

## **Urban Development in a Decentralized Indonesia: Two Success Stories?\***

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### **Abstract**

The year 2011 marked the tenth anniversary of the implementation of Indonesia's regional autonomy laws. This paper considers implications of more than a decade of decentralized governance for urban development in Indonesia. After a brief historical overview and consideration of the rationale for political and administrative decentralization in that national context, we examine a range of critical perspectives on policy outcomes. Both media coverage and academic analyses have overwhelmingly cast decentralized governance as it has been implemented in Indonesia in a negative light. As a corrective to this, we have sought to identify positive outcomes and possibilities associated with Indonesia's large-scale decentralization project. In particular, we detail the cases of two cities which have been cast in a variety of rankings and media representations as success stories of urban development through decentralized governance – Solo (or Surakarta as the city is also formally named) and Surabaya. In the final section of the paper, we critically evaluate these two cases and discuss their wider implications.

## Introduction

In 2001 Indonesia began to implement some of the most ambitious and far-reaching decentralization policies to have been attempted anywhere in the world. More than a decade later, it is possible to take stock of the outcomes and implications of decentralized governance in Indonesia. There has already been a substantial body of academic research covering issues related to decentralized governance ranging from administrative studies to the localization of school curricula, to natural resource depletion and associated conflict or insecurity, to the rights of indigenous ethnic minority groups, to ways in which fiscal decentralization has generated or perpetuated everyday forms of violence, and implications for urban and regional planning.<sup>1</sup> For all the diversity of such work, both thematically and in terms of disciplinary framing, one characteristic which is shared by most strands of the existing literature is the generally negative light in which Indonesia's regional autonomy (*otonomi daerah*) program, as decentralized governance is locally called, has been cast. This paper examines possibilities for providing a corrective to the existing academic emphasis on negative outcomes of decentralized governance, focusing on issues of urban development and city government policy.

The main body of the paper consists of profiles of two cities which have, in different ways, been perceived as success stories in the (inter)national media and in a variety of rankings of local government performance that have proliferated in Indonesia's era of decentralized governance. The first case is Solo (also formally called Surakarta)<sup>2</sup> in Central Java. Here, a popular mayor who was first elected in 2005 oversaw the equitable and peaceful resettlement of street vendors, expanded provision of public and green space, invested in traditional markets and small business rather than merely wooing or pandering to large investors, and provided a conducive political environment for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to promote popular participation in the planning process. The second case is Surabaya, the capital city of East Java. Surabaya features a mayor who has actively promoted "green and clean" urbanism, apparently flourishing community-based environmental initiatives, and encouraging signs of metropolitan coordination and wider (provincial scale)

collaboration. The final section of the paper provides a critical examination of the cases of Solo and Surabaya and discusses their implications for decentralized governance in Indonesia more widely. We begin, however, by recalling the original rationale for decentralized governance in Indonesia and how outcomes over the past decade have been critiqued in existing academic analysis.

### **Decentralized governance: from panacea to problem?**

Indonesia's democratic decentralization program began with a so-called "big bang" following the passing of two laws in 1999 which were brought into effect from January 2001 and subsequently amended in 2004. Law No. 22 of 1999 (amended by Law No.32/2004) concerned regional governance, including provisions for the election of the head of a region, and associated issues of local political accountability. Law No. 25/1999 (later amended by Law No.33/2004) introduced new fiscal relations, in which local revenues were henceforth largely derived from a general allocation grant (*dana alokasi umum*), natural resource revenues generated within the borders of the autonomous jurisdictions, and shared taxes.<sup>3</sup> This legislation focused on decentralization to the third tier of government, namely regencies (*kabupaten*) and cities (*kota*), with the result that the role of provincial governments in managing the coordination of inter-local affairs has been severely attenuated in the era of decentralization.<sup>4</sup> Before considering the effects or outcomes of these policies, it is important to outline where they came from and how they were officially rationalized.

While Indonesia had experimented with a limited form of decentralized governance in the early 1990s<sup>5</sup>, and it is possible to trace antecedents back to the Dutch colonial period,<sup>6</sup> two broad factors influenced the decision to implement far-reaching regional autonomy towards the end of that decade. The first factor related to fears of territorial disintegration following the collapse of President Suharto's centralized authoritarian New Order regime in 1998 after more than three decades in power. Widespread resentment towards Jakarta during the Suharto era fuelled secessionist conflicts in Papua, Aceh and East Timor. Following Suharto's forced resignation, the independence of East Timor in 1999 heightened fears of a "Balkanization" of Indonesia.

Regional autonomy was thus rationalized as a means of holding the archipelagic diversity of the nation-state together. The third tier of government was chosen in part because of the absence at that scale of powerful claims for secession which threatened Indonesia's national territorial integrity.<sup>7</sup>

A second important factor behind the shift to decentralized governance was wider international trends and, in particular, the role of supranational organizations. If the 1997 Asian financial crisis in Indonesia allowed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to dictate economic reform, then political crisis cleared a path for World Bank-influenced democratic decentralization reforms. The most widely cited official justification for decentralization was to bring the government "closer to the people" in line with wider processes of post-Suharto democratization. However, this formed part of a more extensive range of rationales listed by the World Bank, including the potential for broader public participation in political, economic and social activities, the alleviation of bottlenecks in decision making caused by central government planning and control, and increased sensitivity to local conditions and needs among government officials. Decentralized governance was also vaunted as a way of helping national government ministries reach larger numbers of local areas with services, increasing representation for diverse political, ethnic, religious, and cultural groups in decision-making, relieving top managers in central ministries of "routine" tasks to concentrate on policy, and allowing local "experimentation" in the form of more creative, innovative and responsive programs. Decentralization, in other words, was seen as a panacea for a range of local governance problems in Indonesia and elsewhere.<sup>8</sup>

While Indonesia avoided territorial fragmentation (and fears of such national disintegration were arguably overstated given the country's small number of secessionist movements), most depictions of the outcomes of decentralized governance, whether in media coverage, in the reports of international agencies or in academic research, contrast starkly with the optimistic rationalizations of the World Bank. The dominant trope in media coverage of decentralization domestically and internationally is one revolving around issues of localised "corruption", in which corruption is often used as a blanket term to mask other areas of financial

mismanagement, including a lack of capacity among local government officials to manage their increased budgets under the decentralized system. Indonesia continues to fare very poorly in international corruption rankings and the overall impression is one of an embedded Suharto era KKN (a Bahasa Indonesia acronym for “corruption, collusion and nepotism”) having been decentred rather than eradicated.<sup>9</sup>

Another common critique, among political economy scholars in particular, is that Indonesia’s decentralization is irrevocably tainted by association with wider processes of neoliberalization. According to Vedi Hadiz, for example, the focus on technocratic aspects of planning and implementation – ignoring “real constellations of power and interest” – has made for a form of decentralized governance that “tacitly endorses the non-disturbance of the existing social order”.<sup>10</sup> Thus, rather than constituting a decisive break from the Suharto regime’s centralized system of patronage and associated linkages between political and business elites, predatory and personalized power relations are seen to have reconstituted themselves at all levels of government.<sup>11</sup> For practical purposes, inconsistencies and areas of ambiguity in Indonesia’s decentralization legislation have generated numerous problems in the implementation of local development programs and activities. Legal grey areas have enabled opportunistic sections of Indonesia’s state bureaucracy to exploit and undermine the new system from within, especially at the local level where government officials have been able to use ambiguities in the legislation to absolve themselves of responsibility for the mismanagement of state resources and for failed development projects. Confusion over the delegation of authority has enabled most line ministries to hold considerable sway over local development projects, despite the formal transfer of central state authority to sub-provincial governments.<sup>12</sup> At the local (including city) government level, meanwhile, democratic electoral contest has nurtured new linkages between political and business interests.

