URBAN UTOPIANISM

The International Workshop
Hong Kong
May 2011

<u>The International Workshop on Urban Utopianism</u>
12th - 14th May, 2011
NAB 211, Lam Woo International Conference Centre
Shaw Campus, Hong Kong Baptist University

Programme and Abstracts

By Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University
In Collaboration with Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University

Organiser: Wing-Shing TANG (wstang@hkbu.edu.hk)

<div align="center">

PROGRAMME

</div>

12TH MAY, 2011 (Thursday)

NAB 211 Lam Woo International Conference Centre

9:00 – 9:10   Registration

9:10 – 9:25   <u>Welcoming Ceremony</u>
Bernie OWEN, Head, Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University

Setting the Scene: Many Facets of Urban Utopianism, the West and the non-West
<u>Chair:</u> Toshio MIZUUCHI

9:25 – 10:05   Wing-Shing TANG
<u>Many Facets of Urban Utopianism when Lefebvre Meets the East Nowadays, with the Example of the Wedding Card Street Movement in Hong Kong</u>

10:05 – 10:20   Tea Break

The Role of Art: Fantasy or Cultural Materialism
<u>Chair:</u> Michelle Tsung Yi HUANG

10:20 – 11:00   Cuz POTTER
<u>In defense of utopian thinking</u>

11:00 – 11:40   Stuart CHRISTIE
<u>'Country Writing': Reading the Limits of Raymond Williams *The Country and the City* in the Chinese context</u>

11:40 – 1:10   Lunch
Renfrew Restaurant (2/F, David C Lam Building, Shaw Campus)

The Role of Urban: The Prevalence of Differences
<u>Chair:</u> Anne HAILA

1:10 – 1:50   Angela STIENEN
<u>Building Utopia: Pedagogy and the Re-Signification of the City in Medellin, Colombia</u>

1:50 – 2:30   Solomon BENJAMIN
<u>Urban Utopianism: Some thoughts from the Imperfect City</u>

2:30 – 2:45   Tea Break

The Role of Science (1): The Invocation of Spatial Metaphors
<u>Chair:</u> Uwe ALTROCK

2:45 – 3:25   Anne HAILA
               <u>A Perfectly Just City or Reducing Injustice</u>

3:25 – 4:05   Wing-Shing TANG and Joanna Wai-Ying LEE
               <u>A Utopia for the Bay Area of the Pearl River Estuary: The Spatial Metaphor of Planning Concepts</u>

4:05 – 4:20   Tea Break

The Role of Science (2): Diversity and Sustainability
<u>Chair:</u> Mee Kam NG

4:20 – 5:00   Uwe ALTROCK
               <u>The Quest for Post-Modernist Urban Planning 50 Years After Jane Jacobs: Utopia, Background Music of Neoliberal Trends in a Post-Fordist World or Reformist Reality?</u>

5:00 – 5:40   Surajit CHAKRAVARTY
               <u>Sustainability in the Desert</u>

The Role of Science (3): The Interaction between the Inside and the Outside
<u>Chair:</u> Solomon BENJAMIN

5:40 – 6:20   Bhuvaneswari RAMAN
               <u>Countering Hegemonic Utopias: The Dialectics of Identity Politics: Accumulation and the Production of Urban Space in Chennai, India</u>

Field Trip
7:00 – 9:00   Society for Community Organization (SoCO)
               <u>Hong Kong, Hong Kong, We Can Live a Better Life!: A Tour of Cubicles and Homeless</u>

9:00 – 10:00   Dinner Break

13TH MAY, 2011 (Friday)

NAB 211 Lam Woo International Conference Centre

The Role of Science (3): The Interaction between the Inside and the Outside (Cont'd)
<u>Chair:</u> Solomon BENJAMIN

9:00 – 9:40   Tianxin ZHANG
<u>A Current Western Image for the Future Chinese Cities?</u>

9:40 – 9:45   Morning Break

The Agent of Change: The State or the Community
<u>Chair:</u> Cuz POTTER

9:45 – 10:25   Hyun Bang SHIN
<u>Privatisation of 'Public Interest': State Power and Land Assembly in East Asian Urbanisation</u>

10:25 – 11:05   Jackie YC KWOK
<u>The Communitarian Trap: Some Observations in Hong Kong</u>

11:05 – 11:20   Tea Break

The Role of Community Capacity Building
<u>Chair:</u> Hon Chu LEUNG

11:20 – 12:00   Young A. LEE
<u>How to Build Community Capacity in Urban Development Process</u>

12:00 – 12:40   Kwok-kin FUNG and Suet-lin HUNG
<u>'Dialectical Utopianism' and the Experience of a Community Development Project in the Tin Shui Wai North</u>

12:40 – 2:10   Lunch
Togenor Japanese Restaurant, NTT International House, 32 Renfrew Road

Activism (1): Negotiating Identity
<u>Chair:</u> Jackie YC KWOK

2:10 – 2:50   Iam-Chong IP
<u>The Spatial Turn in Contemporary Social Movements in Hong Kong</u>

2:50 – 3:30   Liling HUANG
<u>Red Memory, Green Hope: Citizen Mobilization against the Privatization of Thong-Nhat Park in Hanoi, Vietnam</u>

3:30 – 3:45   Tea Break

Activism (2): Negotiating Culture
<u>Chair</u>: Iam-Chong IP

3:45 – 4:25   Pelin TAN
<u>Possibilities of Counter-Cultural Urban Space in Istanbul</u>

4:25 – 5:05   Ran MA
<u>The Dazhalan Project and Disappearing Beijing: Negotiating Urban Regeneration in Mainland China</u>

5:05 – 5:15   Break

Activism (3): Encountering Hegemony
<u>Chair</u>: Liling HUANG

5:15 – 5:55   Mee Kam NG
<u>Whose Utopia? A Tale of Two Urban Regeneration Battles in Hong Kong and Taipei</u>

6:30 – 9:00   Welcome Dinner
Chong Fat Chiu Chow Restaurant

14TH MAY, 2011

NAB 211 Lam Woo International Conference Centre (9:00-12:35)
Wing Lung Bank Building 206 (2:05-6:00)

[NAB 211]

Activism (4): The Role of Media
Chair: Hyun Bang SHIN

9:00 – 9:40   On-Kwok LAI
Urban Utopianism and East-Asia's Glocalization in the Information Age: The New Media-enhances Human Rights Movements in Urban Transformation

9:40 – 10:20   Chloe LAI
The Politics of Journalism Objectivity in Post-Handover Hong Kong

10:20 – 10:35   Tea Break

Alternative Organisations: Social Economy and Politics
Chair: Ngai PUN

10:35 – 11:15   Terence YUEN and Pauline CHAN
Rediscovering Social Economy in Hong Kong – An Urban Utopian Project

11:15 – 11:55   Shinya KITAGAWA
Search for an Alternative Social Space in the City: Some Aspects of Spatial Practices of a Social Center 'Leoncavallo' in Milan

Alternative Practices (1): Housing for the Homeless
Chair: On-Kwok LAI

11:55 – 12:35   Toshio MIZUUCHI and Geerhardt KORNATOWSKI
An Alternative Approach toward Inner City Regeneration through Homeless Self-dependency Support

12:35 – 2:05   Lunch
Renfrew Restaurant (2/F, David C Lam Building, Shaw Campus)

[WLB 206]

Alternative Practices (2): Housing for others
<u>Chair</u>: Kwok-kin FUNG

2:05 – 2:45   Yingfang CHEN
                 <u>Everyday Life of Migrant Population in Shanghai</u>

2:45 – 3:25   Maren GODZIK
                 <u>Discussing the Emergence of Alternative Housing in Japan</u>

3:25 – 3:40   Tea Break

Alternative Practices (3): Participatory or Faith
<u>Chair</u>: Suet-lin HUNG

3:40 – 4:20   Jin Yong WU, Ding Xiong XIAO, Ru Ci HUANG and Shenglin Elijah
                 CHANG
                 <u>Leave Me Alone, I Live along the Riverside: Case Studies of the
                 XiZhou Tribe Village and the 535 Shelter adjacent to the XinDian
                 Rivers in Metropolitan Taipei, Taiwan</u>

4:20 – 5:00   Tatsuya SHIRAHASE
                 <u>Social Roles of Faith-Related Organizations in Homeless Support</u>

Roundtable Discussion
5:00 – 6:00   <u>Chair</u>: Wing-Shing TANG

6:30 – 9:00   Farewell Dinner
Tanyutou Restaurant

Uwe ALTROCK

The Quest for Post-modernist Urban Planning 50 Years After Jane Jacobs: Utopia, Background Music of Neoliberal Trends In a Post-fordist World or Reformist Reality?

