



## Globalizing capitalism's raggedy fringes: thinking through Jakarta

Eric Sheppard

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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## ABSTRACT

Thinking through Jakarta, this paper explores the possibility of decentring understandings of conditions of possibility for economic transformation across the post-colony by shifting the optic away from European-style Capitalism. Colonialism, racism and slavery enabled the hegemony of European-style Capitalism, characterized by nation-states and the rule of law. The bulk of the theorizing within geographical political economy elides alternative possibilities because it views the world from this perspective. Conceptualizing capitalism's raggedy fringes (informality, state actions and the more-than-human world) as more-than-Capitalist practices with the capacity to unravel Capitalist norms, positional conjunctural analysis can provide the methodological space to think beyond the North Atlantic, creating space for envisioning alternatives. Operationalizing these claims, this paper argues that Indonesia's political economy exceeds variegated European-style capitalism, and that urban land transformations within Jakarta are deeply shaped by its raggedy fringes of elite and grassroots informality and more-than-human hydrological processes of flooding and water management.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

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## KEYWORDS

provincializing capitalism, more-than-capitalist practices, positional conjunctural analysis, informality, Jakarta

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## 摘要

资本主义全球化的破败边缘：深入思考雅加达。 *Area Development and Policy*。通过对雅加达的情况进行深入分析，本文跳出欧式资本主义的视角，探讨了以其他思路理解后殖民地区经济转型可能性条件的可能性。殖民主义、种族主义和奴隶制成就了以民族国家和法治为特征的欧式资本主义的霸权地位。地理政治经济学领域的大多数理论阐释由于只从地理政治经济学的视角去看待世界，从而忽略了其他可能性。通过将资本主义的破败边缘（非正规性、国家行为和不限于人类的世界）定义为有能力瓦解资本主义常态的不限于资本主义的惯例做法，位置情势分析可以为跳出北大西洋的思维桎梏提供方法论空间，为设想其他可能创造空间。遵循以上主张，我认为印度尼西亚的政治经济形势超出了各式各样欧式资本主义的范畴，雅加达的城市土地转型深受其精英与草根民众非正规性的破败边缘和洪水及水资源管理不限于人类水文过程的影响。

## 关键词

资本主义地方化；不限于资本主义的惯例做法；位置情势分析；非正规性；雅加达

**CONTACT**  [esheppard@geog.ucla.edu](mailto:esheppard@geog.ucla.edu)

Department of Geography, University of California, Los Angeles, CA, USA.

**RESUMEN**

Globalización de los flecos raídos del capitalismo: análisis detallado de Yakarta. *Area Development and Policy*. En este artículo se analiza la posibilidad de descentrar los conceptos de las condiciones de posibilidad para una transformación económica en el periodo poscolonial de Yakarta desviando la mirada del capitalismo al estilo europeo. El colonialismo, el racismo y la esclavitud permitieron la hegemonía del capitalismo al estilo europeo, caracterizado por Estados nacionales y el Estado de derecho. La mayor parte del proceso de teorización en una economía política geográfica elude posibilidades alternativas porque asume el mundo desde esta perspectiva. Conceptualizar los flecos raídos del capitalismo (informalidad, acciones estatales y el mundo más que humano) con prácticas más que capitalistas con la capacidad de revelar las normas capitalistas, y un análisis coyuntural de posicionamiento pueden aportar el espacio metodológico para pensar más allá del Atlántico del Norte, creando un espacio para alternativas visionarias. Al poner en práctica estos argumentos, sostengo que la economía política de Indonesia supera al capitalismo variado de estilo europeo y que las transformaciones del suelo urbano en Yakarta están profundamente marcadas por sus flecos raídos de élite e informalidad comunitaria y procesos hidrológicos más que humanos del control de inundaciones y la administración del agua.

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

provincialización del capitalismo, prácticas más que capitalistas, análisis coyuntural de posicionamiento, informalidad, Yakarta

**АННОТАЦИЯ**

Обтрепанные края глобального капитализма: осмысливая Джакарту. *Area Development and Policy*. Осмысливая пример Джакарты, эта статья исследует возможность переосмысления экономических преобразований в пост-колонии, отходя от европейского понимания капитализма. Колониализм, расизм и рабство обеспечили гегемонию капитализма в европейском стиле, характеризующегося наличием национальных государств и верховенством права. Географическая политэкономия не замечает альтернативных возможностей, поскольку рассматривает мир с этой точки зрения. Концептуализация обтрепанных краев капитализма (неформальность, действия государства и более-чем-человеческий мир) как более-чем-капиталистических практик, позволяет распутать капиталистические нормы, а позиционный конъюнктурный анализ обеспечивает методологическое пространство для мышления за пределами Северной Атлантики, позволяя увидеть альтернативы. Руководствуясь этими утверждениями, я утверждаю, что политическая экономия Индонезии выходит за рамки видоизмененного европейского капитализма, и что городские земельные преобразования в Джакарте сформированы неформальными отношениями элит и низов и более-чем-человеческими гидрологическими процессами наводнений и управления водными ресурсами.

**КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ СЛОВА**

провинциальный капитализм, более-чем-капиталистические практики, позиционный конъюнктурный анализ, неформальность, Джакарта

**INTRODUCTION**

Globalizing capitalism has been shaping the uneven geographies of globalization and development since at least the year 1500 – geographies that themselves dialectically reshape the spatio-temporal trajectories of globalizing capitalism. Since the late 1970s, triggered by initiatives connecting the United States with the UK to form its centre of calculation, we find ourselves embedded in a neoliberal variant of European-oriented globalizing capitalism whose discourses of best practice and of providing a rising tide that lifts all boats have felt

quite hegemonic, until recently. Of course, the realities of uneven geographical development meant that this rising tide was swamping many boats, with those encountering its costs actively coming together in and across place to mobilize against it. These mobilizations have included protests against structural adjustment across the post-colony in the 1980s and 1990s (jumping scale, after the 1997 financial crisis, to state-led rejection of, and hedges against, Washington Consensus policies), anti-World Trade Organization (WTO) protests, the multi-scalar World Social Forum network, and the like. Yet, global elites proved able to truncate and dismiss such resistance, reproducing discourses of neoliberalizing globalization, on the grounds that impoverished bodies and places were the result of their failure to neoliberalize properly (to practice 'good' governance and act responsibly and entrepreneurially).

The 2008 economic crisis, stemming as it did from the quintessential heart of 21st-century neoliberalization (global finance's 'twin towers': the City of London and Wall Street), threatened to undermine these discourses and practices. No longer could the periodic global financial crises – a fact of life under post-1945 globalizing capitalism – be blamed on failing places and people located in the project's margins (working classes, people of colour, peasants and 'underdeveloped' territorial economies). Civil society protests resonated globally around the 'Arab Spring' and the Occupy movement. John Maynard Keynes briefly was back in vogue after 2008, with nation-states – in geographically variegated ways – experimenting with counter-cyclical infrastructure spending, anti-privatization initiatives, expansions of the money supply ('quantitative easing') and expanded social welfare. Debates about whether a post-neoliberal era was dawning – whether Keynes represented a trip back to the future – foundered, however, as these initiatives stalled: Rumours of neoliberalism's demise proved greatly exaggerated.

Yet the year 2016 brought a sea change, undermining the taken-for-grantedness of neoliberalizing capitalist globalization. The emergent resistance came from the political right and left within the United States and the UK (the heart of neoliberal globalizing capitalism), and particularly from struggling white populations: located in communities experiencing deindustrialization, persistent unemployment and too few state-led ameliorative initiatives; frustrated by finding themselves in a post-political era in which representative democracy seems pointless; and concerned about the erosion of white privilege. Turning to the ballot box to 'vote the bums out', they elevated Donald Trump to global power and ejected the European Union from the UK. With resistance now coming from across the political spectrum in the heartlands of global economic hegemony, neoliberal globalization suddenly has been put into question worldwide. This is a liminal moment, one when the mission of *Area, Development and Policy* (ADP) feels particularly timely:

ADP . . . recognizes that research should examine the role of diverse national and regional institutional configurations and values, and that theories should derive from the experiences of these countries and regions and not necessarily from theories derived from the possibly exceptional experiences of Northwest Europe and North America.<sup>1</sup>

Emergent American and British nationalist sentiment is framed as opposing globalization *tout court*, equating its most recent neoliberalized manifestation with all kinds of globalization (a phenomenon beginning with the movement of humans out of Africa, peaking approximately 50,000 years BCE). Yet, this is just one regulatory era of capitalist globalization, and globalization has (and will) come in many other spatio-temporal varieties (colonialism/slavery, state-led capitalism, Marxist calls for the workers of the world to unite, the another world is possible movement, China's Belt and Road Initiative, etc.). Some are top-down projects of nation-states and global elites; others stem from grassroots initiatives. Some will seem devilish

to far-right nationalist and white supremacist groups; others feel – to them – like a reborn idealized past. Thus, it is worth pausing to reflect on these variants, to ask whether the globalization baby is to be thrown out with its capitalist bathwater, and to clear space to take contemporary alternatives seriously.