A rather different set of problems associated with decentralization concern what might be referred to as the hardening of local government boundaries. City (*kota*) and regency (*kabupaten*) government leaders are elected to deal with issues specific to their respective territorial jurisdictions. This may be seen in a positive light to the extent that it

is associated with local government accountability to the electorate contained within city or regency boundaries. However, such boundary hardening has also been associated with a rise in what Tommy Firman has critiqued as “negative parochialism”.<sup>13</sup> A pervasive concern with maximizing the exploitation of local resources and generating local revenues (*pendapatan asli daerah*) has resulted in a corresponding neglect of trans-boundary processes and cooperation. This applies to regency-to-regency relations as well as to city-to-regency relations. However, many of the most pronounced cases are those in which functional urban regions extend across the boundaries of any given city into neighbouring regencies. One high-profile example documented by Firman concerned the decision by the regency of Bekasi to impose prohibitively high charges for the disposal of waste from neighbouring Jakarta.

Just as the dominant storyline for individual local government performance has been one of corruption rather than accountability or good governance, stories of boundary hardening and an absence of meaningful cooperation have proliferated around multi-jurisdictional urban processes and phenomena. Nonetheless, in our work on urban governance in Indonesia since 2007, we have also encountered much more hopeful assessments of decentralized governance. In our first round of interviews in Jakarta in December of that year – with central government officials, academics, development policy consultants, donor agency staff and NGO representatives – we were struck by the prevalent optimism among our informants about regional autonomy and democratization in Indonesia.<sup>14</sup> While our informants readily acknowledged the above-described problems associated with regional autonomy, as well as a range of more specific legal and regulatory concerns, many of them also cited examples of good practice and cases that were considered to be models worthy of emulation. Some such cases had been experienced directly, but most were known through media coverage or through a range of rankings and other evaluations of local government performance. The wider research collaborations from which this paper emerges proceeded, in part, precisely by following cases of positive citation in both secondary sources and in interviews – what, following Aihwa Ong, may be termed “inter-referencing”.<sup>15</sup> We have now carried out more than 100 interviews in: the cities of Banda Aceh, Batam, Denpasar, Gorontalo, Makassar, Padang, Semarang, Solo, Surabaya and Yogyakarta;

the regencies of Sragen (Central Java) and Sidoarjo (East Java); and in the national capital region of Jakarta. We have also tracked the citation and inter-referencing of local government success stories in a range of national and international policy and media discourse. In what follows, we focus in particular on the cities of Solo and Surabaya as widely-cited success stories for certain aspects of urban policy and development.

### **Solo and Surabaya: Stories of success**

While the cities of Solo (in Central Java) and Surabaya (in East Java) are by no means representative of the wide diversity of cities across Indonesia, consideration of these two cases brings into view a wider range of issues than a single case study, and allows consideration of commonalities and differences, even though our paper is not explicitly comparative. Solo and Surabaya are very different in terms of cultural origins, size, commercial role and administrative status. Solo was founded in the mid-eighteenth century as the seat of the Mataram Empire and continued to be ruled as a sultanate until the middle of the twentieth century, while Surabaya expanded as a port city and major centre of trade under Dutch rule from the 1740s. With a population of some three million residents, Surabaya is more than four times more populous than Solo and also forms part of a wider urban region with a population more than double that of the city proper. Solo is home to traditional handicrafts and is also a major textile centre. Surabaya continues to function as a major port, exporting industrial and agricultural products from a highly urbanized region extending well beyond the city's jurisdiction.<sup>16</sup> Solo is located in the province of Central Java, the administrative capital of which is the city of Semarang, while Surabaya is itself the capital city of East Java province. In what follows, we detail aspects of the recent development of Solo and Surabaya through which they have been cited as success stories.

### **Solo (Surakarta)**

Our attention was first drawn to Solo through an article which appeared in the Indonesian weekly *Tempo* magazine in December 2008. Entitled “A few good men in a vast republic”, the article profiled what were considered to be ten exemplary mayors from across the archipelago.<sup>17</sup> Among them was former furniture trader Joko Widodo (popularly known as “Jokowi”) who had been elected mayor of Solo in 2005 and was commended in particular for his equitable and humane handling of processes of resettling street vendors (*pedagang kaki lima*, or PKL). The negotiated resettlement of street vendors forms the first of four positive aspects of city development under the leadership of mayor Jokowi which space permits us to detail here.

Even in democratized Indonesia, efforts by city authorities to relocate informal street vendors from public space have often been heavy-handed, in some cases giving rise to violent conflict.<sup>18</sup> High-profile examples include processes of eviction at Ayodhya Park in South Jakarta and at BMW Park in North Jakarta.<sup>19</sup> In contrast, mayor Jokowi’s approach in Solo was one of dialogue, negotiation and persuasion. In the case of the city’s Banjarsari monument park, this involved a reported 104 public meetings with representatives of different factions of street vendors so that the issue of relocation could be settled amicably and consultatively. An agreement was reached for all 989 street vendors to relocate to Klitikan traditional market, and the eventual 4km move in July 2006 took the form of a carnival procession (*kirab boyang*) led by the mayor and deputy mayor on horseback, and also including participation from other local government officials and legislature members, community leaders, palace soldiers (*prajurit*), school marching bands, academics and NGO activists, as well as the street vendors themselves.<sup>20</sup> In addition to making the relocation into a civic celebration, the carnival procession formed part of wider Javanese ceremonial practices through which environmental sites may be conferred good fortune.<sup>21</sup> Following this successful relocation, the city government replicated the Banjarsari experience in other areas of Solo which are frequented by street vendors. Processes of negotiated and peaceful relocation in Solo have gained national attention and recognition. In October 2010, Jokowi – along with Yogyakarta city mayor, Herry Zudianto – was awarded the Bung Hatta Anti-Corruption Award. As one of the judges for that award, summarized, “The

municipal administration always communicated with the street vendors instead of just evicting them as is commonly seen in other cities”.<sup>22</sup>

