitely not be treated differently by colleagues or supervisors as a result of taking part in the study, every precaution will be taken to make sure that your interview responses are not identifiable in any way.

If you decide to take part in the research study, you will be asked to participate in an interview with the researcher which may take approximately 1-2 hours. During the interview the researcher will ask you questions about police practices and training in Vietnam. She will digitially record the interview using an audio recorder with your consent. The interview/s can take place at a location of your choosing which may be your place of work, café or at a local research institute accessible to the researcher. The interview does not involve any physical risk to you. You can withdraw any time.

Will I be paid to participate in this project?
You will be reimbursed for any reasonable travel, parking, meals and other expenses associated with the research study which will be paid in cash by the researcher.

What are the possible benefits to participation?
We hope to use information we get from this research study to be a resource to inform decisions about how to best equip Vietnamese police with necessary knowledge and skills to adapt to contemporary public security challenges.

What will happen to information about me?
By signing the consent form you consent to the researcher collecting and using information about you for the research study. Your data will be kept for seven years

after publication of the findings. We will store information about you at The University of New South Wales. Your information will only be used for the purpose of this research study and it will only be disclosed with your permission.

It is anticipated that the results of this research study will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you will not be identified in these publications unless you agree to this by providing written consent to the researcher.

You have the right to request access to the information about you that is collected and stored by the researcher. You also have the right to request that any information with which you disagree be corrected. You can do this by contacting the researcher.

The audio digital recordings are for the purposes of the research study. After the interview(s) we will transcribe your digital recordings. We will keep your digital recordings in the form of transcription for seven years after publication. We will store information about you at The University of New South Wales. Your confidentiality will be ensured by protecting your anonymity and securely storing any records of your participation.

If you are a police officer or student at a police training institution, such as the People's Police Academy or a Police College, the International Co-operation Department will record your name as having taken part in the research. Some information from any interview you participate in may also be included in the report. This information may be made available to the Rector of the People's Police Academy if requested. The International Co-operation Department will retain these records for as long as they deem necessary. If you are concerned about this requirement, you can decline to participate in the interview.

How and when will I find out what the results of the research study are?
You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by indicating in writing on the consent form or emailing the researcher. This feedback will be in the form of an executive summary of the research and/or an oral presentation to disseminate the findings in Hanoi. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

What if I want to withdraw from the research study?
If you do consent to participate, you may withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw, you will be asked to complete and sign the 'Withdrawal of Consent Form' which is provided at the end of this document. Alternatively you can ring the researcher and tell her you no longer want to participate.

If you decide to leave the research study, the researchers will not collect additional information from you. You are free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be erased and the information you have provided will not be included in the study results. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview.

What should I do if I have further questions about my involvement in the research study?
The person you may need to contact will depend on the nature of your query. If you want any further information concerning this project or if you have any problems which may be related to your involvement in the project, you can contact the researcher:

Research Team Contact

Name	Melissa Jardine
Position	PhD researcher
Telephone	+61 417 374 070
Email	m.jardine@student.unsw.edu.au

What should I do if I have concerns about the risks involved in the research study?

Should you require any assistance to address any harm, discomfort or inconvenience arising from this research please contact the researcher or the following people who will make representations on your behalf to resolve any concerns:

People's Police Academy contact

Position	Research Liaison Officer, Pol. Lieut. Col. Lam Tien Dung
Address	People's Police Academy, Tu Liem, Hanoi
Telephone	+84 128 8035777
Email	lamdung_jds2008@yahoo.com

Local ethical review contact

Position	Director of the local ethical review board, Dr Khuat Thu Hong
Address	Institute for Social Development Studies, Suite 1804, PH Floor, The Garden building, Me Tri road, Tu Liem District, Hanoi, Vietnam
Telephone	+84.4.37820058
Email	isdsvn@isds.org.vn

Local supervisor

Position	Local fieldwork supervisor, Ms Khuat Thi Hai Oanh
Address	Center for Supporting Community Development Initiatives, 240 Mai Anh Tuan Street, Thanh Cong ward, Ba Dinh district, Hanoi, Vietnam
Telephone	+84 04 35720689
Email	scdi@scdi.org.vn

What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the research study?

