Scalar Toggling & Trans-localism: Observations on Spatial Sustainability from Inner, East & South Asia
By Dr David Sadoway

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Tower Block Level 10, 469A Bukit Timah Road
National University of Singapore @ BTC

CHAIRPERSON

Prof Prasenjit Duara, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

ABSTRACT

Scale remains a critical conceptual and practical barrier for acting upon and talking about the longstanding sustainability challenges facing communities, cities, nation-states and the international community. This discussion introduces the concept of “global-local scalar toggling” as a potentially useful way of thinking about sustainability both from the “street level”, where the day-to-day realities of environmental challenges are faced; to the “suite level”, where governance, programming and logistical decisions shape the bigger picture, and yet often remain detached from “local knowledge systems”.

Drawing from research at several distinct research sites where I have previously worked (Ulaanbaatar, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei, New Delhi, Bengaluru) I aim to provide examples of the ongoing ontological, empirical and epistemological challenges of “transcending” scale. I suggest that the need to simultaneously toggle between being grounded (in a practical sense) and yet global (in a theoretical sense) remains crucial in problematizing spatial sustainability challenges and solutions.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

David Sadoway has been a Postdoctoral Research Fellow with HSS-Sociology at Nanyang Technological University since February 2015. His current research explores “underground urbanism”. He has a PhD in Urban Planning and Design from the University of Hong Kong (2013) and served as a Postdoctoral fellow at Concordia University, Montréal (2012-14), where he examined the politics of Indian urban infrastructure. Dr Sadoway has been a Visiting Scholar at: The Technical University of Darmstadt’s Topology of Technology Faculty (2013); The National Institute of Urban Affairs, New Delhi (2013); and Academia Sinica’s Center for Asia-Pacific Area Studies, Taipei (2008). His research interests include: Asian urbanism; civic environmentalism; urban infrastructure and technologies; community informatics; and enclave urbanism. Dr Sadoway has worked in the U.N. system, government, the non-profit sector; and with urban planning consultants.

REGISTRATION

Admission is free. We would greatly appreciate if you RSVP to Ms Tay Minghua via email: minghua.tay@nus.edu.sg