The second progressive aspect of urban development in Solo follows on from the first and concerns underlying motivations for resettling street vendors as well as other informal occupants of state land. Unlike in many other cities in Indonesia and elsewhere, the aim was *not* to free space for private sector residential or commercial developments.<sup>23</sup> Rather, spaces such as Banjarsari Park and the City Walk pathway along Jalan Slamed Riyadhi where street vendors previously conducted their business were cleared for use as civic spaces.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, relocation of inhabitants from the banks of the Bengawan Solo and two other rivers running through the city was motivated by flood risk and the most significant development that has taken place on the cleared land has been the creation of a publicly-accessible “urban forest”. Of some 6,368 households affected by serious flooding in December 2007, 1,571 lived along riverbanks and, of these, 1,012 did not have land title. Drawing upon funds from the central government and UN-Habitat, as well as from the city government budget, each of these households was provided with Rp.12 million (US\$ 1,200) towards the purchase of new land of at least 50 square meters, and a further Rp.8.5 million (US\$ 850) toward house-building costs.<sup>25</sup> Apart from relieving poor households of vulnerability to flood damage and danger, this process converted illegal occupants (*penghuni liar*) of state land into land holding residents of Solo, and was even justified by Jokowi as a sound investment in the long term. Previously, the government had to pay to assist households affected by flooding, in some years for more than a month at a time.<sup>26</sup> The area designated as the “urban forest” at Pucang Sawit has now been planted and there are open spaces that have been reserved and landscaped as a playground.

The mayor also took the lead in efforts to rejuvenate the city’s traditional markets, and this leads on to a third progressive aspect of urban development in Solo concerning socio-economic policy priorities. In addition to constituting civic spaces in their own right, traditional markets are important sites of small business and trade in local produce, but (in Solo as elsewhere in Indonesia) have struggled in the face of competition from supermarkets and minimarket franchise stores.<sup>27</sup> Jokowi oversaw

traditional market renovation work and established a coupon system with prizes funded by retribution funds to encourage people to shop at traditional markets.<sup>28</sup> His time as mayor also saw the introduction of a local government regulation stipulating that “modern” shops (including minimarkets, supermarkets and malls) cannot be located within 500m of traditional markets.<sup>29</sup> This, along with reports of Jokowi having turned down proposals for the construction of malls and hypermarkets, was cited by members of the city administration as evidence of his wider vision of a “people’s economy” (*ekonomi kerakyatan*).<sup>30</sup> Jokowi himself publicly stated that he values street vendors as part of the people’s economy,<sup>31</sup> asserting that “it is not just shopping malls that need space, they (street vendors) do too”.<sup>32</sup> At the Bung Hatta Anti-Corruption Award, noted above, Jokowi was commended for having moved the vendors into “strategic business locations” and for the fact that they only had to pay daily retribution fees.<sup>33</sup> Jokowi, in turn, emphasized how traditional markets – incorporating street vendors who have been transformed from informal to formal sector business people – make a significant and growing contribution to the economy of the city.<sup>34</sup> In sum, his approach to local government leadership in Solo was one founded on a publicly-expressed political belief that “it is not low-income people who should be treated as enemies, but poverty itself”, and that low income groups are valued members of urban communities.<sup>35</sup>

The fourth positive aspect of urban development in Solo under Jokowi has concerned possibilities for community and civil society participation in the planning process. One important example concerns the activities of Solo Kota Kita, an NGO which seeks “to raise awareness about urban issues and assist residents to better prioritize development projects during the annual participatory budgeting cycle, the *Musrenbang*”.<sup>36</sup> Specifically, Solo Kota Kita initiated a community-mapping project to provide information about each *kelurahan* (neighbourhood) to city residents through a mini-atlas poster, or neighbourhood profile of data about population, education, water, housing, poverty, and other social and economic indicators. The mapping process is highly participatory, as information is gathered from community members through facilitators and the results are displayed in community centres and information kiosks. Solo Kota Kita is intended to serve as an example of how informed citizens can contribute to transforming their city from below, in line with the original spirit of

decentralized governance. Such grassroots efforts are important to recognize given the attention that has been given to political leadership as the decisive factor in Solo's success. That said, one of the reasons why Solo was chosen as the city to implement the mapping project was because the mayor Jokowi was widely recognized as an effective city manager who encouraged participatory community development.<sup>37</sup> This, together with the other three aspects of urban governance in Solo under Jokowi's leadership which have been profiled here, were clearly appreciated by the city's electorate as Jokowi was re-elected as mayor in 2010 with over 90% of the vote.<sup>38</sup>

## **Surabaya**

The site of our second set of urban governance success stories was identified in a more serendipitous way. We planned to visit industrial satellite districts surrounding Surabaya to explore the economic and political impact of hardening administrative boundaries in the era of decentralized governance. In the course of our research, however, we learned that the city of Surabaya had itself received national and international commendation for urban policy achievements. The former deputy mayor boasted of having doubled tax revenues through tourist promotion of Surabaya as a “sparkling city”, while a 2010 national business survey ranked the city second among the twenty largest local government economies in Indonesia on a business satisfaction index.<sup>39</sup> More importantly, positive stories of urban development were not merely about making the city attractive to international tourists or big business. The city's achievements in environmental management through hands-on city government leadership and state-societal cooperation at local levels are included in UN-Habitat's database for urban best practice and have received a host of international awards.<sup>40</sup>

Successive city governments have implemented a highly effective waste management program.<sup>41</sup> Back in 2001, the closure of Surabaya's final disposal site in Keputih created a city-wide “waste disaster” (*bencana sampah*) as garbage began to accumulate at 155 informal disposal sites at a rate of 2.61 tonnes per day.<sup>42</sup> In an effort to provide some redress for this problem, city authorities purchased a new 34 hectare

final disposal site at Benowo, but at the same time began to turn their attention towards more sustainable waste management planning via activities centred on the “3Rs” (reduce, reuse, recycle). Joint-venture cooperation with the Japanese city of Kitakyushu, which is home to the secretariat of an inter-city environmental cooperation program under the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), was initiated in 2002.<sup>43</sup> A researcher from Kitakyushu City, Mr Takakura, developed a simple container for composting household organic waste, which accounted for some 68% of total municipal waste in 2005.<sup>44</sup> What has been referred to as the “magical Takakura box” (*Kotak Sakti Takakura*)<sup>45</sup> was promoted by the city government and distributed by an NGO, while the city government also established some 16 community-based composting centers. Total municipal waste generation of 1,500 tons per day in 2005 had been reduced to 1,150 tons by 2008 and the composting centers have been used for park and city greening programs.<sup>46</sup> Importantly, during the period 2005-2008, Surabaya’s current mayor, Tri Rismaharini was head of the Cleansing and Landscaping Department, the city government branch responsible for the 3R programme.<sup>47</sup> Elected as the first female mayor of Surabaya in August 2010, Tri Rismaharini is vaunted by civil servants whom we interviewed in 2011 as personifying the city government’s “inclusive” approach to promoting a “Green and Clean” city. We were told with some pride how for two hours between 6 and 8am every Tuesday and Friday, mayor Tri Rismaharini, along with other city government employees, carries out neighbourhood environment improvements and collects rubbish in five locations around the city as part of efforts to “lead city reforms by example, not by force”.<sup>48</sup>