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted, then you may contact:

Complaints Contact

Position	Human Research Ethics Coordinator
Telephone	+ 61 2 9385 6222
Email	humanethics@unsw.edu.au
HC Reference Number	HC15195

Consent Form – Participant providing own consent

Declaration by the participant

- ☐ I have read the Participant Information Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand;
- ☐ I understand the purposes, study tasks and risks of the research described in the project;
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received;
- ☐ I freely agree to participate in this research study as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the project and withdrawal will not affect my relationship with any of the named organisations and/or research team members;
- ☐ I understand that I will be given a signed copy of this document to keep;

Participant Signature

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

Declaration by Researcher*

☐ I have given a verbal explanation of the research study, its study activities and risks and I believe that the participant has understood that explanation.

Researcher Signature*

Name of Participant (please print)	

Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

+An appropriately qualified member of the research team must provide the explanation of, and information concerning the research study.

Note: All parties signing the consent section must date their own signature.

Form for Withdrawal of Participation

I wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in the research proposal described above and understand that such withdrawal **WILL NOT** affect my relationship with The University of New South Wales or other professionals.

Participant Signature

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

The section for Withdrawal of Participation should be forwarded to:

CI Name:	**Professor Janet Chan**
Email:	**j.chan@unsw.edu.au**
Phone:	**+61 2 9385 2753**
Postal Address:	**The Law Building** **UNSW Australia** **Building F8, Union Road** **UNSW Kensington Campus** **UNSW Sydney NSW 2052** **Australia**

HC Number: HC15195
Version dated: 21 June 2016

	UNSW AUSTRALIA | Law

THÔNG TIN VỀ NGHIÊN CỨU VÀ ĐƠN CHẤP NHẬN THAM GIA
Công việc cảnh sát trong một Việt Nam đang chuyển mình
Giáo sư Janet Chan

Nghiên cứu được tiến hành bởi những học giả sau:		
Vị trí	**Họ và tên**	**Cơ quan/tổ chức**
Trưởng nhóm	Giáo sư Janet Chan	Trường Đại học New South Wales - Úc
Đồng nghiên cứu	Giáo sư David Dixon Bà Khuất Thị Hải Oanh	Trường Đại học New South Wales - Úc SCDI Việt Nam
Nghiên cứu sinh	Melissa Jardine tiến hành nghiên cứu này làm nền tảng cho luận văn tiến sĩ tại trường Đại học New South Wales. Nghiên cứu được triển khai dưới sự hướng dẫn của giáo sư David Dixon, trưởng Khoa Luật thuộc Đại học New South Wales và giáo sự Janet Chan, Đại học New South Wales	Trường Đại học New South Wales - Úc
Nhà tài trợ	Nghiên cứu này được cấp vốn bởi trường Đại học New South Wales - Úc	

Nghiên cứu này về vấn đề gì?
Bạn được mời tham gia dựa trên những kiến thức chuyên môn hoặc cá nhân của mình về vấn đề được nghiên cứu. Tôi mong muốn trao đổi với bạn một số câu hỏi liên quan đến bản chất của công việc cảnh sát ở Việt Nam. Các ý kiến và đóng góp của bạn về những cơ hội và thách thức mà lực lượng công an nhân dân phải đối mặt khi giữ gìn an ninh của cộng đồng.

Để tham gia vào dự án này, bạn cần phải đáp ứng yêu cầu sau đây:

- Là một sỹ quan cảnh sát, hoc viên trường cảnh sát hoặc người làm nghề chuyên nghiệp có liên quan hoặc có kiên thức về an toàn xã hội và các chính sác liên quan đến tội phạm ở Việt Nam

Nghiên cứu sẽ là cơ sở đề xuất các giải pháp nhằm trang bị một cách tốt nhất các kiến thức và kĩ năng cần thiết cho cảnh sát Việt Nam để thích ứng với những thách thức trật tự trị an trong thời đại mới. Nghiên cứu này hy vọng sẽ đưa ra một số khuyến nghị cho nỗ lực chuyên nghiệp hóa lực lượng cảnh sát Việt Nam.

Tôi có bắt buộc phải tham gia vào nghiên cứu này không?
Tài liệu này giải thích cho bạn về nghiên cứu và những nhiệm vụ nghiên cứu có liên quan. Hiểu rõ về những gì có liên quan sẽ giúp bạn quyết định nếu bạn muốn tham gia.