50 years after Jane Jacobs' "Death and Life of Great American Cities" started a most influential movement of critique against modernism in architecture and planning, we have witnessed wide-ranging changes in planning practice. They are led by the idea of overcoming the severe flaws of modernism and have brought about the renaissance of traditional urban layouts, public spaces and moderate heights and densities in urban design, the birth of careful regeneration strategies that turned their back on urban renewal, the communicative turn in planning, the rise of urban governance approaches with a pinch of integrative and empowering flavor in development, pedestrian-orientation and sustainability.

However, has this development been more than a utopian vision of planners in saturated European societies? Do examples of blending modernism and post-modernism in Asian cities show that post-modernist planning has never quite gained control over urban development in the way planners always dreamed of? Is the integration of private developers into governance arrangements and the promotion of new urban schemes rather a dodge by mature capitalism in its neoliberal form instrumentalizing credulous naïve planners for the privatization of urban space and for a reinforced reign of inequality? Is the communicative turn in planning overlooking the dark side of power in planning?

Those questions will be addressed in an attempt to interpret post-modernist (central European) planning ideals of the second half of the 20th century as utopian aspirations that have influenced practice to a certain extent but have never been able to change the general agenda of urban development fundamentally. With this approach, the paper will try to assess the achievements and shortcomings of post-modernist thinking in urban planning and development critically half a century after it has first gained momentum.

Solomon BENJAMIN

Urban Utopianism: Some thoughts from the Imperfect City

Can the 'Imperfect City' present an emancipatory possibility – at a time when institutional reforms, financial architectures, planning instruments, and 'good governance' propose in striving for a perfect market but also political closure? Second, what is the relationship between such 'imperfectness' and the reworking of singular forms of property, both in territorialization via diverse and often clouded land tenures and in commodities disrupting 'the brand'? Third, such 'imperfectness' opening political possibility implicated in 'Occupancy Urbanism' via Local Government engagement of land markets and economy? Finally, are we also witnessing a trans-global co-production of such 'imperfectness' when we look at the both the spatialization and material process of trade between Indian cities and towns, and those in Eastern China, South East Asia, and Hong Kong? I address these four questions mainly from the case of Bangalore –informed by Ranciere on political space, Blomley, Benda-Beckmann among a host of other scholars from legal pluralism, and historians such as Goswami, Dossal, Habib, and Thapar.

Bangalore, touted as India's 'Silicon Valley' was since the late nineties evoked by it's then Harvard educated Congress (I) party Chief Minister, into a possible Singapore. This perfectionist vision was then underpinned by new forms of governmentalities via the IT elite directed and dominated, Bangalore Agenda Task Force (BATF), and continues by the BJP promoted ABIDe much in a similar vein. Initial groundwork by the BATF on an agenda of 'Good Governance' and the strengthening of land acquisition laws and institutions aimed at mega projects laid the ground for a renewed emphasis on policy centered around urban renewal, 'planning gain' driven instruments of Public Private Partnerships' and 'Transfer of Development Rights.' The mainstream English press often sees these as utopian dreams as glamorized by the property developers brochures of high rise towers set in pristine environs – Bangalore was meant to be India's 'Garden City'. Such nostalgia, (following Bombay (Mumbai)'s own version) has the ABIDe promoting heritage and conservation as one of its key planks. Underpinning these efforts are an aggressive elite promoting a campaign inspired by American Style democracy for political reform which on closer inspection turns out to be a de-politicization aimed to establish private property. All of these are set within a magnified governance regime since 2007, of metro act that makes Bangalore metro twice the area of Mumbai and almost as big as that of Delhi.

There are ruptures into the imperfect city. Massive territorilizations sought to operationalise this city's several mega projects bring in their own political crises and ruptures. Another set of ruptures relate to the property of the 'brand' – materialized via the increasingly trans-global in their trade with South East Asia, and via Hong Kong into China, lie in small firm based manufacturing and commerce that dominate most of the city's economy and labour force (unlike the IT's less than 4%). A third

rupture, operationalized via a combine of a politicized mid level bureaucracy and their engagement in land markets and economy, lies in a political appropriation of the elite's carefully manicured agenda for 'good governance' by various political groups.

The Bangalore story, and perhaps like most other Indian cities, runs on closer inspection, hardly Singapore like. If so, are we witnessing paradoxically, an Urban Utopianism inherent in imperfection? And as significant, is this now trans-national complicating the 'immigrant' centered Nation State categories to pose situations more fluid?

Surajit CHAKRAVARTY

Sustainability in the Desert

The rapid development of several major urban centers in the Gulf region has created a new vision of utopia for these countries. In the short period of about 3 decades bustling cities boasting the very best of urban infrastructure have risen from the dunes of the Arabian Desert. While internal differences in historical and economic significance have led to different development trajectories, in almost all cases, an automobile-led growth model has created highly unsustainable urban forms and practices.

This paper looks at recent efforts to promote sustainability in Abu Dhabi, the capital of UAE (a country with one of the highest per capita carbon footprints in the world). I critically examine several recent plans and policies including the Estidama (sustainability) code, Plan 2030 (Abu Dhabi's new 'master plan') and Masdar City (planned carbon-neutral city). Each of these has its utopian vision of an environmentally sustainable model of urban development. I use the following questions to disassemble the meaning of sustainability in Abu Dhabi. How is sustainability interpreted? How have authorities tried to promote it? What is the political underpinning of this utopian vision? Can these plans turn the trends around? Or is sustainability destined to be an unattainable mirage?

The paper identifies some truly innovative initiatives, and also some lacunae that need to be addressed if sustainability is to be taken seriously in this region. Some possible corrections for the future are suggested.

Yingfang CHEN

Everyday Life of Migrant Population in Shanghai

The Chinese urban society is usually conceived of as an isotopia in that everywhere is the same, produced by the identical logic. Before the economic reform in 1979, it was *étatisation*, the logic of the state. After the reform, especially in recent years, the market takes the rein. Thus, the dominant reference point nowadays is economic consideration of floor area at the expense of everyday (both working and other) life of urban residents. This paper challenges this kind of simplistic conceptualisation. It argues that the urban society is in fact heterotopic; there are different places and everyday lives. This is to be achieved by surveying the migrant population in urban society.

Nowadays, a large proportion of the urban migrant population can neither enjoy public housing provision nor afford to rent a house within the stipulated rental housing regulation. Yet, they manage to make their ends meet in the city without causing too much disruption, if not violence, to the urban society.

Our survey unveils their everyday life. There are 'illegal', yet lively markets in the city's economic life; it is in these markets that they sell their labour power, consume their daily necessities and live their daily life. Besides, family is their main bonding unit, something that has not yet disappeared during the Chinese road to modernisation. One must add also the traditional association of fellow town/village folks, which provides the necessary mutual support. Furthermore, there prevails among the migrant population a public ethic, privileging an ordinary and personal relief system at the expense of an objectively and rationally stipulated institutional one. In short, while there is the dominant way of life, there are differences.

The development of these differences may lead us to the utopia that China has been searching for the past century.

Stuart CHRISTIE

"Country Writing": Reading the Limits of Raymond Williams 'The Country and the City' in the Chinese Context

In *The Country and the City* (1973), Raymond Williams writes: "We find stories of distant lands, but we can then recognize in them some of our own traditional experiences" (284). As Williams' statement suggests, with globalization has come a doubled inheritance of culture: on the one hand, we perceive a problematic of "universal" (capitalist) economy the non-Western world has inherited and refashioned to its own purposes; on the other hand, there is a persisting narcissism within Anglo-European Marxist theory and discourse which all too often has reduced non-Western contexts and representations effectively to the limitations (both real and imagined) of Western perceptions of economic and cultural experience. The paper will briefly address the utility of (as well as blind-spots within) Williams' model of country and city as it pertains to the new globalized metropolis; the rising pertinence of ecocriticism as both extension of, and rebuttal to, Williams' critical vocabulary; the extent to which Williams' "long revolution"—a Gramscian-inspired model for incremental cultural development—contributes to our understanding of the Chinese experience of urbanization; and the critique of Williams' version of cultural materialism, in its privileging of process over system, in actually sustaining (neo)imperial ideologies (G. Viswanathan).