A related positive aspect of city development in Surabaya concerns the reportedly high rates of community participation in the 3R campaign. Composting programmes have been established in urban *kampung* neighbourhoods through state-societal partnerships. For instance, with city government assistance, local members of the national PKK (*Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga*, Building Family Welfare) women’s community empowerment movement distribute compost baskets to individual households and organize a network of community environmental cadres (*kader*) who teach community members how to use the household compost baskets. As of 2009,

19,000 composting baskets had been distributed.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the Green and Clean Campaign initiated in 2005, and including a series of media-backed neighbourhood competitions, has been successful in motivating neighbourhood groups to clean up their local environment and reduce waste at source by practicing waste segregation and composting. As award-winning communities became visible through newspaper and TV coverage, the number of participating communities increased. By 2009, around 30% of all neighbourhood units (*Rukun Tetangga* or *RT*) in the city were said to have participated in the programme.<sup>50</sup> At RT 7 in the Margorukun area of Gundih sub-district in August 2011 community members proudly introduced us to their verdant neighbourhood – fed by compost from household waste – and showed “before and after” pictures demonstrating the greening and cleaning up that had occurred over a period of less than two years.

At a wider scale of analysis, there are nascent signs that Surabaya is increasingly being governed and planned as part of an integrated metropolitan region. Thus, the third set of developments in (and around) Surabaya that might tentatively be considered as positive, have to do with the city’s cooperation with surrounding regencies and integration with other parts of East Java province. The so-called Gerbangkertosusila region (an acronym derived from the names of its six constituent cities and regencies) was formulated during the Suharto era but, as the Director of the Cooperation Affairs Bureau in the East Java Provincial government put it, decentralized governance has made it “quite difficult to make all of the governments bind together in one organization”.<sup>51</sup> There are ongoing conflicts among component local governments, most notably over the financial arrangements for the Purabaya bus terminal.<sup>52</sup> To deal with these challenges, the East Java provincial government has been working to establish intercity networks of cooperation for the six cities and regencies in Gerbangkertosusila to address common concerns over issues such as regional transport integration, water supply and solid waste management.<sup>53</sup> In this, the East Java provincial administration has been looking to metropolitan governance in greater Yogyakarta (or “Kartamantul”) as a model for regional coordination in waste disposal. There are thus plans to replicate experiences from Kartamantul by concentrating final waste disposal for the Gerbangkertosusila region in parts of Gresik district where soil

fertility is low.<sup>54</sup> It is still too early to judge definitively the effectiveness with which lessons from greater Yogyakarta are being applied to the case of greater Surabaya but the efforts are at least evidence of a will to move beyond the kind of parochialism that has been diagnosed as problematic in many other trans-jurisdictional urban areas in decentralized Indonesia.

## **Evaluation and discussion**

Just as Surabaya and neighbouring regencies in East Java have sought to learn from the celebrated Kartamantul case of inter-local government cooperation, so both Solo and Surabaya have in turn been vaunted as models worthy of emulation by other local governments. The award-winning leadership of mayor Jokowi in particular has been noted already, as have the position of both Solo and Surabaya at or near to the apex of various rankings of local government performance. In addition, both cities have become destinations for study tours from other cities and regencies from across the archipelago and even overseas. For us, this raises important issues about the potential for what are perceived to be positive urban developments in specific localities to be extended elsewhere. Clearly, academic work must subject putative success stories to critical scrutiny, not least to examine the ways in which they are played out on the ground, rather than taking for granted their status as “models”. At the same time, critical academic lenses should not filter out all possibility of the existence of urban policy innovation, nor lead us to presume that the only policies and practices that can travel are lowest common denominator forms of neoliberalization.<sup>55</sup> Clearly, these are matters that greatly exceed the scope of this paper. The discussion which follows in this final section is limited to four sets of issues that emerge from our work on the specific cases of Solo and Surabaya but which speak to wider debates about urban governance and policy mobilities.

The first set of issues concerns local government leadership and the significance of this in success stories of urban development in decentralized Indonesia. The political and media attention afforded to mayor Jokowi means that he has widely been seen as

embodying Solo's success. Albeit perhaps to a lesser extent, mayor Tri Rismaharini's personal actions and exemplary conduct account for much of what is perceived to have been good about the recent urban transformation of that city. On the one hand, these cases can be cast as empowering in that they demonstrate how positive changes may stem from electing the right local government leader. Taken together, the two mayors considered in this paper also serve as evidence that the pool of such potentially good city leaders can arise from diverse backgrounds -- public administration in the case of Tri Rismaharini, and business in the case of Jokowi -- and includes women as well as men. On the other hand, belief in the omnipotence of such leaders can clearly be disempowering to the extent that progress comes to be imagined as a matter of waiting for "another Jokowi" or "the next Tri Rismaharini" to emerge. As has been noted above, even innovative NGO activity and public participation in the planning process in Solo was partly to do with the decision of Solo Kota Kita to locate in a city whose mayor was understood to have established conducive political conditions. It should also be noted, however, that analysis of local governance elsewhere in Indonesia has revealed cases where pro-poor policy agendas have been advanced by civil society groups precisely because of the *absence* of effective city leadership.<sup>56</sup> In addition, in the case of Surabaya, celebrated environmental and greening initiatives associated with Tri Rismaharini were introduced during her time in the city's Cleansing and Landscaping Department, and as head of the city planning office -- *before* she was elected as mayor. In the case of Solo, it is possible to decenter Jokowi's personal influence by situating him in the context of wider historical dynamics of social and governmental transformation in that city.<sup>57</sup>

A second set of issues concerns those specific sites or aspects of urban development that come to stand for the "success" of whole cities and their leaders in an era of decentralized governance. Sites (and sights) such as a rejuvenated Banjarsari Park or a verdant neighbourhood within Gundih subdistrict become "synecdoches" for the cities in which they are located.<sup>58</sup> Leaving aside the possibility that these may be highly unrepresentative of wider city contexts and associated practices of governance -- though see the third set of points below -- high-profile stories have been (re)told so many times that they become difficult to examine in critical ways. This was particularly

apparent to us in the award-winning neighbourhood of Gundih sub-district in Surabaya, where residents were equipped with photographs to illustrate their rosy story of community-led environmental improvement. Nonetheless, even in the absence of sustained ethnographic engagement, critical perspectives emerged from our fieldwork in both cities. In Solo, criticism of Jokowi's achievements was not limited to powerful bureaucrats and businesspeople who perceived a loss of material benefits for their own projects. One street vendor leader complained that in comparison to the first, and most famous, case of relocation from Banjarsari, subsequent relocations of street vendors in Solo have been much less sensitively-handled and resourced.<sup>59</sup> In addition, while some of the earlier cases of traditional market renovation were effective, others are said to have been far from successful in enabling relocated street vendors to meet their livelihood needs.<sup>60</sup> At RT 7 in the Margorukun area of Surabaya's Gundih sub-district, even from our brief field visit it was evident that logics of neighbourhood competition had led to social marginalization of community members who were unwilling or unable to contribute to kampong beautification in ways that conform to prize winning expectations. It is also important to note that this particular neighbourhood has been elevated by city authorities as a normative or showcase model for intra-urban emulation rather than as a depiction of what most of Surabaya is actually like.