In the ADP spirit, I seek to interrogate questions of globalization from a place outside its mainstream by thinking through Jakarta. Like any project of deconstruction, my intent to shift the optic, to clear space to imagine and practice alternatives to the taken-for-grantedness of neoliberalizing globalization, must begin by calling into question (provincializing: Chakrabarty, 2000), what we think we know about globalizing capitalism. Drawing on Eric Sheppard's *Limits to Globalization* (2016), the first section of this paper argues that thinking dialectically about globalization means attending to the asymmetric and inequalizing spatial connectivities shaping it, and that this creates new spaces for imagining alternatives. I suggest that how we have come to define capitalism is itself Eurocentric: a European variant of capitalism that was elevated to the global norm in large part through the uneven connectivities of slavery and colonialism from which it has sought to separate itself (Baptist, 2014). Further, the internal dynamics of European capitalism reveal a system that reproduces, rather than is capable of overcoming, socio-spatial inequality. Globalizing capitalism is not ubiquitous best practice, which can function hermetically to align the world with its centre of calculation via endlessly creative ways of expanding its socio-spatial scope. Notwithstanding its seemingly hegemonic presence, it is just one of many alternatives.

The second section of the paper argues that globalizing capitalism's raggedy fringes exhibit their own agency, with the potential to disrupt its apparent hegemony from beyond the pale. I thus challenge the presumption that globalizing capitalism, for good or ill, acts to absorb its constitutive outsides – commodifying and/or undermining more-than-capitalist alternatives. These fringes are all around us, but from a geographical perspective they are particularly visible to those people, and in those places, where globalizing capitalism has most evidently failed to deliver on its fiction of prosperity for all. They are evident in places like Jakarta. More generally, the world region commonly (misleadingly) dubbed 'the Global South', which I refer to here as the post-colony, is an obvious candidate starting point from which to explore these raggedy fringes and assess their implications. For this purpose, I propose that we adopt a form of thinking through place that deploys a positional conjunctural approach: one that takes emergent differentiated socio-spatial positionalities seriously.

The third section, with Jakarta (and Indonesia) as my cognitive and conceptual point of departure and drawing on research we are undertaking there, uses this approach to examine how Jakarta's (and Indonesia's) shifting socio-spatial positionality with respect to globalizing capitalism has engendered people and places that exceed European-style capitalism in multifaceted ways.<sup>2</sup> At the national scale, Indonesia's hybrid capitalist/oligarchic political economy has emerged out of the country's struggle for independence and autonomy from forces dating back at least to Portuguese and Dutch colonialism. At the metropolitan scale, taking land transformations as an example, Jakarta's political economy is riven with informalities, cultural norms and materialities that continually disrupt this local instantiation of globalizing capitalism. Trajectories at these two scales relationally shape one another, particularly given Jakarta's status as Indonesia's largest metropolis and national capital. Tensions persist between those seeking to domesticate Indonesia and Jakarta to the norms of 'late' capitalism, North Atlantic style, and those contesting this (from above and below), with outcomes uncertain.

## THE SPATIO-TEMPORAL INSTABILITIES OF GLOBALIZING CAPITALISM

Much is taken for granted about capitalism: that it was invented in Europe (particularly Britain); that Europe had a comparative advantage as its place of invention; that it globalized

from there; and that it enables the world to be remade in its own image – as the least bad political economic system available to humankind. Critical social scientists are highly sceptical of this closing codicil, but many tend to take these other propositions for granted. Yet, as scholars ranging from Jim Blaut to Doreen Massey and Dipesh Chakrabarty have argued, each of these propositions needs critical interrogation since together they amount to the profoundly non-geographical claim that the history of the world can be reduced to that of Europe (Blaut, 1993; Chakrabarty, 2000; Massey, 1999; Sheppard, 2016). A commonplace implication, drawn by its critics, is that capitalism can only be overthrown by an equally powerful global alternative capable of overcoming its contradictions: Socialism – another European invention (Harvey, 2014). This section briefly critiques this worldview in order to open up space for serious consideration of alternatives from elsewhere.

### How capitalism became European

There is increasing evidence that what we have come to define as capitalist production, capitalists paying workers to produce a commodity for sale at a profit, was already widespread in trading centres spread across Africa, Asia and the Americas before the disruptions of European colonialism (Abu-Lughod, 1987–88, 1991; Blaut, 1993). For example, scholars have traced the rich trading systems spanning the Indian Ocean before their disordering by the likes of the East India Trading Company, and the struggles European colonizers faced to convince Asians and Africans to purchase their wares or work for them (Beckert, 2014; Bose, 2009; Casale, 2010). The period from the 1490s (when Christopher Columbus happened upon the Americas and the Spanish and Portuguese divided the globe between them under the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas) and the early 1800s (by which time capitalism was taking root in Western Europe), has been termed the great divergence (Pomeranz, 2000). With this term Pomeranz (2000) signifies how Europe advanced from being somewhat backward by comparison with the Ming and incipient Mughal dynasties to become the centre of what Wallerstein (1979) dubbed the first world-system (capitalism). In the process, Europeans conspired to de-industrialize India and China, relocating industrialization to Western Europe (Beckert, 2014; Ray, 2011; Williamson, 2006).

It remains common to explain Europe's success in terms of favourable place-based characteristics (e.g., physical geography, politics, culture, inventiveness) that enabled the region to replace the evils of feudalism and slavery with a more humane capitalism (Blaut, 2000). But the real story was quite different. Europeans articulated slavery, racism and war capitalism into a global system that enriched Europe by simultaneously underdeveloping colonized and quasi-colonized territories, constructing asymmetric connectivities that transformed the macro-geography of the world according to their own self-image. The stories Europeans told themselves, and imposed on others (Said, 1978, 1994), amounted to a self-justification of their role as a uniquely civilizing force, marginalizing the colonized (from Ireland to India and the Belgian Congo) as less-than-civilized, in order to justify their less-than-human treatment by self-described liberals (Mehta, 1999; Muthu, 2003; Pitts, 2005). As Rudyard Kipling opined (Kipling, 1899) on the occasion of the US war to colonize the Philippines, it was the white man's burden to 'send your sons to exile. To serve your captives' need'. Slavery, racism and military power enabled Europeans to acquire gold and silver and cheap basic commodities from their colonies, developing the factory system itself in their plantations.

Capitalism was globalized through the transfer of heterogeneous quasi-capitalist production from localities scattered across what is now the post-colony to Europe, and slavery and racism made this possible. Thus, capitalism did not replace colonialism and slavery (*pace* Karl Marx), nor was there simply a transition from feudalism to capitalism. The global deployment of colonialism and slavery, accompanied by racialized European imaginaries and practices

(Baucom, 2005; Goldberg, 2006), made European capitalism possible, but also racial through and through (Robinson, 1983). It is all but impossible to reconstruct how the capitalism that emerged in 19th-century Europe differed from its distant forebears, but one crucial difference stands out. Under the Enlightenment, formalized at the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, Europe's nation-states were accorded sovereignty to organize their territories. Further, Capitalism – as imagined by Scottish, French and English 'political economists' (as they were coming to be known) – seemed to offer a model for how such societies could be organized on secular principles for the benefit of all. Under nation-state rule, laws could be and were put in place – the rule of law, as it has come to be known – to create political conditions of possibility for a Capitalist market economy. Further, organizing an entire territory in this way made it possible for Capitalism to operate at a level of abstraction (the national territorial scale) through which generalized labour values and market prices could be established for commodities.<sup>3</sup> This was the abstraction of Adam Smith's invisible hand articulating the promise of capitalism, David Ricardo's plaudit for free trade, but also Marx's abstract labour and profit-rate equalizing model of expanded reproduction that forms the basis of his critique. It became taken for granted that economies operated at the nation-state scale, that capitalism is European, and that this model is replicable across Europe's white settler colonies (and beyond).

Yet, as geographers long have argued, there is more to the spatialities of capitalism than the nation-state. Further, these emergent spatialities, by creating uneven geographical development, disrupt the internal coherence of a European-style capitalist political economy, including its promise of prosperity for all right-thinking and appropriately behaving people and places.