Kwok-kin FUNG and Suet-lin HUNG

'Dialectical Utopianism' and the Experience of a Community Development Project in the Tin Shui Wai North

The past decade witnesses the proliferation of groups promoting social causes of different kinds, of which experimenting alternative life styles for the interests of the disadvantaged communities is one. Social activism has been a feature in Hong Kong, but increasing incidents of social experiments are arguably seldom found in past decades. Of interest in this paper, community development as a way to cope with deteriorating life chances of disadvantaged communities is among the initiatives. Causes for flourishing of these initiatives owes to the contradictions within the social formation of Hong Kong as well as the impact of the continual development of economic globalization. Disadvantaged communities suffer from continual deterioration of life chances, employment opportunity, public provision of welfare and increasing social polarization despite decades of economic growth. The negative impacts intensified since the outbreak of the Asian financial crisis and worsened in the recent 'Financial tsunami'. This paper documents the experience of an experimental project aiming at facilitating community development of the low income households in the Tin Shui Wai North. With funding from a non-government organization, the OXFAM, this project mobilizes residents to advocate for their interests within and outside their residential community to implement the principle of community empowerment. Testifying to the implications of 'dialectic utopianism' of Harvey (2000), it envisaged the impact of the contradictions within the social formation of Hong Kong and crystallized in Tin Shui Wai North in constituting the social base for mobilization of low income households. Prevalence, severity and spatial concentration of community problems, deteriorating welfare provision and weakening legitimacy of the state, increasing numbers of advocacy groups in civil society, availability of supports from pro-welfare political parties, increasing numbers of social workers and university graduates sharing critical perspectives are among the impacts facilitating the mobilization process. Paucity of social capital within the low income communities, limits of project finance, difficulties in sustaining the autonomy of the community groups, complexity in soliciting supports of various kinds from related social movements are among the difficulties encountered.

Maren GODZIK

Discussing the Emergence of Alternative Housing in Japan

In the last few years alternative forms of housing have emerged in Japan's cities being based on sharing parts of the living space between a number of people not (only) related by family ties. These houses are home to e.g. different generations with nuclear families being only one possible subgroup within the larger number of residents, older people or even people in precarious work situations. Although one could argue that these forms of living are not new (and by no means restricted to Japan) and extremely small in number, the emergence of these housing forms reflect a particular social development, which is characterized by the declining role of the traditional family as well as the lack of welfare provision by the state within in a situation of economic crisis and rapid demographic change. In stark contrast to the development of high-rise one-room apartments spreading in huge numbers in Japan's cities, the ways alternative housing is organised as well as the attitude of organisers / residents towards their housing situation suggest the possibility of a "different urban life" that works against individual isolation and fears towards the perceived dangers of the city. While often reaching out into the neighbourhood thus contributing to the development of community on a larger scale, alternative housing can, on the other hand, also form a new space of social encapsulation.

Based on onsite research and interviews with residents and organizers of communal forms of living the paper discusses the emergence of alternative housing in Japan against the background of recent social and urban developments.

Anne HAILA

A Perfectly Just City or Reducing Injustice

Amartya Sen has noted that revolutionaries in Paris, Gandhi and Martin Luther King were not trying to achieve a perfectly just world, but they did want to remove clear injustices. Also Sen himself is interested in how to reduce injustice and advance justice, rather than aiming only at the characterization of perfectly just societies. This dilemma between the end state and reducing injustice has puzzled urban scholars. Garden city movement and early modernist architects criticized land speculation they saw as a cause for urban problems; however, this radical legacy was forgotten when their urban models were understood as physical models. Planning scholars of the communicative turn emphasized the need to listen to people. Soon, however, inhabitants' movements to suburbs were interpreted as revealing their living preferences. The innovative city concept emphasized the development potential of cities, whereas the latest model for successful cities, the design city focuses on design. The paper will discuss how progressive ideas in urban development and town planning are weakened when interpreted as spatial models.

Liling HUANG

Red Memory, Green Hope: Citizen Mobilization Against The Privatization of Thong-Nhat Park in Hanoi, Vietnam

This research attempts to link David Harvey's perspective about 'space of hope', Lefebvre's arguments on 'production of space', and Maurice Halbwach's concept of 'collective memory' to analyze the citizen mobilization against the privatization of Thong-Nhat Park, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Once named as Lenin Park, Thong-Nhat Park was built in the 1960s through the massive youth participation under the mobilization of social labor service when Ho Chi-minh decided to construct a public space for the poor in the fast urbanized Hanoi. The origin park design also carried rich symbolic meaning of national unification, as its name of Thong-Nhat indicated. In recent decades of the fast development of Hanoi, Thong Nhat Park has become an urban oasis of providing open and green spaces for free for the general public, especially the elderly. However, under the privatization policy, Thong-Nhat Park encountered a crisis of losing its character as a public space.

A few years ago, the Hanoi City Government decided to give one part of the land in Thong-Nhat Park to a foreign company for building an international hotel and also privatizing the management of the park. This research analyzes how the citizen action reconstructed the collective memories of the society over Thong-Nhat Park and reinforced the identity of Hanoians. Body practices, including labor works on building the Park in old time, and the social dancing in the Park in contemporary time are keys to continuously to make the park a representational space. Here the old generation's 'collective memory' of Socialist Hanoi as an and equal city for people was recalled and further linked to the discussion of old and new spatial images of the Thong Nhat Park. In this process, the red memory meets the green dream and prompted a utopia for the future.

Iam-Chong IP

The Spatial Turn in Contemporary Social Movements in Hong Kong

In recent years, more social activists are engaging in historical preservation movements and community resistances in Hong Kong. The terms with connotations of locality, such as "bentu" (local) and "collective memory", have become the buzz-words in media. This paper focuses on how the activists joined and positioned themselves in the movements for Queen's Pier, preservation campaign for Central and mobilization against the Hong Kong Section of High-Speed Express respectively. I argue that they are not simply the outcome of the rise of local identity or nostalgic mood in opposition to the threats from outside; instead, what characterizes this new wave of socio-cultural activism is an emerging mode of spatial practice and representation featuring a post-colonial subject negotiating a new sense of civility. It not merely marks a continuity of the democratic movement since the 1980s, but also an alternative political modernity setting itself off against the spatial-temporal power configured in Hong Kong's late-colonial and late-capitalist era. It urges us to conceive the local identity of Hong Kong as a form of prefigurative politics rather than an fetishistic entity or a territorial category.

Shinya KITAGAWA

Search for an Alternative Social Space in the City: Some Aspects of Spatial Practices of a Social Center 'Leoncavallo' in Milan

Italy has a long history of alternative usage of space by urban social movements, particularly since the drastic rise of the so-called autonomous movements (from the side of exparliamentary left) in the 1970s. Social centers (centri sociali) were created through collective occupation of abandoned buildings, responding to lack of local needs and seeking sociality in this extremely political context. Therefore they have been split into political aspects, on the one side, and social or cultural ones on the other side and have attempted to harmonize to these two. I focus on one of the "historic" social centers "Leoncavallo" in Milan and consider the process to create a social space between the tendency politically more specific orientation and that of opening itself to the city.

Jackie Yan Chi KWOK

The Communitarian Trap: Some Observations in Hong Kong

When observing the urban situation in America, David Harvey states that in the recent decade, there is a wide spread belief that 'urban living can be radically improved, made more authentic and less placeless by a return to concepts of neighborhood and community that once upon a time gave such vibrancy, coherence, continuity, and stability to urban life' (David Harvey, 1997). Harvey further indicates, with an ironical tone, that there is another theme which dominates the discourse of urbanism: 'how to recuperate history, tradition, collective memory, and identity then becomes the holy grail'. In Hong Kong, we witness similar arguments have become programmatic statements in the dominant urban/community movement which battles against the gentrification development led by the Government and private developers.

Adopting the perspective of David Harvey, we also discover that 'there is room for skepticism' in the case of Hong Kong. The active members of dominant urban community movement state strongly there exists real community in local districts in which the neighbours sincerely and mutually supporting each other. They condemn the 'monstrous' urban renewal which destroy such 'authentic' human community and 'intrinsic' social network. In their eyes, such community represents the symbolic *'Genius Loci'* of Hong Kong. The active members of the dominant urban movements, by constructing an ideal image of urban community, have thus altered a social movement fighting against the forced relocation and displacement of the grassroots class away from the urban core area into a cultural movement defending the values of an ideal community.

In this paper, we wish to reflect critically if *'community* can really rescue us from the deadening world of social dissolution, grab-it-yourself materialism and individualized, selfish, market-oriented greed' (Harvey, 1997). We also wish to understand whether there really exists an authentic community, or if the cultural movement itself invents an image of community, and thus a certain ideology of community? From a detail understanding of the concept of gentrification, we put forward a critical observation of the case study of Lee Tung (Wedding Card) Street Community Movement in Hong Kong. From our analysis, we try to trace how a discourse of community 'assembles its rhetorical and political power' in the movement, and hence how it works towards a myth--- the mythic history and culture of Hong Kong.