A third set of issues follows on from this and concerns the clear disjuncture between specific sites, sights or aspects of cities through which they have been storied as "successful" cases, and much more critical accounts of urban development emerging from academic analyses. This is particularly marked in the case of Surabaya. A recently-published ethnographic study, for example, characterizes the time in office of Tri Rismaharini's predecessor, Bambang Dwi Hartono (2002-2010), as one during which the vision of "sparkling Surabaya" was realized at the expense of the livelihoods of ordinary people working as street vendors and in traditional markets.<sup>61</sup> Significantly, it is difficult to cast Tri Rismaharini's own election as mayor in terms of a distinctly different administrative era given that Bambang continues to serve as deputy mayor. At the very least, such conflicting evaluations of the same city point to the importance of thinking critically about the varied systems of evaluation through which cities (or aspects of them) come to be judged or perceived as "successful". It is entirely plausible that a

city such as Surabaya could fare well in rankings of business-friendliness precisely through urban development policies and practices that threaten the livelihoods of street vendors.<sup>62</sup> At one level, a big-business-centred “all-out offensive against urban disorder” in Surabaya might be cast as diametrically opposed to the more people-centred and negotiated processes of urban renewal in Solo. Conversely, although the *processes* of development have been different, Jokowi’s urban vision – a city where public spaces and riverbanks are “free” of informal settlers and vendors – is arguably not dissimilar from the middle class idyll of Sparkling (or “Green and Clean”) Surabaya. Nonetheless, we maintain that there are also substantive differences between the two cities; in particular, in seeking to provide relocated riverbank dwellers and vendors in Solo with new places to live and work, Jokowi’s administration was inclusive in deed as well as political rhetoric. In addition, in Surabaya itself, Green and Clean policies are not reducible to making the city attractive to business/tourists. However unrepresentative the experiences of people in Gundih have been, they experienced Green and Clean in terms of local environmental improvement and neighbourhood pride. Even in cities where less-than-socially-progressive administrative practices and policies have been documented, therefore, it may be possible to identify socially-progressive ones too.

The fourth and final set of issues has to do with *inter*-urban learning, or the extent to which progressive aspects of urban development in Solo or Surabaya can be extended to other cities in Indonesia. As has been noted above, both of these cities have become established as popular destinations for study tours (*studi banding* or *kunjungan kerja* – ‘kunker’) among local governments in Indonesia.<sup>63</sup> Such study tours have often been cast in the media across Indonesia (in many cases accurately) as amounting to little more than shopping trips or sightseeing tours, with the island of Batam figuring prominently as a destination for study tours, in part because of its proximity to Singapore.<sup>64</sup> In the face of increasingly zealous public and media monitoring, blatant cases of the misuse of public funds for vacations and shopping trips are now much less common than when regional autonomy was first introduced, yet there remains a pervasive perception that study trips result in few tangible positive outcomes.<sup>65</sup> Certainly, it would be naive to vaunt study tours as mechanisms for the straightforward transfer of good practice.<sup>66</sup> Some good practices and activities are so

embedded in local contextual arrangements that they defy replication in any kind of recognizable form. Yet, equally clearly, there remains at least the potential that some aspects of progressive developments in sites in Solo or Surabaya (or, indeed, in other cities) may become adopted and adapted elsewhere as part of wider “policy circulation repertoires”.<sup>67</sup> An important direction for further research on decentralized governance in Indonesia is thus precisely to examine processes of inter-urban learning occurring through practices which include, but are certainly not limited to, local government study tours.

## **Conclusion**

While there have been many negative outcomes and disappointments associated with the introduction of the regional autonomy laws in Indonesia, we have sought to identify and examine success stories emerging from interviews and a variety of rankings of local government performance in our wider work on issues of urban development. We have profiled aspects of two cities. On the one hand, this clearly means that the depth of our empirical coverage is less than would be possible in a case study of a single city or site. On the other hand, by drawing upon experiences from two rather different cities – including in terms of their population size and administrative position – we avoid the tendency to generalize from a single case, while acknowledging that Solo and Surabaya are by no means representative of the diversity of urban experiences across the archipelagic nation-state of Indonesia. The chief common denominator in Solo and Surabaya’s perceived “successes” is the role of mayoral leadership. More specifically, both cases demonstrate how particular aspects of urban policy in specific sites can come to stand for the apparent success of whole cities and their leaders. In examining “Solo” and “Surabaya” as success stories, we arguably reproduce the tendency for city toponyms to obscure more specific developments and policies. Tri Rismaharini’s successful leadership in Surabaya revolves largely around issues of environmental management and improvement, while in Solo, it is peaceful and negotiated resettlement of street vendors and riverbank dwellers for which Jokowi became well known. The power of perceptions of successful leadership is evidenced by the fact that Jokowi was

able to use his track record in Solo to win election as governor of Jakarta in October 2012.

Success stories can have powerful and material effects, but the perceptions upon which they are based must also be subjected to critical scrutiny. This necessitates examination of possible disjunctures between stories of success and realities on the ground, and also points to the need to pay attention to diverse systems of evaluation of “success”. Following the recent resurgence of Lefebvre-inspired work which sees urban social progress in terms of “Cities for people, not for profit”, business rankings of the kind in which Surabaya has fared well are easy to discredit.<sup>68</sup> However, any such dismissal is arguably much less straightforward for the kind of international networks through which Surabaya’s waste management policies have attained “best practice” status, while Jokowi’s negotiated relocation successes in Solo were at the very least “for people as well as for profit”. Vedi Hadiz’s critical political economy analysis of decentralization and democracy in Indonesia has drawn attention to the influence of neo-institutionalist/neoliberal institutions that are ideologically disposed to valorize small successes in governance that leave wider mainstream political and economic systems in place.<sup>69</sup> Hadiz also argued that PDI-P – the political party through which Jokowi became both mayor of Solo and, subsequently, governor of Jakarta – has been particularly effective at appropriating the institutions of democracy in decentralized Indonesia for its own interests. We recognize these as important strands of critique, particularly in highlighting the need to consider urban governance in relation to constellations of power at various scales, rather than in purely technocratic terms. However, we question the extent to which UNESCAP or UN-Habitat can simply be lumped together with the World Bank, the IMF or USAID as neo-institutionalist/neoliberal organizations.<sup>70</sup> In addition, we consider it important to acknowledge progress, however modest, where it does exist and not to downplay what two urban geographers have recently referred to as, “the agency of the local state as potentially developmental, even progressive”.<sup>71</sup> Hadiz himself briefly mentions some modest stories of success in local government leadership in work which otherwise generalizes largely from the case of the city of Medan and elsewhere in North Sumatra. We acknowledge that careful field-based verification and discourse analysis is

