Majority Urban Politics and Lives Worth Living in a Time of Climate Emergencies

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In the hardscrabble cities of the so-called Global South, what constitutes a viable politics of climate mitigation for an urban majority sometimes keeping its head above water and, at other times, creating the semblance of dynamic livelihoods? Despite enduring poverty, there is much about urban life in the South that is not simply reducible to the compounding of hardship and a substantial expansion of material consumption. Over this tremulous in-between hover the substantive signs of deleterious climate change. The interlaced relations among global warming, rising sea levels, floods, and severely polluted and overheated urban atmospheres, as well as the insufficient ways these are often compensated for, present critical challenges to the very capacity to prolong the inhabitation of many urban regions.[1]

Across the world, these challenges become the locus of new modalities of urban activism, where the right to the city is converted into a right to continue living.[2] They also raise important questions as to the contours of life worth living and the extent to which that life is viably framed within the confines of "the human." If much of the politics of climate mitigation is undertaken in terms of preventing the extinction of human life, of constantly invoking the threats of climate change to the very survival of the human species, to what extent does this invocation occlude the ways in which the human has dismissed and foreclosed ways of living for those long deemed ineligible for a fully human life? Of course, the human largely functions as a pragmatically necessary universalism that attempts to provide some workable standard through which diverse persons can

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be accountable to one another beyond the specificities of the context of their inhabitation. The human, as Eugene Thacker alludes, may simply be another way for some other agent of existence to perpetuate itself. But what seems salient here is both how the universalism, defined largely through white and colonial privilege, is both embraced and refused by those who are the primary recipients of judgments regarding the importance of sustaining human life—that is, the poor.[3]

So, how does this invocation, now often expressed through transnational constructions of human rights, relate to the murky everyday life politics of living in urban districts whose heterogeneities, conflicts, and complicities tend to play out in terms that could be construed as indifferent to a specifically human development or sustenance? How does configuring everyday spaces of operation entail an often down-and-dirty series of accommodations, brokering, wheeling and dealing, and tradeoffs aimed not so much at protecting the integrity of particular human identities as at elaborating a worthiness of life based on the capacity to "roll with the punches," to make something out of whatever presents itself, no matter how toxic it might appear? As the disciplinary regimens of urban modernity imposed in postcolonial cities often emphasized the need for a human development predicated on relinquishing what was perceived as the unruliness and incivility of the masses, how do poor districts today attempt to recuperate a sense of the collective forms of living once valued as capable of creating a "real urban life"?

Additionally, what role does land play in these "roll with the punches" everyday lives? As land is embedded in claims and occupancy, and as land administration spurs and politicizes a politics of living whose premise informs and gains advantage in the resultant composition of operational territories, who can do what with whom and when?

These questions and dilemmas will be addressed through considering some of the characteristics and practices of pro-poor politics in the district of Penjaringan in northern Jakarta and the particular ways in which low-income residents occupy land in Bangalore. These small case studies illustrate the complexities entailed in attempting to manage environmental change amid seemingly overwhelming obstacles. The essay then goes on to consider possible reformulations of a life worth living beyond the confines of the normative idioms of the human and what implications this might have for emerging urban politics in the future.

Part One

Walling Off the Sea (and Everything Else)

In the northern Jakarta districts of Muara Baru and Penjaringan, the ground is literally sinking under the feet of the poor. But faced with years

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and years of evictions and threats of eviction, the poor are holding their ground, even as subsidence threatens to undermine substantial political gains.[4] During the heated gubernatorial campaign of 2017, the victorious candidate, Anies Baswedan, managed to capture a critical segment of the "poor vote" by entering into a political compact with Jaringan Rakyat Miskin Kota and the Urban Poor Consortium, two leading coalitions of organizations of the urban poor, that committed the new administration to a policy of no evictions and in situ redevelopment through participatory planning processes. During the previous administration of Basuki Purnama (Ahok) there had been 306 forced evictions, most conducted under the auspices of environmental security.

