

 [cross reading of two IP articles by Louise Sundararajan](#) by Louise

S. [2015, May 18]

Dear All,

Attached please find the two papers I meant to comment for some time. In the first paper, by Gao and Bischooping, a disturbing scenario—the elders fighting for seats on the buses in China-- is explicitly treated. In the second paper, by Permanadeli and Tadié, a disturbing scenario was found in one footnote—the army's involvement in the housing projects resulting in the use of military violence to exterminate the indigenous habitat of the poor and replacing it with modern housing complex for the well to do in Jakarta, Indonesia. The conclusion drawn by Permanadeli and Tadié about Jakarta is applicable to China and other Asian countries on the fast lane of modernization: ". . . those real estates seem so disconnected from the city they are in. It is in these disconnecting realities that Jakarta nurtures their inhabitants about the imaginaries of modern living" (2014, p. 33). The disjointed reality is also there in the paper by Gao and Bischooping.

The paper by Permanadeli and Tadié is about the masking of a disturbing, disjointed reality by the glorious imageries of modern housing projects. A similar theme is found in the paper by Gao and Bischooping, who used discourse analysis to expose the justification of those who refused to give seats to the elderly on the bus. I would like to take this theme further.

For the purpose of un-masking, hermeneutics has an edge of advantage. What Caputo (1987) refers to as "radical hermeneutics" is relevant here: "hermeneutics as an attempt to stick with the original difficult of life, and not to betray it with metaphysics" (p. 1), or science, if I may add. I believe this approach will serve IP well.

Thanks for the stimulating read,

Louise

 [Case study of inter-generational conflicts in China](#)  [Imaginary project](#)

 [Comment by J. I. \(Hans`\) Bakker](#) by Louise S. [2015, May 18]

Dear Louise and other colleagues,

I read the Pemanadeli and Tadié paper quite some time ago. It was recommended to me by a friend and then also mentioned here at IP I think.

What needs to be included is what I am calling the "global rural-urban matrix." There is a rural imaginary just as there is an urban imaginary.

It is not just in Jakarta or Beijing or other cities in Asia.

It is global in the sense that the global modern capitalist financial system and trading system makes certain kinds of social change possible.

When I first went to Indonesia in 1975 the city of Jakarta was just beginning to change significantly. Whereas there had previously only been one luxury hotel in 1975 there were at least a dozen. Our Canadian team stayed at what was then considered a three star hotel. A decade before it had been thought of as at least a four star hotel. (I was perfectly happy there and when on other trips I was told I had to stay at a five star I was not particularly happy about that!. But the team had to all be in the same hotel, which made sense, and the better paid consultants were used to five star business facilities that speeded up the process of getting documents ready, etc.)

Anyone who only visited Jakarta in 1975 and now goes back in 2015, forty years (two decades) later, is in for a big shock. So much has changed. There really is a middle class in Indonesia now. They have cars (which are driven by drivers!) and they live in the kinds of housing complexes featured in the article.

The term "imaginary" is a bit loaded. It stems from Benedict Anderson's book about nationalism. But ALL cultural values and norms are "imaginary." Our images of what is rural are just as imaginary as our images of what is urban.

Perhaps there can be some discussion on this list serve of the Pemanadeli and Tadié paper, and what it implies.

I am attaching a 1995 paper about urban settlements and old traditions of "negara."

Sincerely,

Hans

J. I. Bakker

 [Bakker 1995 Negara Urban Settlements and Environment sustain](#)