necessary before stories of success are accepted as actually-existing social progress. But similar empirical responsibilities must apply to those who wish to extend negative conclusions from single cases or else who assume that nothing socially progressive can emerge in the absence of wholesale systemic transformation or urban revolution.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Examples include Christopher Bjork, "Local responses to decentralization policy in Indonesia", *Comparative Education Review* 47, no. 2 (2003): 184-216; I. A. P. Resosudarmo, "Closer to people and trees: will decentralization work for the people and forests of Indonesia?", *The European Journal of Development Research* 16, no. 1 (2004): 110-132; C. Palmer and S. Engel, "For better or for worse? Local impacts of the decentralization of Indonesia's forest sector", *World Development* 35, no. 12 (2007): 2131-2149; J. F. McCarthy, "Changing to Gray: Decentralization and the emergence of volatile socio-legal configurations in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia", *World Development* 32, no. 7 (2004): 1199-1223; C. R. Duncan, "Mixed outcomes: the impact of regional autonomy and decentralization on indigenous ethnic minorities in Indonesia", *Development and Change* 38, no. 4 (2007): 711-733; S. M. Murshed, M. Z. Tadjoeiddin and A. Chowdhury, "Is fiscal decentralization conflict abating? Routine violence and district level government in Java, Indonesia", *Oxford Development Studies* 13, no. 4 (2009): 397-421; Tommy Firman, "Decentralization reform and local-government proliferation in Indonesia: towards a fragmentation of regional development", *Review of Urban and Regional Development Studies* 21 (2009): 143-157.

<sup>2</sup> Solo is interchangeably called Surakarta in formal or official contexts. The name Surakarta derives from the Surakarta Sunate *kraton* (palace), which was created by the partition of the Mataram kingdom into two courts in 1755 (the second court is located in the city of Yogyakarta).

<sup>3</sup> H. S. Tunggal (compiler), *Undang-Undang Nomor 22 Tahun 1999 Tentang Pemerintah Daerah* (Jakarta: Harvarindo, 1999); H. S. Tunggal (compiler), *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 25 Tahun 1999 Tentang Primbangan Keuangan Antara Pemerintah Pusat dan Daerah* (Jakarta: Harvarindo, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Delik Hudalah, Haryo Winarso and Johan Woltjer, "Policy networking as capacity building: An analysis of regional road development conflict in Indonesia", *Planning Theory* 9, no. 4 (2010): 320.

<sup>5</sup> M. Turner, O. Podger, M. Sumardjono and W. K. Tirthayasa, *Decentralization in Indonesia, redesigning the state* (Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, Australian National University, 2003), 11.

<sup>6</sup> Harry J. Benda, "The pattern of administrative reforms in the closing years of Dutch rule in Indonesia", *The Journal of Asian Studies* vol. 25, no. 4 (1966): 589-605; Peter J.M. Nas, "The origin and development of the urban municipality in Indonesia", *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 5, no. 1 (1990): 86-112.

<sup>7</sup> M. Charras, "The reshaping of the Indonesian archipelago after 50 years of regional imbalance", in *Regionalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia*, eds. M. Erb, P. Sulistiyanto and C. Faucher (London and New York: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> The World Bank, <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/what.htm>, last accessed 16 September 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Aspinall and Fealy refer to popular conceptions of the emergence of multiple "little Soehartos" at the local level. Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy, "Introduction: Decentralisation, democratisation and the rise of the local", in *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralisation and Democratisation*, eds. Edward Aspinall and Greg Fealy (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003), 5. It should be noted that the volume that this chapter introduces is one which did recognize some positive as well as negative outcomes of decentralized governance even during the initial stages of its implementation.

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- <sup>10</sup> Vedi Hadiz, "Decentralization and democracy in Indonesia: a critique of neo-institutionalist perspectives", *Development and Change* 35, no. 4 (2004): 704.
- <sup>11</sup> Gerry van Klinken, *Communal Violence and Democratisation in Indonesia: Small Town Wars* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009).
- <sup>12</sup> B. Bambang Brodjonegoro, "Fiscal Decentralization and its Impact on Regional Economic Development and Fiscal Sustainability" in *Decentralization and Regional Autonomy in Indonesia. Implementation and Challenges*, eds. Coen J. G. Holtzappel and Martin Ramstedt (Singapore: ISEAS, 2009).
- <sup>13</sup> Tommy Firman, "The continuity and change in mega-urbanization in Indonesia: A survey of Jakarta-Bandung Region (JBR) development", *Habitat International* 33 (2009): 336.
- <sup>14</sup> It should be noted that these were not local politicians or administrators to whom power has been devolved and who might thus reasonably be expected to be decentralization's "staunchest supporters". Aspinnall and Fealy, "Decentralisation, Democratisation," 7.
- <sup>15</sup> Aihwa Ong, "Introduction: The art of being global", in *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, eds. Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 1-26.
- <sup>16</sup> Howard Dick, *Surabaya, City of Work: A Socioeconomic History, 1900-2000* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2003).
- <sup>17</sup> *Majalah Tempo*, "Sedikit orang baik di republic yang luas" [A few good (wo)men in a vast republic], 22 December, 2008.
- <sup>18</sup> Although Deden Rukmana has noted that "most city administrations are now more flexible with the street vendors and less likely to use repressive measures toward the street vendors than during Suharto's authoritarian regime". D. Rukmana, "Street vendors and planning in Indonesian cities", *Planning Theory and Practice* vol. 12 (2011): 138-144.
- <sup>19</sup> *Jakarta Post*, "Nine cities recognized for success with slums", 1 October, 2009.
- <sup>20</sup> *Suara Merdeka*, "Meriah, kirab boyong Klithikan", 24 July 2006; Association of Indonesian City Governments (APEKSI), *City Best Practice Documentation, Volume 4*, June 2008. The agreement included a waiver of business permit and license fees but stipulated that the street vendors would pay Rp. 6,000 (US\$ 0.60) per day for space at the traditional market.
- <sup>21</sup> According to one second hand motorcycle parts dealer who relocated to Klithikan market, some of his fellow vendors believed that the ceremonial parade was necessary to drive bad fortune (*buang sukerto*) from the relocation site – which had previously been an infamous red light area – while others just saw the event as good advertising for the new market. Pak Bibit, interview by authors, Solo, 17 May 2013.
- <sup>22</sup> Zoemrotin K. Susilo, cited in *Jakarta Post*, "Mayors win anti-graft award", 5 October, 2010, 2. Similarly, academic studies have noted Jokowi's "cooperative" rather than "authoritarian" approach which saw street vendors involved in the process of planning and implementing their relocation. E. Morrell, N. Tuerah and H.F. Sumarto, "Local authority and pro-poor urban management in Indonesia's transition to democracy", *International Development Planning Review* 31, no. 11 (2011): 49-66.
- <sup>23</sup> On the privatization of urban space in the context of Asia more widely, see Trevor Hogan, Tim Bunnell, C.P. Pow, Eka Permanasari and Sirat Morshidi, "Asian urbanisms and the privatization of cities", *Cities* 29 (2012): 59-62.
- <sup>24</sup> *Jakarta Post*, "Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo: Changing the face of Solo", 29 October, 2008. On "civic spaces" and their definitional relation to the more commonly-used terms public and private space, see Mike Douglass and Amrita Daniere, "Urbanization and civic space in Asia", in *The Politics of Civic Space in Asia: Building Urban Communities*, eds. A. Daniere and M. Douglass (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009) pp. 1-18.
- <sup>25</sup> Interview with Gusta Gunawan, Head, Bapermas, Solo, 27 February 2013.
- <sup>26</sup> Interview with Joko Widodo, Solo, 13 August 2010.
- <sup>27</sup> On the expansion of hypermarkets after a ban on of foreign investment in food retailing was lifted as part of the IMF's recovery package during Indonesia's financial crisis, see Alex Mutebi, "Regulatory responses to large-format transnational retail in Southeast Asian cities", *Urban Studies* 44, no. 2 (2007): 357-79.
- <sup>28</sup> *Jakarta Post*, "Joko 'Jokowi' Widodo: Changing the face of Solo", 29 October, 2008.
- <sup>29</sup> Peraturan Daerah Kota Surakarta, no. 5, 2011.
- <sup>30</sup> Interview with Ingramto, Domestic Cooperation, Solo City Government, 13 August 2010. In electoral terms, it is worth noting that Jokowi is a candidate of the Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle, or PDI-P whose political base in the city included poor and marginalized groups. Rushda Majeed, "Defusing