It is cruelly ironic that poor residents had been targeted in this regard as northern Jakarta has witnessed the prolific rollout of high-end vertical residential developments on former swamp land that extract deep groundwater and harden the riverine deltas that are outlets for the scores of rivers that empty into the Jakarta Bay. These actions not only substantially deprive poor residents of their water supply but also largely contribute to subsidence levels now averaging fifteen centimeters per annum.[5]

The situation has been exacerbated by the fitful starts and stops of major redevelopment projects intended for the Jakarta Bay. In a region plagued with flooding, rising sea levels, subsidence, rampant overdevelopment, reticulations to bulk water supply limited to only about 30 percent of the population, and clogged rivers, it is widely assumed that North Jakarta could literally be wiped out within five decades. While Suharto's New Order regime had toyed with the idea of land reclamation and the building of artificial islands in the Jakarta Bay as part of turning Jakarta into a world-class city as far back as 1995, the reclamation project that has been in the works for the past decade intends to save the city from flooding and is a critical component of Indonesia's climate mitigation strategy.[6]

In what was costed as the world's most expensive infrastructure project, a sea wall is to enclose the bay, turning it into a freshwater reservoir, equipped with an elaborate pumping system to remove effluvium. The enormous costs of the project are to be partially funded through the development of sub-cities on a series of nine artificially created islands, conceded to the city's largest real estate developers. These developers have also been significant funders of the dredging and widening projects of the area's rivers and reservoirs, affecting the poor particularly, as their settlements are frequently situated on riverbanks. While this project is neither proceeding nor completely abandoned, a temporality of constant and uncertain adjustments is aimed simply at buying time.

The seawall and related projects, under the auspices of the National Capital Integrated Coastal Development, is largely driven by a consortium of Dutch consulting firms in collaboration with the Ministry of Pub-

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lic Works and Ministry of Development Planning in a partnership that reiterates many aspects of colonial relations. Because the city of Jakarta retains certain jurisdictional powers over this area in terms of land-use regulations, a range of conflicts among institutional actors and the heavy reliance upon the expertise and capital of the city's major private development conglomerates has led to several incidents of illegal construction, such as the almost overnight construction of nearly three hundred shophouses on Island G in 2017.[7]

North Jakarta has been subject to scores of plans of rectification.[8] For example, Dutch funding drove the formation of the Human Cities Coalition for Jakarta and Manila in 2016, which deployed the language of pro-poor sustainable development to roll out so-called hybrid housing for low-income residents of Penjaringan—a way of amalgamating the designs of self-constructed housing within a small-scale vertical platform.[9] But the project prompted its own debilitating speculative pressures on informal land markets, and many poor residents for which these developments were intended simply withdrew any kind of cooperation, sensing that these were simply a prelude to other transformations that would undermine their economic position and long-term security. There is a general absence of consideration of the ways in which different "kinds of water" are connected to each other, a lack of institutional sense of what water does, and how it ramifies across various social and infrastructure relations.[10]

The problem with many projects of "rectification" or "normalization" is that they are instantiated in an urban fabric of intense heterogeneity in the compositions of both the built and social environment.[11] Even for poor residents, their living situations and physical platforms vary widely, from self-built and makeshift wood constructions clinging to the sides of riverbanks, to densely crowded blocks of three- to four-story "tenements," to makeshift dormitory structures within abandoned warehouses and factories.[12] Penjaringan is a jumble of superblocks, high-end suburban estates, old stocks of social housing largely expropriated by lower-middle-class households even as all kinds of improvised arrangements are required to service flats with water and power, large swathes of well-built, stylish multistory residences, rows upon rows of combined residential-commercial shophouses, as well as the modest, basically well-constructed two-story edifices that house working-class or working-poor families.