Chloe LAI

The Politics of Journalism Objectivity in Post-Handover Hong Kong

Imagining a different urban form that delivers a better living and working environment for the inhabitants requires solid theoretical foundations and empirical grounds for aspirations. And in order for the advocated imagery to spread far and wide, and eventually gaining momentum, the press may play a crucial role. The press has the duty of help building a better living environment as being the fourth estate of a society. It has to watch over the other three estates – the administration, the legislature and the judiciary - for public goods and the good of democracy. In order to fulfil this duty, the journalists, over the years, have developed the norm of objective reporting. To be objective, the journalists have to remain neutral and free of bias. They have to separate facts from values and to report only the facts. Under objective reporting, news articles represent fairly each leading side in a political controversy. The objectivity norm is developed to filter propaganda and public relations spin. Unfortunately, the asymmetrical power relationship between the administration and the civil society, the business sector and the mass are eclipsing the ideal of objective reporting, very often reducing objective reporting into a tool on defending and rationalising the interest of the powerful. This paper aims to examine the politics of journalism objectivity in Hong Kong after the city returned to Chinese sovereignty by looking into media ownership and the day-to-day news room practices. This paper will examine how the principle of objective reporting is being used to tone down criticisms against the authorities and the business sector.

On-Kwok LAI

Urban Utopianism and East-Asia's Glocalization in the Informational Age: The New Media-enhanced Human Rights Movements in Urban Transformation

The globalization project championed by international governmental organizations (IGOs) like IMF and WTO has inherent contradictions. Far from benign that fosters better economic benefits for all, the unbridled capitalism leads to the exploitation of the weak and to socio-ecological degradation, and engendering xenophobia and the demise of local people's jobs and culture. Against the problems of globalization, we should promote everyone's (universal) economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights, achieving the essence of humanity and universal freedom– the notion of *urban utopianism,* without suffering from the hegemony of private property-based capitalism The globalization processes have been indeed polarizing people's socio-economic lives and consequently affect their ESC rights, housing rights in particular – poor and underprivileged groups are being pushed to geo-spatial margins of the global cities. Globalization is not just a challenge to the governance capacity of IGOs, but also remaking non-governmental organizations' (NGOs) quest for glocal human rights. This paper problematizes glocal socio-spatial development process, challenging the utopian ideas and humanity ideals in-and-beyond the urbanity, in the information age. Enhanced by new media (mobile communications, Internet, etc.), NGOs' critical e-mobilizations at various geo-political forums in the last decade have been redefining international norms for global governance and urban transformation: urban development agencies have been forced to make policy adjustments or concessions, resulting in new policy regime for consultative consensus building(?) for promoting (or exploiting?) people's ESC rights. The paper has four parts. After outlining the contradictions of the globalization project which threaten the ESC rights, Part Two situates human rights movements within the wider context of the new (and media-enhanced) social activism at the glocal scale. Part Three discusses the new politico-theoretical significance of the new media enhanced critical engagements by human agencies; and how these new forces transform socio-geo-spatial dynamics in East Asia's urban transformation. The paper ends with analytical-normative remarks on the project for urban sustainability, larger freedom and human rights for all, in the informational city.

Young A LEE

How to Build Community Capacity in Urban Development Process

This paper explores community capacity building in the process of urban development in South Korea. While a means to support for economic growth in the developmental state in the past, urban development became a means to make livable cities for residents. In the paradigm shift, it is important and timely to deal with capacity building as energy of urban development.

As capacity building at individual level can contribute to capacity building at organisational and local levels called community capacity building, this paper particularly focuses on capacity building at individual level.

First, this paper defines community capacity building, explaining similar terms such as empowerment and social capital. Community capacity can be built when residents start to participate in community projects or events. Consistent participation in their community issues can make their interest and participation sustainable and the sustainability can finally make their mind open for other communities'.

By interviewing residents who are actively involved in community capacity building (sometimes they are called 'Commu-builders' in Korea) and surveying residents living in the communities, this paper examines the factors which have influenced community capacity building.

This paper finally suggests what residents need for community capacity building and how they can develop the capacity for the future of their own communities.

Ran MA

The Dazhalan Project and Disappearing Beijing: Negotiating the Urban Regeneration in Mainland China

Since the era of Reform and Opening-up initiated in 1978, mainland China has undergone drastic urbanization in waves of demolition and construction nationwide, which have rapidly rewritten the urban fabrics and social relationship. Dwelling in this fast-changing urban environment, contemporary artists and cultural workers have been able to respond to and reflect upon their city experience through highly diversified site-specific art projects of image-making (photography, media/video art & films) and sound-making (soundscape & sound art projects). Projects or artistic productions as such are often driven by the impulses to re-explore the cultural memory, to document the disappearing cityscape and to do justice to the cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible). Meanwhile we are also seeing these projects as integrating with more grassroots level research projects that engage with the social reality closely via community participation and potential civil rights activism, in which arts play vital roles mobilizing people and articulating agendas. I suggest projects as such can be considered the entry point to further analyze and complement the theoretical undertakings to explore and articulate China's urbanization processes in alternative ways.

This paper mainly seeks to highlight one particular research project that is situated within the sociohistorical exigencies and geopolitical peculiarities of the city of Beijing—the Dazhalan Project, which has been curated/directed by Ou Ning and Cao Fei in collaboration with a group of artists, volunteers and the residents at the Dazhalan area of Qianmen, the old commercial heartland of the capital. Mainly powered up by the European arts fund, participants of the "Dazhalan Project" (short as DP henceforth) have on the one hand endeavored to rediscover the historical, archaeological documentations evidencing the evolvement of this area at a critical conjuncture when it was to be demolished as part of the pre-Olympic Games urban renewal projects. On the other hand, DP also works in collaboration with some of the evictees who feel discontent with the government's demolition policies and compensation terms and tries to record their struggles and protests mainly through digital cameras. This project has mediated between the "city-making" movement and urban preservation or the improvised urban forms, of which it has offered perspectives that cannot be pinned down by the developmentist ideology of the Party-state. In particular, DP pays much attention to the peripheral urban quarters of slums and throughout the project visual documentation has been deployed to facilitate the formation of the counter-discourse.

Toshio MIZUUCHI and Geerhardt KORNATOWSKI

An Alternative Approach Toward Inner City Regeneration Through Homeless Self-dependency Support

It has been now more than a decennium since homelessness in Japan manifested itself as initially an urban social key issue, followed by steady increasing in local cities. In the meanwhile, national and local policies, as well a varied array of non-governmental initiatives have progressed to efficiently tackle this issue, some having more success than others. A milestone among these efforts was the 2002 formulation of the "Law on Supporting the Self-dependent Living of the Homeless", which officially stated governmental support responsibilities and created an unprecedented support system, based primarily on transitory housing (park shelters and "self-dependency centers", followed in a later stage by the "Housing First" initiative in Tokyo) and employment counseling, in order to facilitate the homeless' return to the labor market and eventually society. Whereas initially most efforts were put in a facilitation off the streets, the remaining issues now focus on supporting and maintaining the self-dependent living of the homeless in communities.

The above-mentioned law is set to expire in 2012, requiring a new framework for the post-homeless law era. It is against this background that we have taken up a new national survey that has started in 2010, as to clarify the current needs of the homeless and to rethink the definition of homeless itself. Based on the survey results, on the recent change in global economic labor market conditions and on the new trends occurring within homelessness itself, we will try to suggest a new agenda for the post-homeless era and also consider how living support can be spatially materialized within the city in general and in deprived inner-cities in particular. This will bring us to an alternative approach of how these support measures can contribute to new forms of inner-city revitalization and to reconsider the role of social safety nets (and the government) in order to make it sustainable.