Xin vui lòng đọc kĩ các thông tin. Đặt câu hỏi về bất cứ điều gì mà bạn không hiểu hoặc muốn biết thêm. Trước khi quyết định có hay không tham gia, bạn có thể tham khảo ý kiến của người thân hoặc bạn bè.

Nếu bạn quyết định tham gia, bạn sẽ được đề nghị:

- Kí vào Đơn chấp nhận tham gia;
- Giữ một bản thông tin về nghiên cứu;

Việc tham gia vào nghiên cứu này là tự nguyện. Bạn không bị bắt buộc nếu không muốn tham gia. Quyết định của bạn sẽ không ảnh hưởng đến mối quan hệ giữa bạn và trường Đại học New South Wales.

Việc tham gia vào nghiên cứu này đòi hỏi điều gì, và liệu sẽ có rủi ro nào liên quan?
Dự án nghiên cứu này không quan tâm đến các thông tin cá nhân, mật, hoặc liên quan đến các hành vi phạm tội hình sự cụ thể. Bạn được yêu cầu không tiết lộ các thông tin như vậy trong cuộc phỏng vấn. Nếu bạn cảm thấy rằng tham gia vào nghiên cứu này có thể đặt bạn vào các rủi ro cá nhân hay rủi ro nghề nghiệp, bạn có quyền tự do rút khỏi nghiên cứu bất cứ lúc nào.

Bạn có thể cảm thấy khó chịu hay bất tiện, bao gồm:

- Lo lắng gây ra bởi việc được phỏng vấn; và,
- Bỏ thời gian để tham gia vào nghiên cứu

Mặc dù các học giả không thể đảm bảo rằng bạn sẽ chắc chắn không bị phân biệt đối xử bởi đồng nghiệp hay cấp trên do tham gia vào dự án này, mọi biện pháp phòng ngừa sẽ được thực hiện để đảm bảo rằng câu trả lời phỏng vấn của bạn sẽ không thể bị tìm ra dù với bất kì cách nào.

Nếu bạn quyết định tham gia vào nghiên cứu này, bạn sẽ được yêu cầu tham gia một cuộc phỏng vấn kéo dài khoảng 1-2 giờ với các nhà nghiên cứu. Trong cuộc phỏng vấn, các học giả sẽ hỏi bạn những câu hỏi về thực tiễn công việc và đào tạo của cảnh sát tại Việt Nam. Nhà nghiên cứu sẽ thu âm cuộc phỏng vấn bằng cách sử dụng một máy ghi âm nếu có sự đồng ý của bạn. Cuộc phỏng vấn có thể diễn ra tại địa điểm mà bạn lựa chọn, ví dụ nơi làm việc, quán cà phê hoặc tại một viện nghiên cứu tại địa phương mà các học giả có thể tiếp cận được. Cuộc phỏng vấn không tồn tại bất kỳ rủi ro thể chất nào cho bạn. Bạn có thể rút lui bấ cứ lúc nào.

Tôi sẽ được trả tiền để tham gia vào dự án này?
Bạn sẽ được thanh toán cho các chi phí hợp lý như đi lại, đậu xe, ăn uống và các chi phí khác liên quan đến nghiên cứu này. Các học giả sẽ chi trả bằng tiền mặt.

Những lợi ích có thể nhận được khi tham gia là gì?
Chúng tôi hy vọng thông tin mà chúng tôi nhận được từ nghiên cứu sẽ là cơ sở đưa ra khuyến nghị nhằm trang bị tốt nhất cho lực lượng công an Việt Nam các kiến thức và kĩ năng cần thiết để thích ứng với những thách thức trật tự trị an trong thời đại mới.

Điều gì sẽ xảy ra với các thông tin về tôi?
Bằng việc ký vào Đơn chấp nhận, bạn đồng ý với việc các nhà nghiên cứu thu thập và sử dụng thông tin về bạn cho nghiên cứu. Dữ liệu của bạn sẽ được giữ trong vòng bảy năm sau khi các kết quả nghiên cứu được công bố. Chúng tôi sẽ lưu trữ thông tin về bạn tại Đại học New South Wales. Thông tin của bạn sẽ chỉ được sử dụng cho các mục đích của nghiên cứu này và chúng sẽ chỉ được tiết lộ với sự cho phép của bạn.

