/home-making and house building in the poor settlements:
towards a framework to study self-help housing

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presentation

• introduction
• theory of home
• understanding process of home-making
• the motivation for making home
• processes and programs of making home
• home-making as a continuous process
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INTRODUCTION (1)

- Overview of Bandung and its informal urban settlement
- The complex issues related to housing procurement of the poor
  - Land
  - Shelter construction
  - Services or finance
- Housing of the poor: home making and/or house building

THEORY OF ‘HOME’ (2)

- Definition of home:
  - Home is considered to consist of the history and memories of the family and is the storehouse for the physical, social, psychological or emotional wealth of its occupants (Lawrence 1987, 1991)
  - Home is thus made in the process of living and is in a constant process of consolidation and transformation (Habranken 1983)
  - Home means the location where one ‘dwells’ and which enable one to claim a sense of belonging (Heidegger 1954)
  - Home is a place to return to, a place to defend against intruders and a place to contain one’s belongings (Bachelard 1964)
  - Home is a much more restrictive and place-based idea than dwelling. The idea of home signifies the location in which the main activities of daily life are conducted and therefore symbolically have meanings Seagart (1985)
  - Home is the attachment that binds the entities of physical enclosure, social relations and psychological feelings Canter (1977)
The differ of homes and houses: a ‘place-based’ concept
- house relates importantly to the physical object and its location
- home relates to a wide range of geographical scales: to land, house, district and country

Four important aspects of home (in dealing with the issues of housing and dwellings):
- Most people, irrespective of social characteristics hold conceptualizations of home and place and employ these concepts to express the experiences of being rooted in either domestic or other locations (Cantor 1977).
- Place and home are concepts that cut across cultural geographical and disciplinary boundaries and therefore enable the establishment and synthesis of a comprehensive understanding generated through different disciplines (Dovey 1985b).
- Place and home are common concepts which enable the elimination of the gaps in the conceptions between professionals and ordinary people (Dovey 1985b).
- The quality of the built environment is inherently related to the opportunities available for the appropriation of space, so building identity with place and making home (Dayaratne 1992).

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF HOME-MAKING (3)

- Home-making is a fundamental activity which secures an individual in the world within the universe of space, things, people and events in which he or she exists → underlying goal of all housing process
- Two case studies of informal urban settlements in Bandung:
  - First the urban villages of ‘sablon and Anor creative industry’ in Gang Gagak, Jalan Suci, Bandung; was an upgraded settlement
  - Secondly squatter settlements in ‘rumah susun Industri Dalan’ nearby Stasiun and Pasar Ciroyom, Bandung was a relatively new ‘revitalized’ settlement.
- Method of data collection: recording of testimonies to explore the residents’ housing histories, actions and aspirations (Kellett 2000). These respondents households were selected using snowballing sampling techniques
  - interviews and visual sorting tasks with 52 and 36 households in the particular settlements
  - questionnaires in one of the settlements for extended periods to observe and document the processes of home-making, house construction and consolidation.

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Location of Case Studies in Bandung

The Characteristics of two case-study areas:

- Settlements that developed over a period of about 50 years on the Bandung city.
- Houses were initially constructed using earth and waste materials salvaged locally and from the garbage yards of the city.
- Densities were high as many of the houses accommodated families of two or three generations in segmented spaces.
- The settlements grew and evolved to reflect the complex socio-politics of a constantly expanding population, giving rise to a spontaneous order of space, routes and alleyways and social networks that were sometimes strained, undesirable and unhealthy.
The majority of the housing supply in many informal housing areas in Bandung:

- has been through collective, illegal and frequently violent invasions of land on which are erected poorly, temporary shelter made largely from recycled materials.
- gradually consolidate, as the residents incrementally construct houses of permanent materials, install infrastructure services and adorn them with their belongings to make home for themselves (Kellett 1999; 2005).
- the processes of home-making are the underlying forces that motivate people, the intentions and purposes behind their actions, and the roles played by individuals and institutions.
- some kinds of ‘homes’ were created at the very earliest stages of the settlement process
- the ways in which land is utilized and how materials and objects are employed to define and construct important places. (these material and non-material assimilations that can be seen as the manifestation of home which cannot be understood without recognition of the underlying forces)

THE MOTIVATION FOR MAKING HOME (4)

- Activated and complemented by transformation from the position of homelessness to the establishment of a full sense of home
- The motivations for making home by the desire:
  - to own through the acquisition of a piece of ground.
  - to acquire and conform to popular images and conventions.
  - for social acceptance, social respect and personal dignity.
  - to order and arrange space to fulfill household needs.
  - to form a community
to own

- The culture of the powerful socio-psychological force is attachment to land:
  - It changes the status of the family (unrootedness to rootedness, squatter to residents, temporary to permanent)
  - It invests authority and control of poser relations in the society

"The desire to own, the acquisition of a piece of ground has added by providing a level of stability and offering residential security and the possibility of passing something on to their children."

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to confirm to dominant images and conventions

- It represents social class, ex. rumah susun Industri Dalam: images of the dwellings of the underclass

"A term home is not only perceived as the amount space enclosed within walls. It also has to confirm to popular images, which indicate status, a way of rising up the social ladder and an ability to acquire and conform to accepted tastes."

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### Social Acceptance, Social Respect and Personal Dignity

- In gang gagak and jalan suci: through the furniture within the house.
- In rumah susun Industri: recreate the settlement forms of the villages where they have come from.

> "To achieve social acceptance, resources and efforts have been employed to satisfy 'image and appearance needs', sometimes before resolving practical questions of space and quality.”

### To Order and Arrange Space to Fulfill Family Needs

> The desire to order and arrange space to fulfill family needs.

> The establishment of divisions between private and public spaces to the articulation of specific places for individual family members.

> "The desire to order and arrange space to fulfill family needs.”
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- The urban poor lifestyle and survival is highly dependent on sharing:
  - Kinship clustering facilitates the shared use of streets, open areas and common facilities.
  - Home and the entire settlement is perceived as 'ours' and thus 'home of the community'.
  - The forces behind the layout of settlements, houses, orientations and spatial linkages are thus community-oriented and encourage social interactions which enhance a sense of home.
  - Invisible boundaries exist which can be crossed by insiders without violating the 'rules'.

The desire to form a community. Such kinship clustering facilitates the shared use of streets, open areas and common facilities. The entire settlement is perceived as 'ours' and the home of the community.

Making a spatial structure for habitation and dwelling

- Acquisition of land and construction of an extendable house (sites histories, meanings and values).
- The design of house: providing settings for social relations, articulated in a spatial structure to be 'owned and occupied' by individual members of the family overlaid upon functional needs.

Filling the house with 'things': personalizing space

- Things that represent the values, affiliations, identities and aspirations of the dwellers.
  - Furniture will be obtained for utilitarian purposes and to define space, the role of representation can be important.
  - Utility may become secondary to the symbolic if and when priorities are to be worked out.
- Imitation and follows not only the trends picked up from conventional urban neighborhoods but also through the media and commercial activities which generate and transmit them through informal vendors. These are processes which link poor urban dwellers and the urban middle class home.

Forming a family dwelling

- Home for the urban poor: making a home is synonymous with making a family and this link between family and home.
  - In rumah susun Industri Dalam, for example, a one-bedroom house was occupied by two or three families each having established 'their home-places' within a room, except for the shared kitchen.
  - In the Gang Gagak, Jalan Suci sharing of houses was very unusual. Households with larger dwellings would not consider renting out space as all families valued their independence even if it meant living for long periods in very basic and substandard shelter.
• Establishing a network of places: home as the centre of a universe of places
  — For the urban poor these networks may be as important as the house itself, because it is these networks that offer opportunities to construct the urban community that they seek, an identity created through home-making processes

• Performing rituals to sanctify home
  — In many non-western societies, this involves sanctification of the ground through a series of rituals (a traditional way of engaging the protection available to a family through cosmic energies and expelling the potential of evil presence)
    • ‘before cutting the first sod of earth’,
    • laying the foundations,
    • starting the laying of bricks,
    • the first placement of roof timbers,
    • fixing of the first door frame,
    • passing through the door

“For the poor dwellers, however, the home must be completed before the house because it is the sense of home that offers them the strength to attach and to dwell” (Heidegger 1954)
CONCLUSION (7)

- The processes and practices of home-making are universal, despite important cultural specificities.
- In surrounding *rumah susun* Industri Dalam,
  - The predominant means to acquire a building site has been to invade and occupy state land in the absence of affordable decent housing in the city.
  - The incremental invasions, subject to the constraints of social hierarchy, power and negotiations, resulted in informal settlements comprising ad-hoc subdivisions and a curious separation of public and private spaces.
  - The resulting spontaneous order often reflects the dominant forms of order of the surrounding urban areas.
  - Homes came into being through occupation over time.
  - By defending them when confronted with intruders and government eviction orders, the inhabitants consolidate a sense of belonging.
  - Homes however cannot fully develop in the presence of cognitive uncertainty despite the fact that people had lived there for a long time and had made a home within the constraints of illegality.
- In *rumah susun* Industri Dalam, in contrast,
  - The settlement form follows a rigid conventional geometry conforming to dominant norms.
  - The settlers believe this form is important to eventually achieve respectability and full acceptance.

In both case study areas, Gang Gagak, Jalan Suci and *rumah susun* Industri Dalam the struggle goes on between homelessness and home-making; a process which cannot be fulfilled without supportive interventions to remove external obstacles such as affordable access to land ownership.

The obstacles to home-making: a need to remove the obstacles to the construction of socially relevant houses vs the impact on home-making.

The only low-income housing can also provide supportive contexts for occupation and dwelling and thus for making home: housing practices must struggle towards a greater degree of accommodation of shared meanings and definitions of their perceived spatial structures and formations.

The creation of home and a sense of home must be accomplished in parallel
  - to recognize the significance of home-making even for low-income housing
  - to engage important non-material issues in the process of housing provision

A sense of home is an important and fundamental experiential component of “living in the world”, without which life makes less sense and has less value even with materially complete dwellings.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


THANK YOU

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