Combined with thousands of shops, small factories, workshops, markets, shopping malls, interspersed with all kinds of *terroir vague,* almost every kind of economic activity or social categorization imaginable is packed into a highly dense area. In order for all these multiplicities to coexist under conditions where opportunities for consensual deliberation are minimal or inconceivable, they must all work their way around

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one another, and cultivate all kinds of physical and cultural buffer zones.[13] Political organization is distributed across a variety of authority figures and forms of mobilization that often don't mirror our familiar forms of mobilization and activism. Still an intricate choreography of popular local forces is at work, and it is often difficult to know for sure what it accomplishes beyond enabling many of the urban poor to quietly remain in place.[14] This then becomes a critical conundrum in assessing viable forms of political mobilization for the urban poor. For the sheer intricacy of the intersections among daily transactions, among actors with different resources and capacities, affords the poor a continuous series of "strategic openings" to improve livelihood and social conditions, but without the necessary reversing of structural conditions of their relative impoverishment. Yet, too many political interventions tend to abstract the poor from these heterogenous arrangements, diminishing the horizons of political possibility in the very exigency of making their presence and needs more visible and specific.

Commonality Always to Be Reinvented

Much has been made in cities across the world about middle-class and poor coalitions centered on environmental protection. In Penjaringan, despite many women and youth organizations that cooperate with one another to advocate for rights and better livelihoods, the primary concern of the "majority" is at all costs not to be as poor as those "on the other side of the streets." This tends to militate against "cross-class," "cross-micro-territory" affiliation because one just cannot afford to be seen as having something to do with that which is even infinitesimally "lower" than his or her situation.[15]

At the same time, this does not mean that collaborative activity is not happening all the time.[16] Perhaps with the exception of upper-middle-class and wealthy residents ensconced in the upscale Pluitt subdistrict of Penjaringan, the district is replete with complicities of all kinds, from accessing work, services, favors, and support. The poor and middle class are thoroughly imbricated with each other's lives in the way they avail to each other their relative comparative advantages—in terms of the knowledge of the street, about where certain resources can be obtained, about informal work, about how to fix various problems. For the consolidation of the position of each, what each has to do in terms of putting food on the table, of knowing what is going on across the district, provides certain resources for each that the other does not have ready access to.[17]

These discrepancies, far from constituting only the markers of separation, become modalities for implicit exchange.[18] This situation is aided through retaining some fundamental ambiguities about to whom things

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really belong, whether this is in terms of specific tracts of land or public space. Efforts to render these ambiguities more transparent, to straighten them out, thus undermine an important "platform" of interconnectedness among disparate groups and interests. While these implicit exchanges among diverse residents are an integral aspect of sustaining the residents' presence with one another in ways that temper conflict, their motivation largely remains on the level of protecting self-interest, not the well-being of a "community" as a whole. Here, the poor have an important degree of agency, but not as humans whose lives pale in sufficiency compared to others with whom they share a common district, but rather as a complex field of antagonisms and diverse interests in which the presence and action of the poor constitutes an important element in the working out of affordances, labor, strategic knowledge, and resources. While there are no guarantees against eviction or a massive remaking of the existing landscape, the intricacies of Penjaringan's interweaving of social and built environments has in most respects proven to be an effective shield to a wholesale uprooting of the life of most of the working poor in this district. Deeply embedded in multiple circuits of everyday economic exchange, it is this very embedding, rather than the amplification of the specific needs of the poor themselves, that offers limited guarantees.

Despite long-term efforts to build consortia of the urban poor, to think in terms of such a whole, a more collective "we" raises issues of belonging and entitlement that the political culture of Jakarta has contributed little to working through.[19] This is reflected in popular discussions about where residents are from, where they "belong to." It is rare to hear people say they are from Jakarta even if they have been born and lived there all their lives, for they will inevitably cite the place of origin of a parent or more usually grandparent, even when their exposure to that place may be limited to at most an annual visit during the Eid al Fitr holiday. While all speak an intensely Jakarta dialect of the national language, have no interest in living anywhere else, and are likely to host a slew of distant relatives migrating to the city, they express few ideas about what it would mean to "belong" to Jakarta. While the city is a vast reservoir of diverse ways of being, for which they usually express their appreciation, the horizons of what is important for them usually remain intensely local, even parochial.

A long-term practice, especially among poor and working-class residents, is a begrudging disregard for local transgressions, and at least a feigned indifference to the practices of neighbors that might diverge from their own, as well as a willingness to let them go. In other words, the capacities of people to reside together in close proximity without clear ideas of a sense of mutual belonging have depended upon a willingness not to see the behavior of others as having something to do with one's own

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capacities to carve out a viable life, even as those differences are often converted into the basis of some kind of complementary exchange. So, while the environmental precarities of Penjaringan are enormous and the long-term prospects for continued residency in the area in question, even with plans to move the capital from Jakarta, it is difficult to conceive of a politics that might enjoin its diverse residents into an overt, as opposed to a tacit, form of sustained collective action.

That said, limited campaigns initiated on the part of the basic local governmental units of the district, often as competitions among them, to "green" neighborhoods through the introduction of plants, the sorting of waste, and the appropriate disposal of litter are often successful, as they operate under the guise of extended-family projects. They become supplements to the activities already engaged in on a daily basis, which neighbors always witness and thus are viewed as a kind of immediacy, not challenging the basic presumptions that neighbors have about one another.[20] For crisis is not viewed as something brewing over time, as something that can be anticipated or prepared for, and thus the fact that the ground is literally sinking under the feet of Penjaringan residents, even if overtly registered in recognition of increased flooding, of the appearance of cracks in the wall and on pavements, is perceived as something that can be used against them by more powerful actors. There are parts of Penjaringan along the bay where poor families are constantly being flooded out of their makeshift, box-carton constructions, and yet they constantly return to the "scene of the crime," in part because their choices are limited. But they also return, in part, because this is simply "where they are," as one resident expressed it; they have become part of this landscape in a near symbiotic relationship; they have been extended into it as it extends itself to them.

This, in turn, raises fundamental questions about who and what is to be sustained in any environmental, climate change politics. In the long banal reign of Suharto's New Order, residents were to accommodate themselves to a fundamental disregard of their well-being as the state promised to take care of them. The educational system had no interest in promoting inquiry, in students thinking for themselves. In a generalized formatting of the population, everyone was expected to do the right thing, to focus everything on generating normative appearances for general consumption. There was little pretense for anything that might promote a human flourishing. As such, what does the sustainability of human life mean in such a context in which, for decades, such life was basically reduced to a kind of collective biomass subjected to a vagary of standardized rituals.[21] At the same time, Penjaringan, despite its precarities, is a testament to the skilled practice of a kind of collective politics that produces an interweaving of different ways of life but lacks an incisive vernacular capable of

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representing this capacity to itself. This is why local activists have focused recently on devising nightly roving public dinners across the district, providing an elemental public image of that interweaving.

A Human Project? Brokering a Life Worth Living

The *kampung* has been stereotyped as the village in the city, the reproduction of village mores as the means of social reproduction in an urban context that otherwise did not provide sufficient institutional resources for such social reproduction. It was seen by the elite and middle class as the concrete evidence that the "majority" of Jakarta's residents remained ineligible for "real" urban citizenship. In this imagination, the survival of the *kampung* has been predicated on the absence of any widespread collective sensibility of the characteristics and responsibilities of an "urban human." In other words, these were not residents capable of "possessing themselves," of demonstrating propriety through regarding themselves as a property to be developed and maintained.

The poor have long been vilified as something that must be kept apart, relegated to the *kampung,* something not fully human, in the terms that an urban elite and burgeoning middle class came to understand that designation. As Neferti Tadiar points out, the predominant condition of our age is the war between those who are attempting to remain human at all costs and those who will probably never attain such a status, who simply fight to retain a semblance of a life worth living—something that is rarely construed as a "human project."[22] It is this notion of a life worth living that is often occluded from the framing of climate change politics. For Tadiar, it is not that the poor necessarily refuse the sense of being human, but rather that the aspiration for human dignity and human necessity has often been mobilized to denigrate the very skills and capacities of the poor, that the very ways in which they attempt to do more than survive their "bare" human life is dismissed as insufficiently human. In other words, the poor come to refuse the "refusal," and thus implicitly expand the terrain of human—that is, its ability to extend, even disappear across multiple relations with the more than human landscape or built environment. What might be viewed as toxic or self-destructive is revalorized as a work in progress.

In Penjaringan, the oscillations of class conflict and complementarity, the compaction of heterogeneities into a constantly unsettled interchange of divergent interests and ways of doing things, and the rampant disregard for the well-being of long-term residents manifested by speculative real estate capital and the self-aggrandizing brutalities of an elite all are undertaken with few considerations of human rights or any kind of specifically *human* project. In part stifled by the style of new order gov-

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ernmentality that sequestered a political imagination in terms of increased material consumption and in part simply a by-product of residing in a city with few official affordances, there is a limited horizon of aspiration for most Jakarta residents I have come to know over the years. For the orientation of everyday life is basically geared toward negotiating obstacles—all the things that get in the way of getting the basic things done, of getting from here to there in interminable traffic, where the present needs to be constantly repaired, leaving little for planning for a future.[23] At the same time, aspirations, especially to attain middle-class status, are increasingly perceived as a trap, a lure into indebtedness, and a distraction from efforts to keep all options open.

Part Two

Contesting Dangerous Spaces

Climate change does not simply concern rising sea levels, and the subsequent floods and landslides. Rather an apparatus of governance is produced with planning documents, newspaper articles, and technical studies employing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and GPS data to constitute the details of transformation, of what is potentially dangerous, along with international seminars, workshops, and classrooms where courses on climate change and sustainability are conducted in technorational and evangelical ways. The effort to render territory safe and secure thus contrasts with the more liminal aspects of territory formation that have been crucial platforms for the livelihood of the majority.

For example, many urban spaces embody a "spiritual logic" that is also brought to bear on land claims and development. Stories concerning Indian urban development are replete with how eight lane highways came to a mysterious halt or how the collapse of new buildings were not sufficiently "insured spiritually."[24] "Sacredness" is constructed via the embedded experience of the family rather than the usual assumptions of its being "religious." A particular place may embody an intense symbolic value because it is the site where a mother may have revealed the stories of a long genealogy to her offspring, or where a sudden death might have occurred. When sacred deities are also legal subjects, their status shapes claims to land from logic that spans across both space and time and yet is presented in a highly materialized form every day.

In South Bangalore's trading spaces, wealthy resident welfare associations (RWAs) have mobilized various legal instruments to undermine the residency of mostly a Thigla caste of flower cultivators and sellers who settled in the Maystripalya district during the 1930s. These RWAs of the Bangalore Development Authority were formed in the 1980s, and have long labeled groups such as the Thigla as encroachers that form slums

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that threaten law and order. Low-income and working-class residents that have for nearly a century demonstrated a measure of economic vitality and viability are increasing regarded as constituting what the RWAs label a "wild scape," making territory "dangerous."

The efforts of these RWAs have erased three of five Thigla sacred sites, which are headed by female deities as "seven sisters" that form a territorial configuration organized centrally around a *kere* wetland. This is now bifurcated into a landscaped lake, whose underground includes three stormwater drains emptying the effluvium of the posh 3rd Block into a chain-link-fence-circumscribed marsh impeding grazing once accessed by the Maystripalya settlers. Local Thigla leaders associated with one of the many arms of the Dalil Sangarsh Samiti (DSS), recounting this act as a "holocaust," mobilized their alliances with both elderly corporators and administrators within the Bangalore City Corporation's elected councils to lobby the province-level revenue and irrigation administration, under which such "minor" wetlands fall, so as to restitute the traditional uses of this land.

These contests between a resident welfare association—largely made up of US returnees, NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) attempting to recreate their Florida and Californian dreams—and differently rooted Thigla prompt the latter to initiate "upgrades" of their own. Here a cluster of concrete-block shack housing draws on "scheme" funds to cater to what the Thigla leadership sees as ways to relieve congestion within Maystripalya. Concrete paved lanes are densified by lines of plastic cans that store a day's supply of water from single pipelines. The pipelines, the concrete paving, and now the newly built shacks reflect Thigla politicization of administrative spaces. The shacks are of course useful to address the overcrowding within the core settlement. But these are also intended to safeguard the land as a territorial extension against the incursions sought by the 3rd Block RWA to transform wetlands into "lakes" proposed as eco-zones. An eight-foot-high wall surrounds the concrete shacks.

A key symbol of this reclamation of territory is a distinctive memorial to the renowned Dalit intellectual and civil rights campaigner B. R. Ambedkar that lies beyond the concrete-wall shacks and their containing wall. Its location defines the northern part of a muddy walking path around the marshy part of the remaining wetland. Technically, the memorial with its powerful caste connotation is a warning to the mostly upper-caste RWAs and their morning walkers using this path for jogging. This is on land still administered by the minor irrigation department that largely relishes maintaining the last shreds of legitimacy to do so. While the claims made by the elite RWAs rely on cartography (maps and plans, surveys, and the landscape plan to reclaim this space as an "ecological commons"), those by the Mastripalya residents are ensconced in the world

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of the Ambedkar aura and artifacts, of copper plates given by the British colonial administration to the settlement founder in return to his services, one of which, ironically, was to survey the outer precincts of Bangalore.

The Ambedkar memorial, shaded as a sitting space for lovers and a meeting point for local youths and leaders, can also be read as a politics of using religious shrines to safeguard against demolition. It is not clear whether this will be viable. Further north, Viveknagar, located as Koramangala edges central Bangalore's Victoria Layout, has witnessed repeated demolitions and evictions. Originally a marshland, and in some parts still so, a *kere* was filled up to form the National Games Village but also where poorer settlers were moved as the third resettlement of those affected by a series of evictions in the urban core. At the heart of Viveknagar is a new mall and office complex, encircled by low-income homes, shops, evangelical churches, another, larger Ambedkar shrine, and several temples housing "local" deities with their protective Naga Cobra hooded icons. The priest of the cobra shrine told us that these sacred places form a "fence" against demolitions.

Across northern Bangalore, protective deities encircle the major *keres* that now lie converted into lakes, which become the basis of experimenting with different forms of management and serve as proof that municipal authorities are attempting innovative ways of governing but without these experiments being used to inform a broader set of sites and issues.[25] The *keres* that surround Bangalore, far from being pristine, instead form part of complicated set of eco-agro practices that are spatialized in temporal ways. This includes a shifting territory around the core wetland that as a fluid territory is designated for multiple and sequential uses: the drying of agricultural products, the collection of silt via silk dredging, and fishing.[26] They are hardly "informal" but have long been embedded into village council administrative procedures reflected in titles and also moved around to other parts of the administrative apparatus, built over and merged, and at times replaced by other procedures.

Although individual village and municipal councils have long shaped and internalized these territorial practices, the interlinked wetlands get reterritorialized in the expanding interactions among multiple developers and village and municipal councils. They take the form of settlement extensions, special economic zones, plots for public housing, as well as high-end "gated communities," crisscrossed and often intersected with expressways or smaller roads. These shape intense contestations between different administrative-politico sectors: master planning and mega-project development confront and overlap with extensions of infrastructure and services to expanding low- and mixed-income settlements carved within village boundaries, which themselves oscillate according to different administrative jurisdictions. The valorization of real estate

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potentials, mostly by RWAs, municipal authorities, developers, and even sometimes by low-income communities, is a critical driver in remaking territory. This is not just in terms of inward flows of large capital investment both domestic and foreign.[27] There are also hundreds of small land developers that partner with village clans to play the land market by developing cheap rental walkup blocks catering to the lower- and middle-end IT workers seeking employment in Bangalore's second "IT corridor."

These real estate surpluses fuel an important measure of political autonomy to village councils and residents, who also subdivide and lease out larger agriculture parcels to contest, via their long-honed connections within administrative and judicial circles, actions by the planning authority that seek to expropriate land to form special economic zones and public, mass housing. However, it would be a mistake to view real estate as the only driver and logic. When the Maystripalya Thiglas used the term "holocaust" in referring to the RWA appropriation of their wetland, they referred to the threat posed to territorial practices that have given meaning to their lives through the rituals connected to specific *kula* (clan) and *gram* (patron) *devathas* (deities) that bring them together. The territorial usurpation is reinforced by the way in which English-speaking Koramangala 3rd Block RWAs derogate the Thigla language as the sounds of dogs barking as a means of legitimating their reluctance to engage in negotiations around land use with them.

While low-income residents, especially those emplaced in particular areas for many decades, are attentive to the changing ground that they inhabit—that is, the vicissitudes of human-induced climate change—they are also wary of the modalities of rectification that put the onus of radical life changes largely on them. For those who have long depended on straddling the murky boundaries between rationality and irrationality, transparent planning/accountability and often murky backroom deals deep within administrative and political bureaus, and between the apparent clarity/definitiveness of law and regulation and the ambiguous productions of multiple and countervailing legitimacies, policy directives based on climate exigencies may have little traction within majority communities. They may be construed as more threat than promise.

Faced with the prospect of emergencies that seem to leave little room for negotiation, more extensive climate activisms will emerge from the grassroots of cities such as Bangalore only by amplifying the negotiability of the shape of needed transformation. For negotiability is at the heart of the capacity for improvisation, and improvisation upon existent, usually discordant urban spatial arrangements of diverging logics, finance, class interests, speculations, and land uses is the only viable process to work toward urban climate justice. Major infrastructural investments and reorganization energy systems are of course necessary. But in cities

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like Jakarta and Bangalore, the production of space has always entailed a messy politics of negotiation, and it is the rollout of advanced technical and computation systems, often in the name of responding to climate emergency, that threatens to close down negotiability.

Conclusion

A critical question in this time of climate emergency is the extent to which it is important to retain a sense of humanity at all costs. For if the possibility to be human, as a self-reflecting, autonomous subject demonstrating a capacity for free will, is that which is to be defended, then it cannot separate itself from the possibilities of war. If the city has been the locus for the constitution of the very notion of "the human," then it required a population that was excluded from the possibility of being human. The capacity to reflect, deliberate, and invent, all tropes closely associated with the notion of a human that possesses no fundamental nature or character beyond that which can be invented, required a substrate of persons that indeed did have a definitive nature, as beasts of burden, as sheer labor.

Historically, as that sheer labor "comes into its own," struggles against the presumptions of its own absence of eligibility, everyday "wars" of position become inevitable, as humanity is experienced as privilege in *relation* to something else, and has to be demonstrated in relation to a nonhuman capable of acknowledging that privilege. Of course this is a war in which the dispossessed are always at a disadvantage, and while the aspirations to be included in the realm of the human on their own terms provide a platform of legitimation for such struggles, as well as a potentially unifying objective, the dilemma has been how to circumvent the need to be human, in its imposed form, in order to have a life worth living. This life worth living has, for an urban majority in the Global South, been attained not so much from a sense of human flourishing but from a mangle of negotiations and deals that have managed to engender a mangle of spiritual, commercial, residential, socially promiscuous, intensely contested landscapes of inhabitation. In other words, it was more important to produce settings where daily life required a continuous "updating" of individual sensibility and performance, of what one could be as a shifting composite with others, rather than securing a sense of an integral self.

In the mangle that is Penjaringan and Maystripalya, it is difficult to criticize the ways in which the political organizations of the poor are not exercising their strengthened capacities for climate mitigation objectives. They have increasingly entered into a larger political fray, as candidates for various offices come to seek their endorsement and offer promises of a better future. They position the poor as habitants tending to the environmental surrounds, keeping riverbeds clean, spearheading a local economy

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that recycles waste, powering their existence from microgrids, and bringing to public attention not so much their rights as the impoverished but their capacities to live sustainably on precarious terrain.

As such, they have managed to secure increased volumes of financial resources, even as these tend to particularize certain areas and actors as residents with enhanced privileges. Although important, there is nothing new about this politics, and it is unclear how it impacts or folds in the long-honed capacities of different domains of Penjaringan and Maystripalya to silently and implicitly extend themselves to each other. This dilemma certainly does not obviate the importance of patient and incremental interventions that attempt to provide more efficient and sustainable urban services to poor residents. It does not obviate the ways in which increasing the territories of operation for the poor—enhanced articulations among their economic activities and practices of caretaking and networking—might enable them to define the dispositions of spatial development away from the avarice of big developers.

Yet many community-level interventions undertaken for climate mitigation tend to close down spaces of interchange, as have been operative in many Global South communities via an imposition of fixity, measurability, and transparency, involving a variety of institutional actors, from consulting firms, NGOs, university-based institutes, think tanks, and even activists. The near obsession with mapping and surveying feeds data-management services that reinforce rationalities based on "evidence-based policy." Coupled with GIS and GPS cartographic systems, land functions are more precisely categorized, recalling colonial practices, and complex social claims to land and resources are formatted into singular property forms—all of which aid and abet the prospects for the future resettlement of the poor regardless of the political settlements now operative.

Such orientations point to a shift away from negotiability to calculation as the essential method for determining the value of life practices. Establishing multiple parameters of efficiency and viability subject to continuous monitoring and assessment replaces processes of adaptability to how specific contexts experiment with their own identifies and functions. Ever more encompassing systems of interoperability that interrelate various data streams, profiles, and histories to determine predilections, probable outcomes, and eligibilities based on an individual's relative standing with an enlarged pool of others determine the viable and worthiness of particular courses of action. Not only is the human as a locus of self-reflection and autonomy being increasingly dispensed with in this process, but it is increasingly converted into a particular status of privilege and eligibility that must be defended not through demonstration but all the more extensively through techno-scientific rationales.

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Notes

1. Shatkin, "Futures of Crisis."
2. Tomasa and Setijadi, "New Forms of Political Activism."
3. Dekeyser, "Pessimism, Futiity, and Extinction."
4. Abidin, Henri, and Gumilar, "Land Subsistence of Jakarta"; van Voorst, "Formal and Informal Flood Governance."
5. Octivianti and Charles, "Disaster Capitalism?"
6. Thompson, "A Dutch Garuda"; Salim, Keith, and Fisher, "Maladaptation on the Waterfront"; Wade, "Hyper-Planning Jakarta."
7. Colven, "Understanding the Allure."
8. Putri and Rahmanti, "Jakarta Waterscape"; Goh, "Urban Waterscapes."
9. Lin and Moon, "Negotiating Time."
10. Putri, *Black Water*; Furlong and Kooy, "Worlding Water Supply"; Kooy, Walter, and Prabaharyaka, "Inclusive Development."
11. Putri, "Sanitizing Jakarta."
12. Kusno, *After the New Order*; Leitner and Sheppard, "From Kampungs to Condos?"
13. Harjoko and Adianto, "Topology and the Web"; Tilley, Elias, and Rethel, "Undoing Ruination in Jakarta."
14. Kusno, *After the New Order*; Kusno, "Power and Time Turning."
15. Budiman, "The Middle Class and Morality Politics."
16. Lobina, Weghmann, and Marwa, "Water Justice."
17. Padawangi, "Reform, Resistance, and Empowerment"; Padawangi, "Building Knowledge."
18. Kusno, "Power and Time Turning."
19. Leitner, Colven, and Sheppard, "Ecological Security."
20. Mulyana, *Decent Work in Jakarta*; Padawangi, "Building Knowledge."
21. Kusno, "The Post-Colonial Unconscious."
22. Tadiar, *Remaindered Life*.
23. Rukmana, "Indonesian Spatial Planning"; Savirani and Aspinall, "Adversarial Linkages."
24. Aljunied, "Sufi Cosmopolitanism"; Benjamin, "The Multilayered Urbanization."
25. Baindur, "Bangalore Lake Story."
26. D'Souza and Nagendra, "Changes in Public Commons"; Patil et al., "The Story of Bengaluru's Peripheries."
27. Goldman, "Speculative Urbanism."

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