Có khả năng các kết quả của nghiên cứu này sẽ được công bố và/hoặc trình bày tại các diễn đàn. Trong bất kỳ ấn phẩm và/hoặc trình bày nào, thông tin sẽ được cung cấp theo cách mà bạn không thể bị nhận ra, trừ khi các nhà nghiên cứu có sự đồng ý bằng văn bản của bạn.

Bạn có quyền yêu cầu truy cập các thông tin về bạn được thu thập và lưu trữ bởi các nhà nghiên cứu. Bạn cũng có quyền yêu cầu rằng bất kỳ thông tin nào mà bạn không đồng ý được sửa chữa cho đúng. Bạn có thể làm điều này bằng cách liên hệ với các học giả.

Những bản thu âm kỹ thuật số là dành cho mục đích nghiên cứu. Sau cuộc phỏng vấn, chúng tôi sẽ chép lại dưới dạng văn bản các bản thu âm này. Chúng tôi sẽ lưu trữ các bản thu âm dưới hình thức văn bản trong vòng bảy năm sau khi công bố. Chúng tôi sẽ lưu trữ thông tin về bạn tại Đại học New South Wales. Việc bảo mật thông tin của bạn sẽ được tiến hành bằng việc bảo vệ danh tính của bạn và lưu trữ an toàn tất cả các hồ sơ về việc tham gia của bạn.

Nếu bạn là sỹ quan Cảnh sát hay sinh viên tại các cơ sở đào tạo Cảnh sát như là Học viện Cảnh sát nhân dân hay một trường đào tạo Cảnh sát, phòng Hợp tác quốc tế - Học viện Cảnh sát nhân dân sẽ ghi nhận sự hợp tác của bạn vì đã tham gia vào quá trình nghiên cứu. Một số thông tin từ bất kỳ cuộc phỏng vấn nào mà bạn tham gia sẽ có thể được Phòng Hợp tác quốc tế lưu trữ. Những thông tin này có thể được báo cáo với Giám đốc Học viện Cảnh sát nhân dân nếu như được yêu cầu. Phòng Hợp tác quốc tế sẽ lưu giữ các bản lưu này lâu nhất có thể nếu thấy cần thiết. Nếu bạn lo lắng về các yêu cầu này, ban có thể từ chối tham gia vào việc phỏng vấn.

Làm thế nào và khi nào tôi có thể biết được kết quả của nghiên cứu là gì?
Bạn có quyền nhận được thông tin phản hồi về kết quả tổng thể của nghiên cứu này. Bạn có thể cho chúng tôi biết rằng bạn muốn nhận thông tin phản hồi bằng cách chỉ rõ trong Đơn chấp nhận hoặc gửi email cho các nhà nghiên cứu. Thông tin phản hồi này sẽ được trình bày dưới dạng một bản tóm tắt kết quả của nghiên cứu và/hoặc một bài thuyết trình để phổ biến các kết quả nghiên cứu tại Hà Nội. Bạn sẽ nhận được thông tin phản hồi này sau khi nghiên cứu kết thúc.

Nếu tôi muốn rút khỏi nghiên cứu?
Sau khi bạn đồng ý tham gia, bạn có thể rút khỏi nghiên cứu bất cứ lúc nào. Nếu bạn rút, bạn sẽ được yêu cầu điền và ký tên vào Đơn rút lui được cung cấp ở cuối tài liệu này. Hoặc bạn có thể liên lạc với các học giả nói với chúng tôi bạn không còn muốn tham gia.

Nếu bạn quyết định rút lui khỏi công trình nghiên cứu, các nhà nghiên cứu sẽ không thu thập thêm thông tin từ bạn. Bạn có quyền dừng cuộc phỏng vấn bất cứ lúc nào. Tất cả các bản thu âm sẽ bị xóa và những thông tin bạn đã cung cấp sẽ không được sử dụng cho các kết quả nghiên cứu, trừ khi bạn nói rằng bạn muốn chúng tôi giữ chúng. Bạn cũng có thể từ chối trả lời bất kỳ câu hỏi nào mà bạn không muốn trong cuộc phỏng vấn.