Mee Kam NG

Whose Utopia? A Tale of Two Urban Regeneration Battles in Hong Kong and Taipei

Utopian thinking as an imposition of authoritarian ideals might be dead but hegemonic visions dressed in rationality rhetoric still abound in directing the development of cities in the 21st century. Hence, Anderson (2006) advocates "immanent utopianism", efforts to create spaces to challenge the present, "for disrupting dominant assumptions about social and spatial organisation, and for imagining other possibilities and desires" (Pinder, 2002, p.238). But what kind of immanent utopian vision are we talking about? John Friedmann dreams of a well governed city of everyday life that enhances human flourishing (2000). Henri Lefebvre envisions the overlapping and combining of perceived (dominated) and lived (appropriated) space. Harvey advocates for the right to "reshaping city after the desire of one's heart" (2003, p.93). Yet Mannheim reminds us the importance of tracing the bases of social judgments to their interest-bound roots in society (1936, 2002). This paper aims at tracing the birth, competition, struggles and final destinies of various utopian visions put forward by different stakeholders, particularly the government or 'official' planners, the vocal professionals or interested parties and the often rather silent local communities in two urban regeneration battles in Hong Kong and Taipei. The case in Hong Kong involves an urban renewal project that affects two street markets with over 150 years of history. The official utopian vision (the perceived space) has remained robust despite undergoing several generations of changes as a result of alternative visions put forward by a group of civic activists. The case in Taipei involves a squatter settlement turned conservation zone. The official vision gave way to the utopian thoughts of professionals in academia and academia turned government officials. However, the utopian vision of the latter was in turn challenged by idealistic artivists. In both cases, the local residents, those who have toiled in their lived spaces, have surprisingly little say in their destinies. Through theoretical exploration, desk top research and in-depth interviews with different stakeholders, this paper attempts to understand the reasons for the 'silence' of the local communities in both space battles and examine if there are qualitatively different community impacts during the implementation of a 'hegemonic' versus an 'immanently utopian' vision.

Cuz POTTER

In Defense of Utopian Thinking

Susan Fainstein's contemporary conception of the Just City is a form of utopian thinking, and as such is subject to the accusation of being a useless fantasy with no relevance to concrete action. This paper argues to the contrary that utopian thinking, even of vaguely conceived utopias, is vital to building better societies. Following Slavoj Zizek's application of Lacan and Marx to ideology, we can define ideology as a system of signification that strives for closure by interpellating individuals and objects into a coherent social system. Contradictions within the system are revealed when signification fails to capture the inexpressible bursting of enjoyment, of jouissance. The mind covers the gap thus produced by affixing fantasy to the "surplus enjoyment" bursting through the seams of ideology. In this role, fantasy provides a frame through which we are able to view the world as whole and consistent. Since fantasy in turn dominates signification by forcing relations upon signifiers, it follows that altering fantasy alters ideology and vice versa. Utopian thinking serves the role of fantasy. For instance, Zizek claims that the capitalist system is supported by a utopian promise of fulfillment through the "surplus enjoyment" of consumption, the failure of which prompts further consumption. Other utopian visions, like that of the Just City, may posit new systems of relations between signifiers, and to the extent that these utopia provide their own "surplus enjoyment", they are able to reshape ideology. Utopian thinking then is not only inevitable for any ideology, it is also vital to any effort to improve society.

Bhuvaneswari RAMAN

Countering Hegemonic Utopias: The Dialectics of Identity Politics, Accumulation and the Production of Urban Space in Chennai, India

This paper explores the questions, 'How and to what extent diverse urban utopias in circulation influenced the production of space and its counter politics', drawing on experiences from the South Indian city of Chennai. In this light, it engages critically with Benjamin's and Lefebvre's concepts of 'dialectical structure of awakening' and 'transduction'. Chennai, the fourth largest city in India, is one of the three destinations for new economies in the South, besides Bangalore and Hyderabad. Since the 1990s, several utopias have been in circulation in the city, some of which include 'world city of our own', 'heritage city' and 'transparent Chennai'. Each of these have emanated from diverse and often, opposing political constituencies and are overlaid in a political milieu infused with an erstwhile egalitarian, anti-caste political ideology of Dravidian parties. Since the seventies, production of urban space in Chennai is co-determined by local political forces and multinational institutions, in particular, the World Bank – which manifests as tensions/contradictions between different forms of institutional politics viz., 'bureaucratic politics' and 'radical populism'. Unlike other Indian cities, the World Bank has had a significant influence over Chennai's planning ideology, policies, practice and the related financial and institutional architecture. Chennai has been the experimental site for the WB's models of institutional and financial architecture, which resulted in a range of quasi-state development institutions controlling ideas about the city and a renegotiation of the relationship between the regional State and private capital. Although, seemingly, a hegemonic force shaping the production of space in the city, its power is neutralized by the political dominance of Dravidian parties. Another feature of the city's as well as the State's politics, until recently, is the troubled relationship with the national parties, the congress in particular, at the Centre. A consequence of this politics is the disempowerment of municipal institutional and political terrain, markedly different from other South Indian cities, particularly, Bangalore. Thus for many in the city, particularly, the poorer groups, party space was critical for negotiating the utopias imposed via bureaucratic politics. The nineties marked a shifted in the politics of the city, which brought to light the caste/class contradictions, with the anxiety to become the world city. The contradictions within Dravidian ideology and strategy, specifically, the emphasis on capital accumulation intensified with the race to join world cities. The Dravidian ideology with its roots in anti-caste (specifically anti-brahmin) movements emphasised accumulation of capital by historically disadvantaged caste groups in order to recapture economic and political power in the city. This philosophy influenced their policies towards land and economy, particularly its emphasis on small-scale industries and entrepreneurship until the nineties.   The party's slogan 'World city of our own' marked a shift from their earlier egalitarian stance. The logic of accumulation together with the compulsion of coalition politics also influenced a shift in political

29

alliances between Dravidian parties and other national parties. It was also a time when affluent non-resident Indians belonging to different castes returned to the city and middle-upper income residents movements with their vision of 'beautifying Chennai' and restoring the 'heritage city'. Another colliding vision is that of 'transparent Chennai' espoused by a think tank set up by a venture capitalist, with support from ICICI and dominated by expatriate academics. The paper explores the various, yet conflicting, utopias in circulation, the fields/constituencies producing them and the complex yet shifting relationships in time, between the constituencies. The paper considers the spaces that the affected groups use to manoeuvre the various utopias. It suggests that how the dialectical nature of the city's politics in itself opens up some spaces for countering hegemonic utopias.

Hyun Bang SHIN

Privatisation of 'Public Interests': State Power and Land Assembly in East Asian Urbanisation

The East Asian region has long seen the presence of developmental, interventionist states, which have guided and actively shaped urban development practices in times of the region's late industrialisation and condensed urbanisation. Land assembly in urban development projects is a state planning apparatus that can be identified as symbolising the presence of strong interventionist, often authoritarian, states in East Asian urban space. Very often, the land assembly exercise comes with the use of eminent domain (also known as compulsory purchase or expropriation), which involves the use of state power to restrict individual private property rights and taking of private properties for 'public use'. The key question here is: To what extent can the eminent domain be justified and carried out at the expense of individual rights to land and housing? By reviewing the experiences of East Asian cities including South Korea and mainland China, this paper argues that the use of eminent domain in contemporary East Asian urbanisation has increasingly been carried out in order to facilitate those urban projects whose nature is to serve property-based interests. Housing projects, for instance, implemented by private developers or by a partnership between individual landlords and the public/private sector increasingly involve the use of eminent domain so as to fulfil their profit objectives. Such 'privatisation of public interests' comes into conflicts with those powerless and marginalised local inhabitants who may not necessarily share the same profit-led urban development agenda. This paper will discuss the extent to which this process of 'privatisation of public interests' takes place in East Asia, and also explore how an alternative way of urban policy-making and practice can be imagined. While the paper does not attempt to put forward practical solutions explicitly, it takes the right-to-the-city perspective to discuss the need of enacting collective actions that can replace the excessive domination of privatism and statism in urban development. The paper argues that the key to these collective actions will be the recognition among local inhabitants that their claims need to be framed in such a way as to include the most excluded and alienated from inhabited urban space (e.g. China's migrant workers and their families).

Tatsuya SHIRAHASE

Social Roles of Faith-Related Organizations in Homeless Support

Homeless people have increased and become visible in Japan since the middle 1990s. Though governmental sectors support homeless people, their activities are limited. Thus private sectors –especially Faith-Related Organizations (FROs) - play big roles to support homeless people.

The Buddhism and Shintoism -they are major religions in Japan- are passive to homeless supports in Japan. On the other hand, the Christianity -it is very minor religion in Japan- is positive to homeless supports. There are various types of FROs. Since many FROs are intricate and invisible, the past Japanese homeless studies have paid little attention to the FROs. Therefore, the social roles of the FROs have not been clarified. In this presentation I aim to classify the FROs' characters.

Christian related homeless support organizations could divide roughly into three types. Type 1 makes much of propagation including material supports. Conservative churches -especially Korean churches- are often categorized type 1. Though they may care spiritual pains and temporal material services for homeless, they don't have big influences in a fundamental solution of decrease of homeless.

