

# Cities are full of ghosts ...

Abdoulmalik Simone talks about the practices which enable the majority to exist in a city as Jakarta, Johannesburg, Rio etc...

How did it get to be the way it is? What kinds of practices come to build the way it is?

For this time AS speaks about these practices, from the starting point of an observation of Jakarta, where he lives actually.

He remarks a constant adjustment in the popular area, a constant “add on / get way” and he looks for the kind of narratives, histories that exist behind it. The density of these areas makes unclear what belongs to who, who gets to do what, where? Everything is shifting all the time and relations between people are replayed every time. Different kinds of spaces are in close proximity, what leads to a messy surface. And always, in the background, we can see these mega buildings, the new city. These places are like if a huge truck plain of different stuff would have simply dumped all this out. So there is an inability of these objects to fit together, an absence of coordination. The object retains its integrity, no matter which way it rolls out.

People from many different places of Indonesia come in the same place, trying to live the city on their own way and trying to establish their self. Because even if one has a job it will never be enough to produce the stability he is looking for and he will always have to do something extra of his job, a plurality of efforts. And many efforts don't work. It is a great deal of instability, of volatility.

What attracts everybody is this “Jakarta marketing”: move here and be part of the world.

The routine relation between people makes a kind of platform. It is always the question of knowing somebody that could do that, making links between people and enlarging his network. Each one shows his availability to work with others on something, it doesn't matter what you want to do but it is an urgency to do something, it will signal to others your availability to do something. It is the notion of increment, in the sense of being able to be moving, to work with others, to do something. And the mess is the increment of the willingness of these people. People constantly adjust their selves to another, incremental adjustments make this place. But at one level this situation becomes unworkable. There is no preconceived solution so it is necessary to put together their mind, their bodies etc... and to compose teams. The built in is always built on opportunities. Then, the groups you are part of oblige you. The question becomes how many obligations we are able to manage? People are interested in making relations that catapult them to other places, in order to know a place in the city they've never been in. The urgency of the city is being able to be on the move. In this way people are implicated in each other's lives.

In Jakarta, the prayman, who does not have attaches, the freeman, is the recipient of stories. The preoccupation of people here is to be able to occupy the future, because of this, it exists also a kind of practices which is a way of showing up, of making yourself visible. What is invisible is the “not yet” which is only materialized as a ghost. The example of vacant spaces, haunted places are places where

there is something but not yet. The ghost is the unrealized, the refused in an ambivalent way. The question is who begins to dominate the imagination of inhabitants. What do they think it is possible and livable? There is an endurance producing imaginary which comes from a necessity of reimagining who we are each other, building a bridge to know the others and to create familiarity in the relation with others. Each one need to see in the other some sense of familiar.