Tôi nên làm gì nếu tôi có thêm câu hỏi về sự tham gia của tôi trong nghiên cứu?
Người mà bạn cần liên hệ sẽ phụ thuộc vào bản chất yêu cầu của bạn. Nếu bạn muốn biết thêm thông tin liên quan đến dự án này hoặc nếu bạn có bất kỳ vấn đề nào có thể liên quan đến sự tham gia của bạn trong dự án, bạn có thể liên hệ với các nhà nghiên cứu:

Thông tin liên lạc của nhóm nghiên cứu

Họ và tên	Melissa Jardine
Chức vụ	Nghiên cứu sinh tiến sĩ
Điện thoại	+61 417 374 070; +841227302734
Email	m.jardine@student.unsw.edu.au

Tôi nên làm gì nếu tôi có quan ngại về những rủi ro liên quan đến nghiên cứu này?
Nếu bạn cần bất kỳ sự trợ giúp nào để giải quyết những tác hại, khó chịu hay bất tiện phát sinh từ nghiên cứu này xin vui lòng liên hệ với các nhà nghiên cứu hoặc những người sau đây. Họ sẽ thay mặt bạn để giải quyết bất kỳ quan ngại nào:

Học viện cảnh sát nhân dân

Chức vụ	Cán bộ Khoa Sau đại học và Bồi dưỡng nâng cao, trung tá Lâm Tiến Dũng
Địa chỉ	Học viện cảnh sát nhân dân, Từ Liêm, Hà Nội, Việt Nam
Điện thoại	+84 128 8035777
Email	lamdung_jds2008@yahoo.com

Ban kiểm duyệt địa phương về đạo đức của nghiên cứu

Chức vụ	Trưởng ban kiểm duyệt, tiến sĩ Khuất Thu Hồng
Địa chỉ	Viện Nghiên cứu phát triển xã hội (ISDS), Phòng 1804, tầng PH, tòa nhà The Garden, đường Mễ Trì, Từ Liêm, Hà Nội, Việt Nam
Điện thoại	+84.4.37820058
Email	isdsvn@isds.org.vn

Người hướng dẫn tại địa phương

Chức vụ	Người hướng dẫn tại địa phương, bà Khuất Thị Hải Oanh
Địa chỉ	Trung tâm hỗ trợ sáng kiến phát triển cộng đồng (SCDI), 240 Mai Anh Tuấn, phường Thành Công, Quận Ba Đình, Hà Nội, Việt Nam
Điện thoại	+84 04 35720689
Email	scdi@scdi.org.vn

Nếu tôi có khiếu nại hoặc bất kỳ quan ngại nào về nghiên cứu này?
Nếu bạn có khiếu nại về bất kỳ khía cạnh nào của dự án, cách nó đang được tiến hành, bạn có thể liên hệ:

Thông tin khiếu nại

Chức vụ	Điều phối viên về Đạo đức của Nghiên cứu con người
Điện thoại	+ 61 2 9385 6222
Email	humanethics@unsw.edu.au
Số HC tham chiếu	HC15195

Đơn chấp nhận của người tham gia

Tuyên bố của người tham gia

- ☐ Tôi đã đọc Bản thông tin về nghiên cứu hoặc ai đó đã đọc cho tôi với ngôn ngữ mà tôi hiểu được;

- ☐ Tôi hiểu được mục đích, nhiệm vụ và rủi ro của nghiên cứu được mô tả trong dự án;
- ☐ Tôi đã có một cơ hội để đặt câu hỏi và tôi hài lòng với câu trả lời tôi đã nhận;
- ☐ Tôi tự nguyện đồng ý tham gia nghiên cứu này như mô tả và hiểu rằng tôi có quyền rút lui bất cứ lúc nào trong suốt dự án và việc rút lui sẽ không ảnh hưởng đến mối quan hệ của tôi với bất kỳ tổ chức nào có tên trong Bản thông tin và/hoặc thành viên nhóm nghiên cứu;
- ☐ Tôi hiểu rằng tôi sẽ nhận được một bản sao có chữ ký của tài liệu này để giữ;

Chữ ký của người tham gia

Họ và tên (in hoa)	
Chữ ký	
Ngày	

Tuyên bố của nhà nghiên cứu*

- ☐ Tôi đã đưa ra một giải thích bằng lời nói về nghiên cứu, các hoạt động nghiên cứu và các rủi ro của nó và tôi tin rằng người tham gia đã hiểu lời giải thích

Chữ ký của nhà nghiên cứu*

Họ và tên (in hoa)	
Chữ ký	
Ngày	

+ Một thành viên có trình độ thích hợp thuộc nhóm nghiên cứu phải cung cấp những lời giải thích và thông tin liên quan đến nghiên cứu.