Type 2 makes much of material services and advocacy to homeless without governmental budget. Many of type 2 are related to liberal protestant churches and catholic churches. In the past the local governments were very passive to homeless support, the presence of type 2 were relatively big. But now the influences of type 2 are relatively small.

Type 3 makes much of material services and advocacy to homeless cooperating with local governments (Public-Private Partnership). Many of type 3 are related to liberal protestant churches. They usually act as Non Profit Organizations (NPOs), so seemingly they are not considered to be FROs. Recently local governments have come to be positive to homeless supports, so the social roles of type 3 have been big.

Though FROs have various characters, they are good at creating alternative communities and families. Because most homeless have lost their community ties and family ties. At the same time it is very difficult to recover their ties, FROs activities are more important for homeless.

Angela STIENEN

Building Utopia: Pedagogy and the Re-Signification of the City in Medellin, Columbia

How do cities become pedagogical sites that mobilize people to implement the Lefebvrian right to the city? This question arose in the Colombian industrial metropole Medellín in the 1990s. Medellín has long been associated with drugs and heavy violence. The city's role as "the capital of reaction in Latin America" has also been emphasized recently. This contribution addresses another dimension of Medellín. During the 1990s, the city has been symbolically re-signified in public debates at Round Tables and Open Forums as well as through urban interventions, following the slogan: "Tomorrow we will live in the city we dream of today". Based on the analysis of empirical material from extensive field research, the contribution highlights on the one hand, the symbolic re-signification of the city, i.e. the local representations of a different city and a different urban life which emerged in the public debates. On the other hand, the contribution analyses three different sites in the city where alternative urban visions had been implemented: 1) upgrading activities in informally built neighbourhoods at the very periphery of the city; 2) an urban renewal area in the inner city; 3) a middle class neighbourhood whose residents resisted becoming a Gated Community.

The paper analyses how different and antagonist visions of utopia met during the deliberations of the 1990s in Medellín: on the one hand, the critique of "western rationality" and the (nostalgic) dream of situationist subversion which were brought up in the public debates by its leading groups. These groups integrated progressive intellectuals and previous radical left-wing political activists. On the other hand, the desire of living a (western) modern life which low-income groups brought up in the debates. Those groups associated upgraded, safe, and cleaned up urban environments with equal protection under the law and the promise of a modern and safe life.

The paper touches on what is seen as the "constitutionalization of daily life": The constitutional language brought about through Colombia's 1991 Political Charta and the establishment of a Constitutional Court penetrated into everyday life. It mobilized citizens to get involved with the implementation of constitutional principles in their daily lives. The practical nature of the debate on the renewal of built environments forced the city's antagonistic interest groups to make concrete their differing priorities over what equal protection under law implied in Colombia's Political Constitution. The upgraded, renewed and revitalized urban environments turned out to be a barometer of the citizens' political power to negotiate and defend basic constitutional civil rights.

In light of this, this contribution critically discusses the conception of cities as pedagogical sites for the creation of utopia. It raises the question whether this conception expresses a genuine ambition of western modern urbanism and whether it is only significant for Latin American cities but not for other cities of the so-called Global South.

Pelin TAN

Possibilities of Counter- Cultural Urban Spaces in Istanbul

This presentation is about analyzing the counter-cultural urban spaces in Istanbul under the pressure of governmental urban transformation policies since 2005. The paper will summarize the activities of state-led urban transformation projects related policies in Istanbul and oppositional actions from the neighborhoods. Related to the pressure of municipalities; a lot of campaigns and collaborations with academics, NGOs, independent activists, journalists and artists have been proceeded since the last years. Cultural events, artistic interventions, research projects and campaigns try to not only create public awareness about the pressure of state on neighborhoods in Istanbul but also taking the role as mediators among the actors in defending the right to the city.

My questions that I focus are: How cultural interventions and gestures in such urban context can stimulate counter-cultural urban spaces? How a state institutional critique could have a role in this counter-cultural discourse? How and where the activists and habitants create the participation and the common ground, for representing the neighborhoods? In what level is *participation* and what is the representation of it?

Collaboration and organization at a neighborhood level is possible especially in the initiation of temporary events and the use of local networks, which do not only help *the settlements* to participate, but also actors from different fields. Furthermore, media activism, using blogs and digital communication, inviting several citizens from different fields through cultural/artistic events in the neighborhoods are the main civil organizations that are going on. Local urban collectives, independent researchers and academics and artists are the most effective actors that the neighborhood platform prefers to collaborate. As George Yudice points out, grassroots local movements that could be more effective then NGOs or civil organization supported by social democratic political strategies could be more effective in oppositional movements. Urban spaces and as micro- collectives, the neighborhoods having the potentials of creating soft forms of activities. Such soft forms of urban "becoming" could be the sites of utopias in complex urban conditions.

In theoretical context this paper aims to provide discussion about discourses of "right to the city" with comparative references to Lefebvre, Harvey and Lopes de Souzo.

Wing-Shing TANG

Many Facets of Urban Utopianism When Lefebvre Meets the East Nowadays, with the Example of Wedding Card Street Movement in Hong Kong

There are too few serious urban utopian practices in Asia. What is gaining currency is for one city to imagine replicating a well-publicised, economically more successful city either in the West or within the region. For those more serious proponents, they usually indigenise more critical thinkers and apply their mode of thinking to their own setting. This paper challenges these attempts by, first, reviewing the Lefebvrian utopian thinking and elaborating a case study of Wedding Card Street movement in Hong Kong.

Lefebvre is well known for putting forward the methodology of transduction and the utopia of the renewed right to urban life at centrality. What is the role of ideology? How is art and science dialectically related experimentally? Who is the agent behind the practice of utopia – the working class or what? What is the dialectical relationship between common and individual interest? Is activism, deliberation or autogestion a better mode to practise utopia? These are some of the issues that one needs to debate rigorously.

These issues are especially pronounced when Lefebvre is applied to Asia. This paper remarks that his theory of the production of differential space is very much rooted in the Euro-setting. The absolute space dated back to the Greeks, while the abstract space originated from Enlightenment and the substitution of exchange value over use value during capitalism. Asia has a different tempo-spatiality, implying that while Asia is by no means unique, it can only be understood in terms of its tempo-spatiality plus co-determination with other forces in the world. Accordingly, critical thinking like the Lefebvrian must be received with caution in thinking and practising utopia in Asia. This is elaborated by drawing on the urban utopianism of Wedding Card Street movement. The latter has been praised as the first of its kind of community design and 'people's planning' in Hong Kong. It must however, this paper argues, be situated within the context not so much of a retreat of the state as of an advance of rampant state intervention in landed and property.

By doing so conceptually and empirically, this paper contributes to the debate of the methodology of utopian thinking.

Wing-Shing TANG and Joanna Wai-Ying LEE

A Utopia for the Bay Area of the Pearl River Estuary: The Spatial Metaphor of Planning Concepts

Healey (2010) has brilliantly highlighted a recent phenomenon of transnational flow of planning ideas from place to place for offering solutions in a place based on others' planning experiences. The translation and adaptation process is highly variable that the concepts may be reshaped while others cannot be translated into other contexts. Without the sensitivity of institutional and socio-cultural differences of places, the adoption of extrinsic ideas into local context may not be fruitful in informing the planning practice in a particular place.

By drawing on a recent planning study on the Pearl River Delta (PRD), this paper attempts to probe deeply into the process of formulating utopian vision. Facing an increasing economic cooperation among PRD cities, the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have jointly commissioned the "Study on the Action Plan for the Bay Area of the Pearl River Estuary" ("Bay Area Study") in 2010. The Bay Area comprises of all the cities abutting the estuary, including Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Hong Kong and Macao. With rich resources, diverse socio-economic contexts and different politico-administrative systems (Chinese governance vs. One country two systems), this Bay Area exemplifies the spatial politics of building a utopian vision by translating and implanting Western planning ideas into a Chinese context. While acknowledging the commonalities in planning problems that we share, we also need to delve into the role of agencies in shaping and counter-acting hegemonic forces within a particular socio-cultural context.

According to the experts, the Bay Area is to be become a "Livable Region" which is similar to those renowned livable regions in the world including San Francisco Bay Area, Greater Vancouver Regional District, New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Metropolitan Area, Greater London Region, Grand Paris Region and Tokyo Bay Area. While perfectly fits with the ideology of social harmony, livability becomes an appealing concept to be adopted in the Bay Area. The spatial concept of "Livable Region" which originates from Athens Charter and the UN inhabitation agenda ("the source region"), is abstracted and neutralized from its own context. Through random conceptual appropriation, the concept is interpreted differently and adopted selectively to suit the interests of the hegemonic power. Mixing with the Construction Ministry livable cities scientific evaluation index system, the concept of "Livable Region" is randomly indigenized into the Chinese context – the Bay Area ("the target region"). With an overwhelming need to impose order on the chaotic development of the PRD, the ultimate utopia of a livable PRD Bay Area is reduced to a material space by which the socio-cultural differences, contentious tensions for the use of land and competing interests of different governments have been hidden from the plan.

It is the interest of this paper to unravel the process of utopian formulation with special emphasis on the power politics of different agencies, the hegemonic structure of different governments as well as the random appropriation and indigenization of spatial concepts across space. With a better understanding of the process, it may be possible to inform the planning practice in a better way.

Jin Yong WU, Ding Xiong XIAO, Ru Ci HUANG and Shenglin Elijah CHANG

"Leave Me Alone, I Live along the Riverside: Case Studies of the XiZhou Tribe Village and the 535 Shelter adjacent to the XinDian Rivers in Metropolitan Taipei, Taiwan"

Much has been written about conceptualization of making utopian urban spaces and imaging alternative hybrid urban villages, but few provide realistic cases from marginal non-western socio-cultural contexts. Our paper bridges the gap and provides two related cases. We focus on two urban informal villages in the XinDian Rivers in the New Taipei City of Taiwan. One case, XiZhou, is an Ames aboriginal urban illegal village adjacent to the XiDian Rivers. The other, the 535 Shelter, is an "underground" homeless shelter with the dominate Taiwanese resided and locate on WuChong Creek in the upstream of the XinDia Rivers. Both communities re-define alternative meanings of utopian urban villages in their own ways.

The XiZhou Ames village has been established in the edge of Taipei city in the downstream of the XinDian River for more than half century. The settlement built up as a self-help community, was threatened by the de-territorialization forces such as legal regulations and state authority. For a long time, especially after 2007, the local New Taipei governments has demolished and forced the illegal aboriginal riverside settlements similar to the XiZhou village and to move those tribe residents into the public housing complex. Due to the rigid housing design and high-priced rental rate, the forced relocation policy has failed to settle down the rising resistances and spatial social movements from these growing settlements. The participatory design was practiced as the solution to re-territorialize the Xizhou residents, and also the substitutive strategy for the bulldozed and forced relocation policy. For the Xizhou residents, the participatory process provided an opportunity and dynamic process to dialogue with the environmental, social and cultural requirements, and offered them a chance to re-territorialize again.

At the same time, on the upper stream of the XinDian River system, the 535 underground homeless shelter stands along the WuChong Creek at the out skirt of the metropolitan Taipei. The building of the shelter was a mining hotel for workers back in the 1950s. When the mining industry declined the ownership of the building has been transferred a few times. The current owner is also brokering illegal day labors to construction sites in the metropolitan Taipei. More importantly, many 535 residents live a very harsh life and save every penny for their daily meals. For better or for worse, the New Taipei government was not aware of this underground shelter standing along the WuChong riverside. The place seems to be idled and no de-territorialization and re-territorialization has been initiated. We question if this idle stage is the utopian homeland for these homeless residents to settle down. How would the 535 residents re-define their home identities and sense of communities

within this underground shelter? In contrast with the participation mechanism in the XiZhou case, what would be the mechanism for the 535 shelter residents to claim their utopia with hope? Or, shall we leave them alone?

Terence YUEN and Pauline CHAN

Rediscovering Social Economy in Hong Kong – An Urban Utopian Project

In identifying and tracking the development trajectories of a wide range of grassroots alternative economic praxis, and through forging a joint action platform with social economy practitioners, the social/community economies (SCE) research project ponders the prospect of developing a sustainable and scalable social economy alterity in Hong Kong that works to counter market fundamentalism of the mainstream capitalist economy.

The SCE Project is about rethinking space, economy and community in a trans-border context. With an emphasis on restoring and doing justice to the multitudes of social relations imbedded in economic life that have been hidden, erased, or utterly destroyed by economic globalization and neo-liberalist urban policies, an alternative, utopian vision is required whereupon SCE practitioners and participants can work as insurgent architects to change the everyday reality of the world as they work consciously to change themselves through actively engaging in alternative economic practices.

Like in many other metropolises, alternative economic practices in Hong Kong have been grown out of contradictions of advanced capitalism, and they take a variety of forms that include co-operatives, Local Exchange Trading Systems (LETS), community-support local agricultural practices, the fair-trade movement and the like. There is no question that the small city-state, dominated by hegemonic market forces and wicked power of land and financial capitals, leaves little space for the continued survival of these alternative economic practices. Yet, the very existence of the highly resilient grassroots projects devoid of mainstream market logic manifests rich and diverse political imaginations, and they are in effect heterotopias occupying while co-existing with capital-dominated urban space.

As political projects, the SCE initiatives all need to embrace utopian visions in the sense that they all believe "another world" is possible. In this paper, through examining exemplary SCE case studies, an exploratory analysis is given to address: 1. key attributes of the local SCE praxis including their commonalities and differences; and 2. the conceptual underpinnings for building an urban utopianism that would allow for political translation and transcendence. Following Harvey, the relationships between the social and the material and the interconnected subjects of space, community and economy would be elucidated through an effort to build a utopianism that encompasses both the spatial and processual dimensions of city planning and urban living.

Tianxin ZHANG

A Current Western Image for the Future Chinese Cities?

From the renaissance period, people dream of utopias that are not directly related with reality. Such utopias mostly locate in remote places like no-man islands. From the phenomenal point of view, they provide a possible world that transcends people's daily life world. In some sense, medias like movie and TV programs represent another type of utopia and functions as a possible world that connects with reality in a virtual way. Although these various types of utopias have been greatly meaningful for initiation of new urban concepts, they face great problems when applied in the real world. In many circumstances, there remains a gap between people's imagination and reality. There are both positive and passive aspects for this gap. The good part is that they initiate fresh social and spatial imaginations. The bad part is, however, that these sometimes cause tragedies when applied in the real world. This happens especially when people try to apply some specific doctrines into the existing society, or to transplant a typical layout in the current landform that does not conform to each other. In recent years, such cases can occasionally be seen in cities across the world, especially in fast growing cities in the developing countries. In these cities, styles that have been used in western countries are imitated. Developers use the name of remote western places to imply an advanced model and try to attract customers. Although some of the details are well designed in these projects, they nevertheless lack the innate connection with the land and the local community. In other words, these projects are connected with a remote and virtual world instead of the real life world. We call this a mis-transplanted utopia that represents an intertwined application. Nevertheless, they also have to experience a process of localization once they are established. In this paper, we examine some case examples in China, notably the several western towns around the suburb of Shanghai, where foreign images are utilized and transformed to fit the Chinese context. We examine the route through which these images come from, and the way they are transformed. We use comparative and interdisciplinary research method to compare the existing cities with the sceneries existed in the main medias like TVs and films. We will summarize by supplying a framework of how this process has been formulated systematically. Based upon such works, we wish that the future planning works could strengthen their local roots while at the same time keep open to the outside world.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

- **ALTROCK, Uwe** - Department of Urban Regeneration, Faculty of Planning, University of Kassel <uwealtrock@yahoo.de>
- **BENJAMIN, Solomon** - Manipal School of Architecture and Planning sollybenj@yahoo.co.in
- **CHAKRAVARTY,** Surajit - Urban Planning Department, Alhosnu University <surajitc@usc.edu>
- **CHAN, Pauline** - Department of Applied Social Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University <ssplsung@polyu.edu.hk>
- **CHAN, Winnie Wing Yin** – Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University <wychanwinnie@hotmail.com>
- **CHANG, Shenglin Elijah** - The New Ruralism Research and Development Center, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University <shenglinchang@gmail.com>
- **CHEN, Yingfang** - Department of Sociology, East China Normal University <yfchen0510@yahoo.com.cn>
- **CHRISTIE, Stuart** - Department of English Language and Literature, Hong Kong Baptist University <scfchris@hkbu.edu.hk>
- **DeFazio, Daniel** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <sukitooruyume@gmail.com>
- **EBI, Kazuo** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <ebisen@d7.dion.ne.jp>
- **FUNG, Kwok-kin** - School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong <SCFKKB@cityu.edu.hk>
- **Godzik, Maren** - German Institute for Japanese Studies <godzik@dijtokyo.org>
- **HAILA, Anne** - Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki <anne.haila@helsinki.fi>
- **HUANG, Liling** - Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University <liling@ntu.edu.tw>
- **HUANG, Michelle Tsung Yi** - Department of Geography, National Taiwan University <zongyihuang@ntu.edu.tw>
- **HUANG, Ru Ci** - The New Ruralism Research and Development Center, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University, <swing770316@gmail.com＞
- **HUNG, Suet-lin** - Department of Social Work, Hong Kong Baptist University, <slhung@hkbu.edu.hk>
- **IP, Iam-Chong** - Department of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University <chong@ln.edu.hk>
- **KITAGAWA, Shinya** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <shinyappo9@hotmail.com>
- **KORNATOWSKI, Geerhardt** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <geerhardtkornatowski@gmail.com>
- **Kwok, Jackie YC** - School of Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University <sdjackie@inet.polyu.edu.hk>
- **LAI, Chloe** - Department of Urban Planning and Design, The University of Hong Kong <chloe.lai@scmp.com>
- **LAI, On-Kwok** - Graduate School of Policy Studies, Kwansei Gakuin University <oklai9@gmail.com>
- **LEE, Joanna Wai-Ying** - Department of Geography and Resource Management and The Centre for Environmental Policy and Resource Management, The Chinese University of Hong Kong <joannaleewy@cuhk.edu.hk>
- **LEE, Young A**. - Geography Education Department, Daegu University <youngpal@gmail.com>
- **LEUNG, Hon Chu** - Department of Sociology, Hong Kong Baptist University <honchu@hkbu.edu.hk>
- **MA, Ran** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <maraninhk@gmail.com>
- **MIZUUCHI, Toshio** - Urban Research Plaza and Department of Geography, Osaka City University <urbano@osb.att.ne.jp>
- **NAKAYAMA, Tohru** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University; Department of Social Welfare, Osaka Prefecture University <nakayama@sw.osakafu-u.ac.jp>

- **NG, Mee Kam** - Department of Urban Planning and Design, The University of Hong Kong <meekam777@gmail.com>
- **NG, Wai Tung** - Society for Community Organization <socotung@gmail.com>
- **OWEN, Bernie** - Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University <owen@hkbu.edu.hk>
- **POTTER, Cuz** - Division of International Studies, Korea University <jwp70@columbia.edu>
- **PUN, Ngai** - Department of Applied Social Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University <ssnpun@inet.polyu.edu.hk>
- **RAMAN, Bhuvaneswari** - French Institute of Pondicherry <raman.bhuvaneswari@gmail.com>
- **SHIN, Hyun Bang** - Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics and Political Science <H.B.Shin@lse.ac.uk>
- **SHIRAHASE, Tatsuya** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <tawaki79@hotmail.com>
- **STIENEN, Angela** - Pedagogical University of Berne <stienena@gmail.com>
- **TAKASAKI, Akihiro** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <aki_pma@hotmail.com>
- **TAN, Pelin** - Program of Art, Technology and Culture, School of Architecture and Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology <pelintan@gmail.com>
- **TANG, Wing-Shing** - Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University wstang@hkbu.edu.hk>
- **Wong, Tammy Kit Ping** – Department of Geography, Hong Kong Baptist University <tammywong111@gmail.com>
- **WU, Jin Yong** - The New Ruralism Research and Development Center, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University <jinyungwu@gmail.com>
- **XIAO, Ding Xiong** - The New Ruralism Research and Development Center, Graduate Institute of Building and Planning, National Taiwan University, <mozart320@gmail.com>
- **YAMADA, Rieko** - Urban Research Plaza, Osaka City University <rriieekkoo@nifty.com>
- **YUEN, Terence** - Department of Applied Social Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University <terenceyuen@gmail.com>
- **ZHANG, Tianxin** - College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Peking University <ztxpku@qq.com>

CAMPUS MAP

Getting to the campus:

Wing Lung Bank Building (*WLB 206, 2/F*), or Lam Woo International Conference Centre (*NAB 211, 2/F*), *Shaw Campus, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong*

By MTR system: Kowloon Tong MTR Station is the closest to the University. Then, you can choose either one as follows:

1. <u>On foot</u>: please follow the map as below. Go out of the exit A2 (MTR), then walk along Waterloo Road, then turn to Junction Road, where you can find the main entrance of Shaw Campus. It might take 10-15 minutes.

2. <u>Green Minibus No. 25M</u>: From there, you can take Green Minibus No. 25M to the Shaw Campus. The Minibus Terminus is near <u>Exit B2 of the MTR Station</u>. Pay the fare when you board the Minibus. The fare for an adult is HK$4.70. Tell the driver that you would like to get off at Baptist University.

3. <u>Taxi:</u> you may take a taxi from just outside Exit B2 of the MTR Station. The taxi fare is about $25.
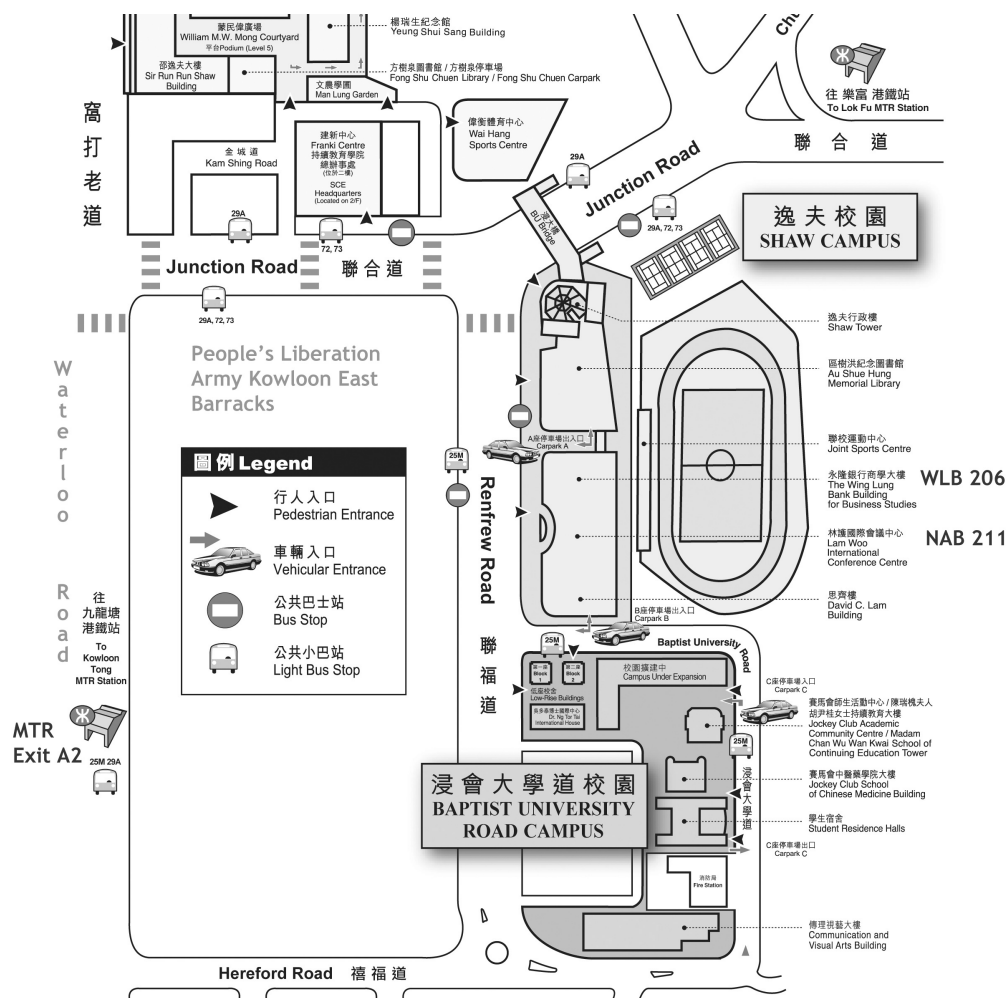
By bus (from the hotel):

There is an alternative way to take a bus to get to Kowloon Tong, and then walk to the venue.

1. <u>Bus No. 81C or 87C:</u> Please go to Park Lane Shopper's Boulevard, Nathan Road, Tsim Shai Tsui, you can take a bus No. 81C or 87C and get off at Kowloon Tong Railway Station. These 2 bus routes are same, and the fare is $7.8 and $8.2 respectively.

2. <u>On foot:</u> after getting off at Waterloo Road, you are located outside the schools (<u>Holy family Canossian School, etc</u>). Then go across the pedestrian overpass, and please follow the map to walk to the venue, around 10 minutes.