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a volatile city, igniting reforms: Joko Widodo and Surakarta, Indonesia, 2005-2011”, *Innovations for Successful Societies*, Princeton University, [http://www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties/content/data/policy\\_note/PN\\_id199/Policy\\_Note\\_ID199.txt](http://www.princeton.edu/successfulsocieties/content/data/policy_note/PN_id199/Policy_Note_ID199.txt), accessed on 1 December 2012.

<sup>31</sup> *Kompas*, “Inilah tips Joko Widodo menata PKL di kota Solo” [Tips from Joko Widodo for organizing street vendors in the city of Solo], 18 June, 2009.

<sup>32</sup> *Detiknews*, “Walikota Solo Jokowi giat menghidupkan pasar tradisional” [Solo mayor Jokowi gives life to traditional market], 29 October, 2010,

<http://news.detik.com/read/2010/10/29/102807/1478458/10/walikota-solo-jokowi-giat-menghidupkan-pasar-tradisional?n991103605>, accessed on 22 November, 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Cited in *Jakarta Post*, “Mayors win anti-graft award”, 5 October, 2010, p.2

<sup>34</sup> *Detiknews*, “Walikota Solo”.

<sup>35</sup> Zoemrotin K. Susilo, cited in *The Jakarta Post*, “Mayors win anti-graft award”, 5 October, 2010, 2.

<sup>36</sup> John Taylor, “Solo Kota Kita: Improving citizen participation through participatory mapping and neighborhood information”. Paper presented at *Conference on Decentralization and Urban Transformation in Asia* (Singapore, 10-11 March 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Rifai Ahmad (Solo Kota Kita activist), interview by authors, Solo, 11 August 2010.

<sup>38</sup> *The Jakarta Post* (26 October 2010).

<sup>39</sup> A profile of Surabaya in the Singapore *Straits Times* in mid-2010 glossed Surabaya’s transformation “From shabby town to sparkling city”. *The Straits Times*, 14 August 2010, p. D7. Surabaya’s strong showing on a “satisfaction index” for business performance appeared in *SWA Magazine* (12-22 August 2010).

<sup>40</sup> UN-Habitat, *Best Practices Database in Improving the Living Environment* (2008)

<http://www.unhabitat.org/bestpractices/2008/mainview.asp?BPID=1903>, accessed 30 April, 2013. Among the awards listed in this database is a 2007 UNESCAP award for Urban Environment Improvement.

<sup>41</sup> D. G. J. Premakumara, M. Abe and T. Maeda, “Reducing municipal waste through promoting integrated sustainable waste management (ISWM) practices in Surabaya city, Indonesia” in *Ecosystems and Sustainable Development VIII*, eds. Y. Villacampa and C. A. Brebbia (London: WIT Press, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> A. Hebi Dj, Cleansing and Landscaping Department, Surabaya City Government, interview by authors, Surabaya, 12 August 2011; UN-Habitat, *Best Practices Database*.

<sup>43</sup> This is known as the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment (see <http://www.iges.or.jp/kitakyushu>)

<sup>44</sup> Premakumara, Abe and Maeda, “Reducing municipal waste”.

<sup>45</sup> Association of Indonesian City Governments (APEKSI), *City Best Practice Documentation, Volume 4*, June 2008.

<sup>46</sup> Premakumara, Abe and Maeda, “Reducing municipal waste”.

<sup>47</sup> It was in this role and subsequently as head of the Surabaya City Planning Department (2008-2010), that Tri Rismaharini made a name for herself, not only for the 3R program but also for having established new parks and revitalized old ones in the city. *Jakarta Post*, “Surabaya installs first woman mayor”, 29 September 2010.

<sup>48</sup> Ibrahim Zaky, Cleansing and Landscaping Department, Surabaya City Government, interview by authors, Surabaya, 12 August 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Premakumara, Abe and Maeda, “Reducing municipal waste”.

<sup>50</sup> A. Tahir, M. Yoshida, and S. Harashina, “Expanding the implementation of community-based waste management: learning from the Green and Clean Program in Indonesia”, *Journal of Environmental Information Science* 45 (2011): 79-88.

<sup>51</sup> Lili Soleh Wartadipradja (Director, Cooperation Affairs Bureau, East Java Provincial Government), interview by authors, Surabaya, 9 August 2011. The six constituent local governments are Gresik, Bangkalan, Mojokerto, Surabaya, Sidoarjo and Lamongan.

<sup>52</sup> Purabaya is the main bus terminal for Surabaya but it is located outside the city limits in Bungurasih, Sidoarjo district. This arrangement dates back to the Suharto era when provincial level coordination of the Gerbangkertosusila urban planning region was much more straightforward. Following the initiation of regional autonomy, Surabaya city refused to pay fees from the old agreement to Sidoarjo, ostensibly because of the high cost of running and maintaining the terminal. Conflict between the two local

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governments over the Purabaya issue extended beyond matters of money to include the management of “social problems” such as crime, traffic, illegal street vendors and environmental impacts. Interview with Ari Suryono (Spatial Planning and Human Settlement section, Planning Department, Kabupaten Sidoarjo), Sidoarjo, 11 August 2011.

<sup>53</sup> Lili Soleh Wartadipradja, Director, Cooperation Affairs Bureau, East Java Provincial Government, interview by authors, Surabaya, 9 August 2011.

<sup>54</sup> Ari Suryono, interview, 11 August 2011. The Kartamantul (Yogyakarta, Bantul and Sleman) region has been vaunted by Indonesia’s central government and international agencies for its cross-border urban infrastructure management, and was the only one of nine cases of metropolitan governance considered to be a success story in a recent academic study. See Delik Hudalah, Fikri Zul Fahmi and Tommy Firman, “Regional governance in decentralizing Indonesia: Learning from the success of urban-rural cooperation in metropolitan Yogyakarta”, in *Cleavage, Connection and Conflict in Rural, Urban and Contemporary Asia*, eds. Tim Bunnell, D. Parthasarathy and Eric C. Thompson, 65-82 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013).

<sup>55</sup> For a recent critique of the way in which the predominance of work on neoliberalism in urban studies has obscured other forms of “circulating urban policy knowledge”, see Susan Parnell and Jennifer Robinson, “(Re)theorizing cities from the global South: Looking beyond neoliberalism”, *Urban Geography* 33 (2012): 593-617.

<sup>56</sup> Laurel Maclaren, R. Alam Surya Putra and Erman Rahman, “How civil society organizations work”. Paper presented at *Conference on Decentralization and Urban Transformation in Asia* (Singapore, 10-11 March 2011).

<sup>57</sup> Solo had taken important steps along a “new path” to participatory planning and had gained international recognition as a “forerunner” in the reform movement before Jokowi was elected as mayor in 2005. Ida Widianingsih, “Local governance, decentralization, and participatory planning in Indonesia: Seeking a new path to a harmonious society”, in *The Role of Public Administration in Building a Harmonious Society*, ed. Raza Ahmad Mandaluyong City: Asian Development Bank, 2006). In the specific case of the Solo Kota Kita mapping initiative, leadership and most of the work, was performed by civil society actors.

<sup>58</sup> On the tendency for synecdoche in representations of cities, see Ash Amin and Stephen Graham, “The ordinary city”, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 22 (1997): 411-429.

<sup>59</sup> Sukir, coordinator of PPSK Solo (organization for street vendors), interview by authors, Solo, 19 March 2011. A recent research paper suggests that not all housing relations went smoothly either. Rushda Majeed, “Defusing a volatile city”.

<sup>60</sup> Sukir reportedly reminded Jokowi in a public meeting that “trees need watering and feeding”. Interview, Solo, 26 February 2013.

<sup>61</sup> Robbie Peters, *Surabaya, 1945-2010: Neighbourhood, State and Economy in Indonesia’s City of Struggle* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013). As Peters puts it, “The municipal government’s ability to raise revenues from the street grew in inverse proportion to the ability of poor kampung people to make a living from it” (p. 198). It is perhaps also revealing that a recent book celebrating Bambang’s achievements as mayor refers to PKL (street vendors) only as a problem and notes that a district head with a military background was appointed to deal with them. Ridho Saiful Ashadi, *Bambang D.H.: Mengubah Surabaya [Bambang D.H.: Changing Surabaya]* (Indonesia Berdikari, 2012).

<sup>62</sup> While SWA Magazine’s business rankings, for example, are based on surveys of entrepreneurs in small, medium and big business, these are presumably formal, licensed entrepreneurs rather than the kinds of informal street vendors who are central to Robbie Peters’ ethnographic concerns.

<sup>63</sup> In the case of Solo, the city received 27 official study tours in 2010, mostly in relation to the resettlement of street vendors, although there are many more unofficial tours that are not accounted for by the Solo city government. In Surabaya, the city government’s Cleansing and Landscaping Department alone received 45 official study tours during the year 2010. This included 19 different city governments, some of which sent delegations on more than one occasion, as well as 8 regency governments. Four of the cities, Balikpapan, Makassar, Palembang and Tarakan, have also committed to a project to replicate Surabaya’s solid waste model. This initiative is being driven by Kitakyushu City and the Institute for Global Environmental Studies (IGES) with support from the Indonesia office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS), the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Public Works. The initiative is also being extended internationally to cities

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in the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia. City of Kitakyushu and IGES (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies), *Composting for Waste Reduction Information Kit* (2010).

<sup>64</sup> Pirma Marpaung, Investment Coordination Board, Batam City, interview by authors, 8 September 2011. As an example of a negative report about study tours in the media in Indonesia, see "TII: Studi Banding Berpotensi Korupsi" [Study Tours have the Potential for Corruption], *Waspada*, 17 September 2010.

<sup>65</sup> Many of our own informants have been vague or evasive in elaborating the outcomes of study tours in which they have participated, and some have even explicitly stated that they are not sure about the benefits derived from them.

<sup>66</sup> Beyond the specific context of decentralized governance in Indonesia, the past decade has seen a burgeoning of critical trans-disciplinary research on inter-urban policy mobilities which seeks to move beyond the longstanding literature on policy transfer and learning, examining instead the ongoing mutation of policies that are never simply exported wholesale. Jamie Peck and Nick Theodore, "Mobilizing policy: models, methods and mutations", *Geoforum* 41 (2010): 169-174.

<sup>67</sup> This is a term we borrow from: Ola Söderström and S. Geertman, "Loose threads: the translocal making of public space policy in Hanoi", *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 34, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>68</sup> Neil Brenner, Peter Marcuse and Margit Mayer, "Cities for people, not for profit: An introduction", in *Cities for People, Not for Profit: Critical Urban Theory and the Right to the City*, eds, Brenner, Marcuse and Mayer (London and New York: Routledge, 2012): 1-10.

<sup>69</sup> Hadiz, 'Decentralization and democracy'.

<sup>70</sup> See also Nicholas A. Phelps, Tim Bunnell and Michelle Ann Miller, "Post-disaster economic development in Aceh: Neoliberalism and other economic-geographical imaginaries", *Geoforum* 42, no. 4 (2011): 418-426.

<sup>71</sup> Parnell and Robinson, "(Re)theorizing cities from the global South", p. 594.