Lưu ý: Tất cả các bên ký kết phải ghi rõ ngày tháng mình ký.

Đơn rút lui khỏi nghiên cứu

Tôi muốn **RÚT LẠI** sự đồng ý tham gia của mình vào dự án nghiên cứu được mô tả ở trên và hiểu rằng sự rút lui **SẼ KHÔNG** ảnh hưởng đến mối quan hệ của tôi với Đại học New South Wales hoặc các chuyên gia khác.

Chữ ký của người tham gia

Họ và tên (in hoa)	
Chữ ký	
Ngày	

Nội dung rút lui khỏi nghiên cứu cần được chuyển tới:

Trưởng nhóm nghiên cứu:	Giáo sư Janet Chan
Email:	j.chan@unsw.edu.au
Điện thoại:	+61 2 9385 2753

Địa chỉ bưu điện:	Tòa nhà Khoa Luật Trường Đại học New South Wales - Úc Nhà F8, phố Union Cơ sở Kensington của trường Đại học New South Wales UNSW Sydney NSW 2052 Nước Úc

Số HC: HC15195
Ngày: 14/09/2015

Appendix 4: Sample interview guides

Semi-structured interview guide: students

1. Why did you apply to become a police officer?
2. What is your Major/specialisation? What type of work will this Major prepare you for after graduation?
3. What was your first day at the Academy like?
4. Please tell me about any internships you have completed. What did you do? How did your colleagues treat you? How did the community treat you?
5. Questions regarding role of women
    a. Are there different expectations of male and female students in the Academy?
    b. How do you feel about there being a 15% quota for female students at the Academy?
    c. Do you know if the People's Police or the Academy has any policies on expanding the role of women in policing?
6. What makes a 'good' police officer? What makes a 'bad' police officer?
7. What do you hope to achieve after you graduate from the Academy?
8. What do you think will be the most challenging aspects of your police work after you graduate?
9. How would you define a professional police officer? What makes a police officer professional?
10. What do you think are the biggest challenges facing police?

Semi-structured interview guide: officers

1. Why did you become a police officer?
2. What is your Major/specialisation/area of work?
3. What are the key skills and characteristics you hope students develop during the course of their training at the PPA?
4. What are the biggest challenges you face in preparing junior officers for operational work?
5. Questions regarding role of women
    a. Are there different expectations of male and female students in the Academy?
    b. How do you feel about there being a 15% quota for female students at the Academy?
    c. Do you know if the People's Police or the Academy has any policies on expanding the role of women in policing?
6. How do you keep up to date with new information to do your job?
7. What differences are there, if any, in the field training of police work compared with what is taught in the academy?
8. What makes a 'good' police officer? What makes a 'bad' police officer?
9. How would you define a professional police officer? What makes a police officer professional?
10. What do you think are the biggest challenges facing police?

Appendix 5: Letter of Approval from the People's Police Academy

THE PEOPLE'S POLICE ACADEMY OF VIET NAM
Address: Co Nhue 2 Ward, Bac Tu Liem District, Ha Noi, Viet Nam
Tel./Fax: +84 4 37523913; ppa@hvcsnd.edu.vn; www.hvcsnd.edu.vn

To	Professor Janet Chan and Melissa Jardine
Project title	Policing in a changing Vietnam
Date	8th August 2015
Re	Letter of support

Dear Professor Janet Chan and Melissa Jardine,

The People's Police Academy is aware of your proposed research project. We understand that the involvement of our Academy in assisting you to accomplish this project include/s the following:

- Support for qualitative data collection during PhD fieldwork in Hanoi, Vietnam
  - Interviews with police officers
  - Site visits to police training institutions and police stations in Hanoi and brief periods of observation, if possible

As the President of the People's Police Academy - Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam, I have read through your research proposal and support the involvement of our organisation in this project, subject to receiving appropriate ethics approval, and participant consent.

Yours sincerely,

Pol. Lt. Gen. Dr. NGUYEN XUAN YEM
President
The People's Police Academy - Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam