

Parallel session 3A-1.1

Land and property

Tuesday 12 November, 11.30 – 13.00

IAS Room 11

Chair/discussant: **Dr Colin Marx**, Senior Lecturer, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL

Unpacking Tenure Security in Yogyakarta: a Community-led Approach to Reframing Concepts and Practices

Katrin Hofer, Research Fellow, The Bartlett Development Planning Unit, UCL

Indonesia has a highly complex land system, characterised by a legal pluralism stemming from its colonial past. In Yogyakarta, this complexity, coupled with low access to affordable housing, has contributed to the development of informal settlements, referred to here as urban kampung. A common feature within these kampung are low levels of formal tenure security, which renders residents not only at risk of eviction, but also ineligible for government programmes. In recent decades, Yogyakarta has also experienced an increase in tourism and private sector development, the consequences of which have contributed further to the precarity of the urban poor.

Within this context, Kalijawi, a network of informal-settlement dwellers, aim to highlight the gap between the state's approaches to tenure security and the kampung, and residents' actual experiences, needs and aspirations. This paper looks at how Kalijawi, initially operating as a federation of savings groups concerned with their own immediate upgrading needs, have gradually expanded their focus to the city-scale, aiming to influence broader urban planning processes.

In order to contextualise their work, the paper first lays out the complex nature of land and housing in Yogyakarta, and the state of government programmes and financing mechanisms aimed at the urban poor. It then explores Kalijawi's ways of working and how – through reframing tenure security, engaging communities in research processes, strategically involving diverse stakeholders, and developing demonstrative pilot projects – they work to reshape the government's approach. In particular, it focuses on how they aim to sensitise the government to the complex lived realities of the urban poor, and push for diversification in the means of accessing government support, moving beyond statutory land title as the precondition. The case study presents an interesting and promising example of bottom-up, community-led efforts at reframing tenure security and shifting to more sustainable and inclusive urban practices.

Governance at the frontiers of urbanisation: exploring the role of Syndicates in territorialising power in the periphery of Kolkata

Dr Ratoola Kundu, Lecturer, Center for Urban Policy and Governance, School of Habitat Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences Mumbai

Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the newly carved out Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation in West Bengal, this paper seeks to contribute to the research on everyday urban governance that asserts that much of urban life is governed not by the state but by complex configurations of actors and institutions, who assert considerable power and public authority while claiming to be non-political (Lund, 2006; Cornea 2019).

Peri-urban spaces in the Global South are regarded as sites of radical and often violent transformation of social and spatial structures, of brutal dispossessions of lives and livelihoods to make way for speculative real estate development and the accumulation of capital through the expropriation and commodification of land. Scholars have pointed to governance experiments, the entrepreneurship of the state and the speculative urbanism that characterises such transformations (Kennedy and Sood 2018, Gururani and Kose 2015). New forms of precarity, impoverishment and socio-economic insecurities have emerged through the series of exclusions and erasures that a state-market driven urbanisation entails. This paper argues that new hybrid, formal-informal imbrications and spatial practices – emerging from the interstices of existing governing arrangements – animates the territorial expansion of urbanisation, rebuilding associational life. Comprising actors seeking to stake a claim to the urban frontier, the periphery is reconfigured through the consolidation of the power of informal authorities who control the buying and selling of land, regulate labour and construction contracts, act as intermediaries between the state and the political party, local population and the private developers. This paper examines the territorial practices of the increasingly powerful, in equal parts benevolent and violent, ‘Syndicates’ – heterogeneous, localised, contingent alliances. These Syndicates are shown to have significant decision-making powers in the everyday governance of the highly uneven fringe areas.

The Push and ‘Pool’ of the Land: Reflections on Speculations in The Global South-East

Dr Nathan Marom, Senior Lecturer, IDC Herzliya, Israel

This paper explores the “first and last frontier” of the urban – land – by critically reflecting on key contemporary land-based policies in three global Southeastern metropolitan cities: Delhi, Mumbai and Tel Aviv. In Delhi, a new Land Pooling Policy, designed to assemble agricultural land on the metropolitan edges, has opened new frontiers of speculation, while also offering the inclusive vision of “Housing for All”. In Mumbai, the latest Development Plan 2014-2034 endorses a vision of “Cities Without Slums” as it intervenes in the market for vertical land in the air and escalates the frenzy over Floor Space Index (FSI) and Tradable Development Rights (TDR). In the Tel Aviv metropolitan region, a new generation of Urban Renewal policies promises to release land in the dense urban core from under the modest homes of residents of run-down housing projects – while in the peri-urban margins, new suburban mega-neighbourhoods are fast-tracked on open land to address the perennial “housing crisis”. Through these diverse cases, the paper reflects on several critical themes:

the 'paradigm shift' towards market-based land instruments and its inherent contradictions; the ambivalent character of access to land and the push-and-pull between inclusion and exclusion of different communities; the conflicting social meanings of the value of land and home, and the contradicting calculations of profit and loss between different stakeholders and "landholders" (e.g. real estate developers, middle-class home buyers, "economically weak sectors", slum-dwellers, land-owning peasants, and privileged agriculturalists); and the material and virtual-speculative character of urban(-ising) land in the early 21st century, all over the world.

The Making of Reclaimed Island: Towards Speculative Strategies of development and Governance

Ng Keng-Khoo, Lecturer, UCSI University Kuala Lumpur / National University of Singapore

Joining the theoretical explorations on speculative urbanism (Goldman, 2010), I seek to explore emerging research respectability for the theme of land development and governance in the global South. I investigate the new and problematic dimensions of mega island-making projects as both tangible asset and symbolic resource for the state to restructure land-development-related policy. To allow the reconfiguration of new governing spaces at sub-national level, the state can deploy the ambiguous status of reclaimed island to create open-ended development plans and various 'themed spaces' of innovative leisure, tax haven and experimental laboratory for green-and-smart city design. Shifting from the debates of land administration to land speculation, this paper thus opens up new ways of thinking about the constitutive and speculative functions of reclaimed islands, with the entanglements of particular modes of flexible governance initiated by sub-national government.

Land reclamation was undertaken for reasons of economic development. The development of rich enclaves on reclaimed land has been best known for the capture of capitalist investments and the possession for elitist interests. Such claims are often seen as a truism, but left many new development interventions and socio-spatial ambiguities untouched. In Malaysia and Southeast Asia at large, there is a growing tendency towards the making of new artificial islands. Neither building for an increasing urban population, nor tackling scarcity of land in agriculture, the reclamation of artificial islands becomes a new development strategy to speculate on urban growth and city imagination. This paper foregrounds on two cases studies – Penang's South Reclamation Projects and Johor's Forest City – to understand various state initiatives and the power politics beneath. The case studies point to interesting observations about the land strategy regarded as 'reclaim first and build later', which is different from some of the central literature on rural land grab or urban land reform.