### Uneven geographical development

Drawing on the conceptualizations of the 19th-century political economists who took its European form as their starting point, this section summarizes the contradictory and unstable socio-spatial dynamics of Capitalist economic change. It is vital to note at the outset that this conceptualization treats Capitalism as if it can be abstracted from the violent history of colonialism, racism and the great divergence described above – as if it were a hermetic system. Setting that problem aside for now, a careful examination of the spatio-temporalities of Capitalism, facilitated by the nation-state-organized rule of law, reveals that it is constitutively unable to deliver on Smith's promise of the invisible hand – even when state institutions play a mediating role. Whereas proponents of Capitalism argue that it can deliver on its promise of equitable development, at least in principle and when states appropriately intervene, the place-based thinking behind this argument is insufficiently geographical and deeply flawed (Sheppard, 2016, 2018). Rather than overcoming what are often presented as exogenous prior conditions of impoverishment, physical geography and underdevelopment (Sachs & McCord, 2017), globalizing Capitalism reproduces socio-spatial inequality and processes of underdevelopment (Frank, 1979).

It is by now common to note that socio-spatial inequality is persistent: resilient in the face of Capitalist globalization (whether state led or neoliberal). Much of the emphasis here has been on conditions in and across places. Neil Smith theorized what he dubbed a seesaw model of uneven geographical development, whereby dynamic and wealth-creating economic growth would switch to and fro between locations – the one prospering as the other stagnates (Smith, 1984). David Harvey highlighted a key dynamic underlying such switching: That local conditions created in place to facilitate Capitalist development, triggering wealth creation, deteriorate over time as technologies evolve and workers agitate for better working conditions. As a result, a place that once had attracted Capitalist investment and capital accumulation becomes one that loses its mojo to now more attractive localities (Harvey, 1982, 2014). In the 1980s, much attention was given to the empirics of such regional economic restructuring

during the emergent crisis of North Atlantic Fordism, de-industrializing what had become centres for unionized mass production. By the 1990s, the same story was being told around the relocation of economic dynamism to the likes of Silicon Valley or southern England. More recently, such analysis has examined the international relocation of industrial production to selected cheaper locations within the less regulated regions of wealthy Capitalist national economies, and across the post-colony.

Yet, a neglected driving force of such uneven geographical development, at least until recently, is the inequalizing effects of the asymmetric more-than-economic connectivities linking places. Accounting for these entails taking seriously the socio-spatial positionality of places and their inhabitants, and how these are shaped by, and shape, such connectivities. I call this connectivity-based thinking. Proponents of the equalizing possibilities of Capitalism have long argued that such connectivities (trade and financial flows, migration, trans-local direct investment and the diffusion of technological know-how) are mutually beneficial (Borts & Stein, 1964; Glaeser, 2008; Siebert, 1969): that interconnected places tend to co-benefit from such connectivities. A classic example is the free-trade doctrine: the claim that unrestricted international trade creates the rising tide that can lift all national boats. If this were the case, connectivities could then be dismissed as a significant contributing factor to uneven geographical development, allowing analysts to focus on place-based explanations (Barca, McCann, & Rodriguez-Pose, 2012; Feldman & Storper, 2018). Capitalism's geographical critics show a similar tendency to focus on place as a determinant of uneven geographical development, rather than connectivities (Sheppard, 2002, 2016). Invoking Marx's (1993 [1857–58]) notion of the annihilation of space by time, or Harvey's (1989) space-time compression, the argument is that the world has shrunk to the point that differences in socio-spatial positionality are of diminishing importance.

This is wishful thinking, however. While the details can be found elsewhere (Sheppard, 2016; Sheppard & Barnes, 2015 [1990]), there are two issues here. First, Capitalist connectivities require an infrastructure – a means of communication/transportation. On the one hand, commodities move through transportation and communications infrastructures, which themselves are increasingly commodified. This is nothing less than the production and sale of accessibility as a commodity (supplemented – decreasingly – by state provision of accessibility as a 'public good'). On the other hand are the financial infrastructures carrying the monetary flows that (in principle – although there is a lot more than this in practice) return to commodity producers the money owed them for the commodities they have set in motion. Treating these infrastructures as endogenous to Capitalism – as a produced geography of networks – we find that their complexity magnifies the instabilities of Capitalism. This reduces the chance that economically motivated actions realize (rational) intended consequences, and undermine some key propositions of aspatial (mainstream, but also Marxist) economic theory.

Second, as they coevolve with Capitalism, these infrastructures shape Capitalist uneven geographical development, favouring some locations relative to others (also in a supposedly post-geographical world of cyberspace).

Third, the Capitalist connectivities made possible by these infrastructures tend to favour some bodies and places (prosperous and powerful centres of calculation) at the expense of others. Consider how commodity trade favours exporters of manufacturing and services at the expense of primary commodity exporters, how migration selectively extracts the most productive residents from places with a lack of local opportunity, how financial flows tend to be directed away from people and places with the greatest cash flow problems, how trans-local investment often favours headquarter locations over branch plant and franchisee locations, and how (Euro-American) laws governing patents enable well-heeled distant Capitalists to deprive local knowledge producers of the financial fruits of their labour. Obviously, the effects of these connectivities are not a one-way street: global production networks may economically benefit



certain peripheral locations while disadvantaging core locations, cores and peripheries periodically shift, and local knowledge producers may benefit from eliding others' property rights. Nevertheless, the tendency of connectivities to impoverish certain bodies and places in order to benefit others cannot be dismissed. Indeed, it is pervasive.

This all has vital implications when we turn to consider alternatives to (European-style, white) Capitalism. If the coevolving, asymmetric and differentially empowered connectivities of globalizing Capitalism undermine the conditions of prosperity for some – including those seeking to follow its rules – in order to underwrite prosperity for others, then alternatives not only seem attractive but also become necessary in order to escape such cumulative causative traps (Myrdal, 1957). It follows that alternatives to globalizing Capitalism cannot be presumed to be undesirable, residual practices – practices that will die out as it brings prosperity to all; these alternatives, good and bad, include both long-standing and emergently necessary forms of both resisting and contesting its norms.<sup>4</sup> If globalizing Capitalism cannot carry all before it, then this abstracted and economic model is subject to internal disintegration. Yet, there is more to understanding alternatives to globalizing Capitalism than the study of its internal dynamics. As Marx also argued, it depends on material and cultural processes seemingly external to it – its 'fictitious' commodities (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]). These occupy globalizing Capitalism's raggedy fringes.

## GLOBALIZING CAPITALISM'S RAGGEDY FRINGES<sup>5</sup>

Much continues to be written about the more-than-capitalist raggedy fringes of globalizing Capitalism. Karl Polanyi (Polanyi, 2001 [1944], p. 76) coined the term 'fictitious' commodities to reference how, even as human bodies and land (and, by implication, the biophysical world more generally) are continually commodified, they disrupt their marketization through their own agency. He saw state intervention as necessary to address such tensions, envisioned as a historically oscillating 'double movement' between marketization and state intervention. Mainstream analyses of Capitalism pay little attention to such processes, deploying arguments that human practices of all kinds can be subsumed within the logic of individual self-interest (Becker, 1973, 1974), and that market mechanisms can tame the more-than-Capitalist aspects of the biophysical world – through carbon markets, taxes and offsets, environmental services, and the like. Marxian accounts take these outsides seriously, as cultural or green economic processes, but nevertheless maintain that globalizing Capitalism is more-or-less successful at working to align them with its centre of calculation. Harvey's (2003, 2006, 2014) notion of accumulation by dispossession (AbD) is a case in point:

What accumulation by dispossession does is to release a set of assets ... at very low ... cost. Overaccumulated capital can seize hold of ... and immediately turn them to profitable use. ... [I]f capitalism has been experiencing a chronic difficulty of overaccumulation since 1973, then the neo-liberal project of privatization of everything makes a lot of sense as one way to solve the problem. (Harvey, 2003, pp. 149–50)

In Harvey's view (tracking the bulk of Marxist thinking about Capitalism), globalizing Capitalism's outsides are necessary to (constitutive of) its self-reproduction: they must continually be colonized and then regenerated in order to defray its internal contradictions. The rapid popularization of AbD speaks to the pervasiveness of this somewhat imperialist conception of how Capitalism's fringes function to maintain its dynamism. Yet, I would beg to differ: AbD is certainly central to how globalizing Capitalism reproduces itself; but these fringes also have lives of their own that work to exceed it. Such capitalocentric thinking runs the danger of overlooking how these fringes are not just constitutive but raggedy: they may have the potential to fray the whole cloth of Capitalism by unravelling it from the outside in.

In this view, the jury is out as to eventual outcomes: Whether mutating, globalizing Capitalism self-reproduces without end, whether it is shoved aside by equally powerful non-capitalist imaginaries and practices or if it is unravelled through a thousand cuts from below, will only be determined through everyday practice in the wild (Callon, 1998). Yet, our conceptual imaginaries and empirical analyses must be opened to these last two possibilities before the question even can be asked, which is the purpose here. I highlight three such raggedy fringes – more-than-Capitalist ‘informal’ economic practices in the domain of civil society; more-than-Capitalist state-led practices; and more-than-Capitalist biophysical processes – also offering positional conjunctural analysis as a means to interrogate how they work geographically.

### Capitalism and informality

A distinguishing feature of territorial economies of the post-colony, reflecting their long-standing marginal socio-spatial positionality within the multifaceted trajectories of globalizing Capitalism, is the particularly pervasive presence of what has come to be dubbed informality. I use informality to describe political economic relations that exceed the ‘rule of law’ of private property, seen as a defining characteristic of Capitalism at least since the writings of Marx. For European-oriented scholars of Capitalism, of all ideological stripes, theoretical analysis generally begins by presuming that capitalism is governed by national legal institutions guaranteeing private property rights to capitalists (over the means of production, generating profit), landlords and resource owners (over land and resources, generating rent), and workers (over their bodies, generating wages and salaries). Yet, this has (again) become subject to question. As Ferguson (2015) notes in his study of labour and distribution, and Hudson (2018) in his explorations of capitalism and illegality, both mainstream and Marxian economic theory presume that Capitalist economic activities link human actors who have been accorded full legal property rights.

Mainstream neoclassical theorists simply presume that any Capitalist territorial economy can be reduced to the formal economy, whose characteristics are a background feature of their theoretical models. These models are driven by hard-core assumptions such as the presumption of individual self-interest (microfoundations), reined in by the invisible hand of (mythical) perfectly competitive Capitalist markets. This gives their theories a normative bent: Capitalism is the least bad political economic system and should prevail. In this view, Capitalism should always be at the centre of our thinking: Nothing else is worthy of our time.

Marxian scholars, while determinedly critical of Capitalism, deploy their dialectical imaginary to attend to how really existing territorial ‘capitalist’ economies exceed this ideal type. Polanyi expanded our imagination, at least historically, from (capitalist) markets to economies of reciprocity and redistribution (Polanyi, 1957). With respect to labour, Ferguson (2015, p. 91) reminds us that Marx himself acknowledged the presence of an urban lumpenproletariat, albeit outside his analysis in *Capital*. At the macro-scale, the 1980s’ ‘articulation of modes of production’ school conceptualized former colonial national territorial economies in terms of the co-presence of, and articulation between, Capitalism and other modes of production (Peet, 1991; Ruccio & Simon, 1986; Spiegel, 1981; Wolpe, 1980). Arguably, these others would include not just Marx’s Eurocentric pre-capitalist modes of production, but indigenous alternatives. (Marx had his own candidate: the Asiatic mode of production.) In this view, a certain heterogeneity prevails: multiple modes of production persist in any territory, interacting with one another. Yet, articulation commonly is presented in terms of a transition, whereby capitalist economic relations are presumed to dominate sooner or later. Such theorists thus conceptualize Capitalism as driven by the logic of continuously expanding its remit, enrolling everything that seems to exceed it through commodification – at least until it founders politically due to irresolvable *internal* ‘foundational’ contradictions (Harvey, 2014). In this

view, informality is dismissed as insignificant and/or a disappearing relic of pre-capitalist political economies. I find this insufficiently dialectical.

Heterodox Marxian work on community economies has challenged the notion of Capitalist hegemony at the local scale, within those European and white settler economies regarded as Capitalism's homeland. This scholarship stresses the neglected, and potentially disruptive, grassroots presence of what Gibson-Graham (1996, 2006) dubbed non-capitalist economic activities and post-capitalist politics. Rejecting the notion that globalizing Capitalism's constitutive outsides exist in a dependent relation of being simultaneously necessary to and reinforcing Capitalism, they conceive of these alternatives as spaces from which to think and act in non-capitalist ways. The community economies school has been accused of treating non-capitalist practices as if they exist outside Capitalism – unaffected by its norms and dynamics, and for giving too much weight to their capacity to disrupt the conditions of possibility of capitalism itself. I agree with the former critique – I see them as more-than-Capitalist rather than non-capitalist – but am agnostic about the latter.

There is a huge literature on informality that I cannot do justice to here. From a mainstream perspective, views of informality vary from seeing it as a barrier to Capitalism to seeing it as emblematic of Capitalism's entrepreneurial spirit (Portes & Haller, 2005). From more Marxian perspectives, it is variously conceptualized as external to capitalism, as the product of capitalism, and as functional to capitalism (Inverardi-Ferri, 2018). Recent discussions of the relation between AbD and informality stress that the two are mutually constitutive, not separate. Nevertheless, the conceptual presumption is that informality is subservient to capitalism. For example, Melanie Samson's nuanced study of informality and the waste economy in Soweto, South Africa, notes how informal workers successfully sued to protect their livelihoods from corporate and state actors, but nevertheless stresses how 'the state and formal capital captur[e] spheres of accumulation created by informal workers in ways that ... render them subordinate to formal private capital' (Samson, 2015, p. 827).

I do not conceptualize informality, or other modes of production, as Capitalism's outsides – resilient hermetic spaces for pursuing alternative political economies (whether or not we like them). Yet, if our theories of Capitalism cannot be expanded (conceptually and spatially) to embrace production, consumption, exchange and distribution in spaces and times that exceed the Capitalist rule of law (governing property rights, legality and what counts as licit economic activities), we run the danger of marginalizing their potential significance while elevating Capitalism in our minds as the only economic system that matters. To be clear, I neither presume that informality is subservient to, nor that it will undermine, capitalism. I simply want to clear conceptual space that allows us to consider both possibilities.

Here, I can only sketch how to shift our thinking to take informality more seriously. Table 1 visualizes aspects of informality, dimensioned by activities to be found in any economy (production, work, consumption, exchange, accessibility and waste) on the vertical axis, and domains of informality that exceed the rule of law (regulatory, legal, property rights-based, communal and familial) on the horizontal axis.

Places of production where goods are manufactured outside the rule of law may well be places of commodity production, in the sense that decisions about what to produce are governed by profitability rather than societal need. But this need not be the case. Goods produced under these conditions may include: unsanctioned versions of copyrighted commodities (violating patents), commodities produced in non-registered places of production (no taxes or conformance to legal requirements such as those governing labour and safety), illicit commodities (outlawed in that space and time), goods that are not commodities (with production governed by socio-ecological ethico-political considerations rather than profitability), and goods and commodities produced collectively or within the logics of household reproduction.

**Table 1.** Vectors of informality

	<b>Unregulated activities</b>	<b>Illegal activities</b>	<b>Diverse property rights</b>	<b>Communal activities</b>	<b>Household reproduction</b>
Production	Unregistered production	Illicit commodities	Bootlegged goods	Non-commodities	Commoning
Labour	Undocumented labour	Criminal activities	Worker-owned production	Collective labour	Care work
Consumption	Black markets	Illegal goods	Stolen commodities	Gleaning	Self-providing
Exchange	Informal markets	Black markets	Barter	Sharing	Gifting
Accessibility	Unregistered shipping, tax havens and Bitcoin	Smuggling, money laundering	Stowaway goods, identity theft	Bucket brigades, savings clubs	Family vehicles, lending money
Waste	Informal waste processing	Illicit dumping	'Liberating', for personal use	Collaborative recycling	Handing down, reuse

Production entails labour, but again not necessarily governed by a Capitalist labour market and its accompanying regulatory apparatus. Labouring bodies may be unregulated, unprotected by laws asserting a worker's rights to his or her labouring body, and their rights to be present may be abrogated (creating conditions of super-exploitation, slavery and wage theft). Work may entail commoning or barter rather than being bought and sold (e.g., Ithaca hours), and/or be devoted to household tasks not conventionally recognized as forms of labour. Relatedly, consumption can be unregulated, illegal and involve 'liberating' someone else's property, gleaning goods that no one else wants or monitors, and self-provided. In terms of exchange, informal markets range from quasi-capitalist monetary exchange (unrecorded, illicit and/or untaxed), through barter to the sharing of goods and gifting (Gudeman, 2008).<sup>6</sup>

The production of accessibility is essential to any economic system. As for any produced good, the production of accessibility entails transportation and communication infrastructure and mobile labour. This has two aspects: moving goods to those seeking them (logistics), and making forms of payment accessible to those seeking them as means of exchange (finance). Accessibility can be produced outside the regulated spaces of ports and banks (unregistered freighters, offshore tax havens, or Bitcoin), can be illegal within those spaces (smuggling, 'dark web' networks, Swiss bank accounts), can exceed formal property rights (stowed away within formal means of accessibility, laundered money), and can be shared, or governed by kinship ties. Once commodities are no longer fit for purpose or desired, they themselves are thrown out of the capitalist economy as waste – another raggedy fringe of globalizing Capitalism with its own potentially disruptive dynamics (Gidwani, 2013; Gidwani & Reddy, 2011; Inverardi-Ferri, 2017, 2018; Samson, 2015).

In the foregoing, I have attempted to sketch out the range of activities that can be convened under the label of informality. Informality is conventionally seen as being undertaken by the marginalized, those unable to participate in the formal economy. These are often non-white and differently gendered bodies, re-emphasizing Capitalism's racialized exclusions. But we neglect domains of elite informality at our peril. Those in power also seek to avoid regulatory regimes, deploying their influence to gain exceptional treatment

outside the rule of law (lobbying elected officials, turning the head of a judge, bribing representatives of the state).

Notwithstanding misgivings, I use the possibly over-capacious and chaotic concept of informality to embrace the more-than of globalizing Capitalism (McFarlane & Waibel, 2012; Roy & Alsayyad, 2004).<sup>7</sup> Informal activities dialectically co-evolve with ‘formal’ Capitalist practices, each influencing the other via the raggedy fringes where ambiguity rules: where the formal and informal are almost impossible to distinguish from one another (and the rule of law fails). This raises questions of spatiality: of how formal and informal political economic practices unevenly cohabit the same territories, are interconnected within and across those places and spaces, and produce particular scalar imprints. For a snapshot exemplifying this, consider Peck’s analysis of the relations between extractive Capitalism and Aboriginal economies in north-western Australia’s Pilbara region (Peck, 2013b). On the one hand, as for Capitalism, there is an uneven geography to informality – one that shapes the dialectical relations between formal and informal economic activities, mutually determining their nature, overlaps and spatio-temporal evolution. It may well be correct to argue in general that ‘capitalist economies constituted solely via wholly legal activities are the exception rather than the rule’ (Hudson, 2018, p. 3), but the condition ‘especially in particular spaces of the global economy’ (p. 3) repays close attention. On the other hand, the dialectical coevolution of Capitalism and informality is itself spatial and temporal, redolent of geographical dialectics, produced space-times, and unexpected outcomes (Sheppard, 2008).

### State-led alternatives

Thus far, I have neglected the state – as if it were performing no more than its ‘nightwatchman’ role of underwriting property rights, the police and military (Nozick, 1974). Yet, it is well established that Capitalist states do far more than this. Polanyi pointed out long ago that markets cannot function without states: heterogeneous, at times internally contradictory, entities walking the tightrope between supporting capital accumulation and securing democratic legitimacy (Habermas, 1973; Jessop, 2007; Offe, 1984), roles also shaped by elite informality and ‘corruption’. Regulation theorists and varieties of Capitalism scholars have sought to tease out how states vary in managing this conundrum, both over time (from Fordist to neoliberal variants of Capitalism) and across space (from liberal to coordinated Capitalist political economies, and beyond). With respect to time, crises undermining a particular regulatory regime trigger experimentation with alternatives, until something workable is found (Lipietz, 1987). With respect to space, national political economies are typically classified in terms of where they fall with respect to these two extremes, with the UK and the United States represented as liberal and Germany and Japan as coordinated (Soskice & Hall, 2001). Channelling and spatializing regulation theory, Peck and Theodore (2007) offer some important criticisms of the varieties of Capitalism school’s implicit methodological nationalism (Agnew, 1994). Preferring the term ‘variegated Capitalism’ (Jessop, 2014), they stress how shifts in regulatory regimes are shaped by broader-scale conjunctural conditions, by the agendas of hegemonic states and multilateral institutions, and through the inter-state mobility of state and policy experimentation. Peck and Jun Zhang also seek to extend this typology beyond these two centres of attraction of Western political thought to find space for the case of China (Peck & Zhang, 2013; Zhang & Peck, 2016).

Peck (2010, p. 7) has influentially made the methodological argument that neoliberalism (itself requiring an active state to reproduce its ‘free market’ myth):

has only ever existed in ‘impure’ form, indeed *can* only exist in messy hybrids. Its utopian vision of a free market is ultimately unrealizable . . . it can never remake the world in its own image. As a result, it is doomed to coexist with its unloved others, be these residues of state socialism, authoritarianism, or social democracy.

In this view, and writing back against those seeking to frame the post-2008 world as entering a post-neoliberal state, neoliberalization is endlessly inventive, continually mutating, and quite ubiquitous, albeit dialectically shaped by its 'unloved others' (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2009, 2012). 'Process-based approaches to neoliberalization, in fact, work explicitly with and across difference, problematizing the (re)production of that difference, and they are no less attentive to the contradictions and limits of neoliberalism in both theory and practice.' (Peck, 2013a, p. 153).

Yet, there remains a certain capitalocentric (Gibson-Graham, 1996) orientation in this literature, whereby all states are conceptualized as 'neoliberalism-plus'. To quote Peck again:

These approaches do not necessitate the automatic or preemptive dismissal of non-neoliberal alternatives or postneoliberal trajectories, but they do require that such (emergent) developments are understood, in the current context at any rate, *in relation to hegemonically neoliberalized fields of power* (Peck, 2013a, p. 153; added emphasis)

There are parallels between this conceptualization and that of the articulation of modes of production school. Both presume that globalizing Capitalism is the hegemonic emergent political economy, with respect to which other state forms (like other modes of production) are 'residues'.

Once again, as for informality, I argue that we need to experiment with shifting our optic: decentering Capitalist theorizations so that we can create space for thinking about how state practices also exceed those governing globalizing Capitalism. China would be an obvious case for experimenting with this, particularly given its alternative 'inclusive' Belt and Road Initiative globalization initiative (Liu & Dunford, 2016; Liu, Dunford, & Gao, 2018) and articulation between a socialist state and market forces (Peck & Zhang, 2013). Rather than conceptualizing China as Capitalism with Chinese characteristics, or even as a non-territorial and hybrid capitalism (Yeung, 2004), consider the proposition that China is a hybrid of state socialism and Capitalism, whose evolution – notwithstanding neoliberalization – may not be predestined to become a variant of Capitalism (e.g., Ong, 2006, 2007). I prefer hybridity and hybridization, because variegation suggests that there is a centre of attraction (Capitalism) with respect to which difference is measured. I use hybridity in the spirit of conceiving an entity as 'of mixed character; composed of different elements'.<sup>8</sup> This embraces the possibility of beginning with multiple starting points, each of which opens a different way of examining the whole. When discussions of hybridity habitually begin from (centring) neoliberalization, then it does not reach its full potential for shifting those optics – for examining the limits of neoliberalism from without, not just within.

### The web of life

Finally, consider briefly the more-than-human world as a third raggedy fringe. Here, the thinking of Jason Moore (Moore, 2003, 2015, 2017a, 2017b) is particularly instructive and important. Adopting a deeply historical geographical and materialist world-systemic approach, Moore traces how globalizing Capitalism – stretching back to colonialism – has been made possible through its capacity to draw the more-than-human world (but also unpaid labour – he emphasizes deeply gendered household work) into Capitalism. He thus considers how the *longue durée* of globalizing Capitalism co-evolves with more-than-economic natural and cultural (gendered and raced) processes (Moore, 2017b). He dubs this cheap nature, a subsidy for Capitalism that reduces labour value, 'appropriating uncaptialized nature as the pedestal of labor productivity' (Moore, 2015, p. 17).

This is sophisticated empirical and theoretical scholarship: historically nuanced, of global remit, taking an integrative more-than-human approach instead of reducing nature–society

relations to a dualism, and integrating these issues into a Marxist theorization of Capitalism (bringing materialism into value theory). Yet, Moore also sees these fringes as tendentially constitutive of the reproduction of globalizing Capitalism: ‘Capitalism’s Cheap Nature strategy has aimed at appropriating the biological capacities and geological distributions of the earth in an effort to reduce the value composition of capital, thereby checking a tendency towards a falling rate of profit’ (Moore, 2015, p. 304). Once again, I would argue that these fringes may be more raggedy than this suggests. Moore acknowledges this to some extent, speculating that the current Anthropocene (in his terms, Capitalocene) era may force the end of capitalism as we know it through a millennial crisis. I would suggest that such disruptive implications for Capitalism, posed by the more-than-human world, are around us all the time – not only becoming evident when globalizing Capitalism approaches an existential moment.

### A positional conjunctural approach

Since the year 2000, a significant number of theorists, thinking through the post-colony, have sought to challenge what they see as Eurocentric theorization within geographical political economy and urban studies. In particular, post-colonial scholarship challenges narrations of globalizing capital – notwithstanding, for at least some, a continuing reliance on Marx – that amount to propagating what Dipesh Chakrabarty has dubbed History 1 (Chakrabarty, 2000). This is the notion that the developmental history of Europe applies to the rest of the world, which is thereby presented as following – lagging behind – European-style progress (e.g., Rostow, 1960; Warren, 1980). Thinking through the post-colony, History 1’s critics advocate a southern turn in political economic theory that accounts for the pervasive informality and surplus populations redolent of territorial economies located across the post-colony (e.g., Roy, 2011; Sanyal, 2014; Sheppard, Leitner, & Maringanti, 2013).

Such claims to exceptionalism have been dismissed, however, by scholars writing from the Global North who argue that empirical differences between the First and Third worlds need not have theoretical import (e.g., Chibber, 2013; Scott & Storper, 2015). Analyzing the modes of accumulation school, Ruccio and Simon (1986, p. 218) note a potential methodological problem that, if left unaddressed, exposes southern theorization to this critique:

[T]he MOP [modes of production] approach appears to involve a more or less complicated form of the theory–observation dichotomy. . . . If due care is not taken, then one can easily and uncritically lapse into epistemological difficulties. . . . That is, certain observable social facts are taken to be theory-dependent in the sense of being the result of and explainable in terms of the logic of the underlying modes of production. The modes themselves are taken to be theoretical entities and unobservable as such. Other facts, those that are not theory-dependent and thus purely empirical and directly observable, are understood to exist independently of the modes of production and to condition their empirical existence.

Their point is that, when seeking to theorize from the ‘south’, it is inconsistent to smuggle in exogenous facts – seeking to document the exception to be theorized – as if they are not themselves theory-laden.

Yet, there is a more defensible approach. Rather than beginning with ‘facts on the ground’, theorization should start with the broader conjunctural context that is constitutive of such empirical differences – but to do so geographically. I call this *positional* conjunctural analysis, for reasons to be laid out below. Conjunctural thinking can be traced back at least to Vladimir Lenin and Marx, but Antonio Gramsci has been particularly influential (Koivisto & Lahtinen, 2012). For Lenin, Russia’s late Tsarist conjuncture explained why it made sense to skip Capitalism and move straight to a communist revolution. Seeking a middle ground between individual events and structural determinism, Gramsci (1995) advanced the conjuncture as a means to theorize how historical context shapes the outcomes of such forces. Relatedly, Louis

Althusser and Etienne Balibar argued that the working out of Capitalism's contradictions in the wild will depend on 'the structure of the real historical present: the present of the *conjuncture*' (Althusser & Balibar, 1970, p. 106). For Stuart Hall, this is about facing things (in his case, Thatcherism) 'as they really are: The contradictory, stony ground of the present conjuncture' (Hall, Samuel, & Taylor, 1989, p. 151). Andrew Sayer's related distinction between necessary and contingent relations also relies on attending to the local context: in his view, this is how space matters (Sayer, 1985).

From a geographical perspective, these conceptions of conjuncture are largely historical: they emphasize how what happens in place depends on the broader context (historical conjuncture) that it is located within. This is place-based, not connectivity-based thinking (Sheppard, 1996). We require a geographical revision to conjunctural thinking, which interrogates how conjuncture also depends on the socio-spatial positionality of a place and the events therein: positional conjuncture (cf. Hart, 2016; McMichael, 2000). In this view, the marginal positionality of countries, regions and cities of the post-colony within globalizing Capitalism (notwithstanding the possibility of digging their way out of this) shapes their conditions of possibility for achieving what the West calls development (Sheppard, 2016). If we theorize how positional conjuncture shapes places, we can avoid the trap of resorting to ground truths to legitimize theorizing from the 'south'. This also has the merit of pushing beyond what critics (Storper & Scott, 2016) have misrepresented as a dualistic theoretical agenda of counterposing southern theory for southern places against northern theory for northern ones. After all, if places can only be understood by also taking into account their conjunctural positionality with respect to one another, then it follows that theorizing from different positionalities should be generative of relational thinking that is illuminative for all starting points (Sheppard et al., 2015). In what follows, I seek to apply this kind of positional conjunctural analysis to Jakarta (and Indonesia).

## THINKING THROUGH JAKARTA

In this section, I seek to bring the preceding conceptual deliberations – themselves inspired by the opportunity to take Jakarta seriously as a field site (Leitner, personal communication) – back to Jakarta. Yet, Jakarta is joined at the hip with Indonesia, so this positional conjunctural analysis must begin at the national scale.<sup>9</sup> At this point in an overly long paper, it is impossible to do justice to the rich literature that has emerged on greater Jakarta in recent years (e.g., Bunnell & Miller, 2011; Kusno, 2013; Padawangi, 2012; Santoso, Febrina, & Ferry-Cuellar, 2009; Silver, 2007; Simone, 2014). Instead, I draw on our collaborative work in DKI (Daerah Khusus Ibukota) Jakarta and peri-urban Cikarang as my case study, since this has most directly shaped how I think through Jakarta.

### The emergence of Indonesia's hybridized political economy<sup>10</sup>

Since gaining independence on 17 August 1950, after a bitter struggle against Japanese, British and Dutch troops, the evolution of the Indonesia political economy has been shaped by, while also seeking to shape, Indonesia's positionality with respect to globalizing Capitalism. Sukarno, its first president, worked to make Indonesia a leader among newly independent post-colonial nations seeking to craft for themselves a third way to development: a 'Third World', differentiated from both the Capitalist First World and the Communist Second World, that became the non-aligned movement. Launched at the 1955 Bandung conference, this project brought together left-leaning leaders of newly independent states from across Asia and Africa. After the failed US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) 1958 coup against Sukarno, Suharto's 1965–67 violent succession to power was more than a domestic tiff. It marked simultaneously an aversion to Chinese influence (anti-communist pogroms accompanied the coup, killing some 500,000) and a realignment towards the United States, whose



role in these pogroms is detailed by Robison (2018). By the early 1980s, a capitalist class was emerging in Indonesia. Yet, as Robison (1986, p. 392) argues, the rule of law underlying European-style Capitalism was not a defining feature:

Whereas in Western, industrial capitalist societies the relationship between state and capital is one in which public policy creates the general conditions for capital accumulation and normally does not discriminate between firms, in the Indonesia situation the relationship between state and capital is also exercised on the basis of specific and personal relationships between individual capitalists and individual politico-bureaucrats. The latter are able to appropriate power to allocate licenses for import, credit, and forestry concessions, construction and supply contracts; and the emergence of domestic business groups in the post-Independence period has been largely based on their ability to gain access to these appropriated concessions.

With Suharto holding autocratic power over the country, all the way down to the village scale, with its pseudo-democratic institutions under his sway, and with his family at the centre of these patronage networks, the Indonesian army and key Chinese–Indonesian-owned businesses were particularly skilled at securing his support to gain access to such concessions and advance their economic power. Arai (2015) dubs this the Cendana–Cukong alliance.<sup>11</sup>

By the end of 1980s, the first decade of the US and UK-led neoliberal revolution that shifted the dynamics of globalizing capital from state-led Keynesian globalizing capital to neoliberal Globalization (Sparke, 2012), Suharto (1997 [1990]) was taking up the neoliberal cause. Yet, he tailored it to his autocratic, nationalist vision:

The measures of deregulation and de-bureaucratization are designed to put the state in its most appropriate place for development. They are certainly not measures to abolish the role of the state. It is definitely not a step towards liberalism. The role of the state remains very important in providing guidance and encouragement to people's initiative and creativity for achieving development goals. This is precisely the reason why our development is implemented through planning.

In short, neoliberalization under Suharto took an autocratic, nationalist form, directed (and delimited) by the political centre:

By the 1980s, ... the families of powerful officials and military officers ... directly entered the world of business in their own right as owners of capital and as shareholders. ... [T]he way was led by the president's family, which constructed a vast business empire that extended from banking, forestry, and agriculture to automobiles and petro-chemicals. (Hadiz & Robison, 2013, p. 47)

Suharto was deposed in the aftermath of the severe impact of the 1997 Asian financial crisis: still today, the crisis which remains in every Indonesian's memory – *krismon*. Indonesia's political economy underwent *reformasi*: democratization combined with the political devolution of power to regencies and localities. *Reformasi* was entirely consistent with neoliberalization taking a less autocratic turn, posing challenges for the oligarchs who had collaborated with Suharto. Seemingly, this finally marked a moment for market-led Capitalist competition and innovation. Yet, as Hadiz and Robison (2013, p. 50) find, oligarchy remains a persistent feature of Indonesian-style neoliberalization.

Despite the starkness of the 'lessons' of the financial crisis and the huge leverage of the IMF and other agencies in pressing for specific reforms in policy and governance, oligarchy and its major players were ultimately able to survive. The key to this 'success' was the resilience of the networks of political

authority and economic interest that underpinned and defined oligarchy and permeated the institutions of the state itself. Neoliberal reformers and their allies were never able politically to dismantle these.

A further aspect of the hybridization of Indonesia's political economy is its entanglements with religion, particularly (if not only) via *sharia* and *sukuk* financial instruments (Rethel, 2017) and the influx of Saudi Arabian Islam.

Summarizing, the realities of Indonesia's political economy are difficult to square with the consensus that neoliberalism should be conceptualized as variegated neoliberalization. The danger of variegated neoliberalization is that it reproduces neoliberalism as the master concept (cf. Barnett, 2005, 2010; Collier, 2012; Goldstein, 2012; Larner, 2003; Leitner, Sziarto, Sheppard, & Maringanti, 2007; Ong, 2007, 2006; Rose, 1999). The case of Indonesia, I argue, is a hybrid formation that has features of both neoliberalization and its other(s), with neoliberalization coevolving dialectically with long-standing and resilient oligarchic power structures and forms of elite informality that exceed and constrain it ('corruption', from the European rule of law perspective), and far from dominant in this relationship. Further, invoking positional conjunctural analysis, the nature of this coevolution has been and remains shaped by Indonesia's shifting and relatively dependent socio-spatial positionality with respect to globalizing capital (and its others). This positionality has shaped Jakarta's worldview, and is both reproduced and challenged through Indonesians seeking to exert their own agency on the globe.

## Greater Jakarta

I now take up how these issues play out on the ground in greater Jakarta, taking as my case study its contemporary land transformations (the subject of our ongoing research). Like many other metropolitan areas and/or capital cities across the post-colony, Jakarta's socio-spatial positionality has generated a form of urbanism characterized by an urban majority whose precarious livelihood possibilities depend on closely interwoven informal livelihood and residential practices. They have moved to and reside in cities of the post-colony whose supply of formal employment cannot match burgeoning demand, and whose exceptional growth rates would stretch even the most competent urban governance system to its breaking-point (Sheppard, 2014). By contrast, urban middle classes, taking advantage of the skilled formal employment opportunities emerging under *reformasi*, demand new housing that real estate developers are all too willing to provide given their high rates of return on investment (exceeding 20% annually). Yet, this housing displaces the urban majority from their informal *kampung*s. In greater Jakarta, this is compounded by problems posed by water. Risks and costs of flooding are growing with land subsidence, sea level rise and shifting rainfall regimes (Colven, 2017; Leitner, Colven, & Sheppard, 2017). At the same time, the urban majority often lacks access to piped water or sewage disposal (Bakker, 2003; Furlong & Kooy, 2017; Kooy & Bakker, 2008).

Jakarta's positionality also must be considered with respect to the nation-state, as the two have been bound at the hip since independence. As the nation's capital city, national elites have regularly intervened in the development of a city whose successes and failures shape the nation's reputation. Further, the governorship of DKI Jakarta has increasingly become a stopping point from which to launch campaigns for Indonesia's presidency. From supra-national scales, under the aegis of policy directives shaped by neoliberal global urbanism (Sheppard et al., 2013), Jakarta has become subject to development institutions such as The World Bank, incentivizing the DKI government to transform it into a properly Capitalist and world class metropolis – an agenda eagerly adopted by its elites. In what follows, I sketch out three realms where informality is pervasive and, reinforced by the raggedy fringes of water, pushes back against and/or exceeds neoliberal forms of urban land transformation: within the *kampung*s, amongst the aspirant middle class, and through national and metropolitan elites'

actions. These issues are discussed in detail elsewhere (Leitner & Sheppard, 2018; Suryono, Leitner, Liong, Sheppard, & Anguelov, 2018).

### *Kampungs*

*Kampungs*, located in the interstices of the ‘modern’ city planned by the Dutch and extended by post-independence urban planning, are the places from which the kind of grassroots informality commonly discussed in this literature (McFarlane & Waibel, 2012; Roy & Alsayyad, 2004) emanates within Jakarta.<sup>12</sup> Abdoumalig Simone has done as much as any Anglophone scholar to tease out the complexities and hybridities of *kampung* livelihood practices (Simone, 2013, 2014), stressing how these are spaces where capitalist self-interest encounters commoning, entailing outcomes that are simultaneously emancipatory and hierarchical. Political and economic elites, but also increasingly the middle class, marginalize and denigrate the people and places involved in these practices as in some sense pre-capitalist and pre-modern – places of arrested development relative to the European (now, neoliberal Capitalist) narrative.

*Kampung* residents, lacking the legal protections of private property, political power and cultural valorization, repeatedly face threats of displacement – a process playing out across Asian cities (Roy, 2014). The municipal state repeatedly threatens to evict residents living in *kampungs* designated as illegal (on the basis of claims that they violate public order regulations), in the name of the supposed common good (recently, flood mitigation). These evictions have gendered implications, disadvantaging women who more often are involved in home-based informal economic practices alongside their ‘double’ role as unpaid family providers (Tilley, 2017; Tilley, Elias, & Rethel, 2017).<sup>13</sup> In addition, real estate developers, unable to launch evictions in the age of *reformasi*, offer unheard of riches to residents living in *kampungs* designated as legal, in return for their agreeing to sell whatever land rights they can acquire, and to relocate. *Kampung* residents may also be positioned to reap money from their proximity to new real estate developments, offering workers in these developments cheap informal housing and food provision, providing janitorial staff, etc.

Yet, abetted by local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), *kampung* residents regularly challenge such attempts to replace their homes with state-held public space and Capitalist land markets. These challenges include various forms of outright resistance: the occasional street protest, legal actions, refusing to sell to developers and *kampung* counter-mapping seeking to make illegal *kampungs* visible to the state as legitimate residential spaces. But challenges also entail contestations of Capitalist/neoliberal norms – seeking to work around rather than resist them. Residents seek to work with the city to redesign whatever replacement housing is offered to evictees so that it supports their social networks and livelihood practices, rather than the depressing and dehumanizing Western-style public housing favoured by the DKI bureaucracy. Residents also are pursuing initiatives to redesign their *kampungs* so that they conform to public order regulations, to head off eviction. Recently, *kampungs* have become able to deploy their residents’ power as voting blocks to sign political contracts with the current DKI governor, Anies Baswedan, who is selectively redeveloping ‘illegal’ *kampungs* razed under the uncompromising regime of the previous governor Ahok (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama) (Savirani & Aspinall, 2018). Those displaced by real estate developers also refuse offers of space in the new projects, relocating instead to other, more peripheral and cheaper, *kampungs*. Such contestations challenge attempts to reduce these urban land transformations to processes of AbD, whereby the informal is simply absorbed into Capitalist markets to regenerate capital accumulation. Acknowledging how dispossession engenders practices that exceed such absorption – even as residents take advantage of speculative

opportunities for making money – Helga Leitner and I conceptualize these in terms of contested accumulations through displacement (Leitner & Sheppard, 2018).

### *Urban middle classes*

Jakarta's middle classes long have interacted with and benefitted from the informal economic practices of the poor: purchasing from informal traders, hiring *kampung* residents informally as maids, gardeners or drivers, and employing them as workers in their own informal micro-enterprises (Leitner & Sheppard, 1987). These connectivities between Jakarta's middle class and urban majority families have become abridged, however, as the middle classes withdraw behind the walls of ever-more-spectacular 'integrated' developments that are springing up across the metropolitan area. These are marketed as enabling their residents to occupy an orderly corporate city, isolated from the complexity, congestion and uncertainty of everyday Jakarta. In the 1970s and 1980s, middle class and urban majority families lived cheek by jowl, their children playing with one another on neighbourhood streets, but this has become rare (Santoso, personal communication). Yet, such linkages still persist in attenuated form – much like those of wealthy Los Angelinos who hire undocumented Latinx maids and gardeners. This spatial segregation is triggering a marked shift in Jakarta's middle-classes' attitudes towards the urban majority, from a sense of coexistence, reflecting symbiosis, to a denigration of the urban majority as people whose poverty is their own fault. Literally and figuratively looking down on the *kampungs*, representatives of the middle classes informally lobby urban political elites to rid their cities of these now unwanted residents and their noisome practices (Firman & Fahmi 2017; Hudalah & Firman, 2012; Rukmana, 2015). As Roy (2009) has documented also for India's cities, they can take advantage of personal connections to a powerful, but complex, heterogeneous, inconsistent, and personality-driven national and metropolitan state planning apparatus to advance their interests. As Roy puts it:

informality is a key feature of this idiom such that . . . planning proceeds through systems of deregulation, unmapping, and exceptionalism. These systems are neither anomalous nor irrational; rather they embody a distinctive form of rationality that underwrites a frontier of metropolitan expansion.(p. 87)

### *Political and economic elites*

Elite informality enables developers to get their own way with local political elites, even when the latter are not supportive of the new development projects. The developers working in greater Jakarta, often the development arms of large Chinese–Indonesian family-owned conglomerates, have powerful national political connections that in many cases date back to the Cendana–Cukong alliance. Arai describes the current manifestation of this as a revolving door between lobbying groups and the parliament, replacing the Cendana–Cukong informal alliance with a more formal coalition linking GOLKAR (once the state party of Suharto), Real Estate Indonesia (REI – the real estate business association) and the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN). 'The consequence is very clear. It is highly implausible that the government would take measures against big businesses controlling land' (Arai, 2015, p. 461). Large developers place political heavyweights on their board of commissioners (Suryono et al., 2018), and flout local political planning regulations. *Reformasi* has devolved responsibility for land-use planning from the national scale to regencies and municipalities, who lack the training, competence, resources and autonomy to push back against large developers. Indeed, they often depend on these developers to provide the infrastructure to support urban development that local states are unable to build or adequately maintain – creating a relation of dependence of local political elites on national economic elites that enables developers to informally negotiate exceptions to zoning, floor-to-area ratios, and infrastructure and environmental regulations. For example, the Lippo Group has begun

building the massive new exurban city of Meikarta in Bekasi, billed as ‘surpassing anything this country has ever seen, epic in its scale and vision as a truly integrated city of the future’,<sup>14</sup> before seeking planning permission. Yet, whereas *kampung* informality is condemned as undermining Jakarta’s world-class aspirations, middle-class and elite informality are tolerated because they seem aligned with realizing these aspirations.

In the above analysis, I have barely referenced the question of globalizing Capitalism’s more-than-human raggedy fringes. Yet, its disruptive effects also are evident in Jakarta’s urban land transformations. Informal groundwater extraction, by *kampung* households lacking piped water and by developers seeking to service their projects, together with the physical weight of new developments and the concretization of Jakarta’s land, is accelerating groundwater extraction, land subsidence (Kimmelman, 2017) and flood risk. Global climate change and warming, itself shaped by our trajectory of globalizing Capitalism, is compounding these risks in as-yet difficult-to-determine ways through shifting rainfall regimes and sea level rise. These changes have precipitated a discourse on the need to achieve ecological security and create a resilient Jakarta (the 100th city to join The Rockefeller Foundation’s globally influential 100 Resilient Cities programme<sup>15</sup>). This in turn legitimized evictions of *kampungs* along the banks of Jakarta’s 13 rivers – themselves now subject to concretization and dredging with the help of The World Bank and the Korea International Cooperation Agency, to accelerate the through-flow of water. In short, Jakarta’s urban majority faces increased vulnerability, compounded by environmental and climate injustice: erroneously blamed by elites, middle classes and the media for flooding that they barely contribute to, they suffer evictions that undermine their already precarious livelihood possibilities (Leitner et al., 2017; Padawangi, 2012). Yet, the massive real estate projects roll on.

## CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, I have argued that the powerful theoretical tools developed by geographical political economists (also myself), enabling us to analyze globalizing Capitalism critically, suffer from a particular set of geographical blinders: they look at our world in ways that normalize the European perspective on how development happens – a perspective that cannot but fail to deliver on its promise of development for all, everywhere, as a result of the uneven and asymmetric connectivities driving uneven geographical development at scales ranging from the globe to the neighbourhood. In Chakabarty’s (2000) felicitous phrase, these perspectives are redolent of History 1. I have become increasingly aware of this blind spot over the years as I became more engaged with questions of development, and of the importance of theorizing from different socio-spatial positionalities (Sheppard, Porter, Faust, & Nagar, 2009). Recent fieldwork in Jakarta has helped lift these scales from my eyes: I have become convinced that it is vital to think through places like Jakarta, not just about them (Sheppard, 2013), if we are to avoid such blinders. This is the task I have set myself here.

Marginalized places are not simply places of theoretical exception: places where the empirics depart from the theoretical norm, legitimizing an approach to theorization that treats them as interesting residuals to be accounted for in terms of local contingencies or exigencies. Instead, a positional conjunctural approach allows us to see how these differences may be quite systemic – reflecting a shared impact of uneven geographical development on places occupying similar socio-spatial positionalities. It follows that it can be productive to theorize through such places, challenging the presumption that received northern theory is ubiquitously useful – that it can travel the globe without significant loss. For me, this sensibility is at the heart of thinking geographically.

I have sought to provincialize our default Marxian/political economic theorization of capitalism, pointing out that its particularities, identified by Marx and his fellow 18th- and

19th-century English, Scottish and French political economists, reflect the construction of Europe's positional conjunctural positionality between 1492 and 1900. This enabled Britain, and Europe and their white settler colonies, to industrialize on the backs of racism, slavery and colonialism. I also have reiterated my argument that the uneven geographical development dynamic endemic to globalizing Capitalism necessitates the search for alternatives to European-style Capitalist development. Yet, the core of my argument is that Capitalism's fringes should not be reduced in our minds to its passive outsides, whose putative enrolment into globalizing Capitalism – enabling its reproduction – is inevitable. Rather, they are *raggedy* fringes, inhabited by more-than-human agency that is capable of disrupting this reproduction. Further, I argue that recognizing such agency requires us to shift our optic, loosening theoretical blinders that we have come to take for granted. Thinking through Jakarta, the raggedy fringes that matter are the hybridity of Indonesia's political economy, informality and biophysical processes. I have sought to suggest ways to theorize these in their own right, even as we recognize that their dialectical relations with Capitalism are crucial to understanding how it coevolves with its outsides, illustrating such coevolution with examples from our research in greater Jakarta. Thinking through Jakarta, then, provokes us to take seriously the implications of theorizing from globalizing Capitalism's elsewhere: the places and people whose shared positional conjunctures has found them encountering, rather than propagating, Capitalist economic development (Escobar, 1995).

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## NOTES

1. See <http://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=rard20> (accessed January 15, 2018).
2. See the acknowledgment.
3. Following the convention initiated by Cowen and Shenton (1996) on development and Sparke (2012) on globalization, throughout the paper uses the upper case 'Capitalist' to reference European-style capitalism and lower case 'capitalist' to reference other forms.

4. With resistance, I reference practices that actively push back against those of Capitalism; with contestation, I reference practices – old and new – that are tangential to those of Capitalism (Leitner, Sziarto, Sheppard, & Maringanti, 2007).
5. Previously, I have used the term ‘edges’ (Sheppard, 2016), but ‘fringes’ better captures the grey zones stretching beyond globalizing Capitalism.
6. This is not the sharing economy promoted by the likes of Uber, Airbnb or Go-Jek, which is essentially a data-driven digitized Capitalist process of production and exchange: platform Capitalism (Srnicsek, 2016; Kenney & Zysman, 2016; Langley & Leyshon, 2017).
7. Ferguson (2015, p. 93) rightly expresses misgivings. This is a risky move, perhaps opening things up too much, but it enables one to avoid convening the ‘more-than’ under categorical labels (slavery, feudalism, socialism) that themselves reflect Eurocentric theorizing – notwithstanding informality’s own origins in such theorizations. It also is important to acknowledge that the very language of formal/informal creates a dualism elevating the former term (at least in the minds of law-abiding actors) above the latter.
8. With others, including local experts, I have been undertaking fieldwork in Jakarta annually since 2013, interviewing developers, *kampung* residents, middle-class residents, developers and government officials, seeking to understand land transformations in greater Jakarta (Jabodetabek).
9. This section draws heavily on arguments developed by Suryono, Leitner, Liong, Sheppard and Anguelov (2018).
10. The Suharto family lived in a modest family complex called Cendana in Jakarta’s formerly Dutch Menteng district. Cukong loosely translates from Bahasa Indonesia as broker/capitalist/well-to-do financier (Arai, 2015).
11. Within Indonesia’s cities the term *kampung*, which loosely translates as village, references informal settlements. This presumably reflects the history of *kampungs* as autoconstructed residential districts built and maintained by migrants often from rural settlements.
12. Unpaid household labour is now widely recognized as a pervasive ‘informal’ economic practice that hugely subsidizes the formal economy (England & Lawson, 2005; Ferber & Nelson, 2003; Waring, 1988).
13. See <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/hybrid/>.
14. See <http://meikarta.com/about> (accessed March 15, 2018).
15. See <http://www.100resilientcities.org/> (accessed March 15, 2018).

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