Desakota:
A Politically Calculated Spatial Configuration of Urbanization

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05/09/2019
Global Depeasantization

GDP per head vs share of agriculture in employment, 1960 to 2010

The vertical axis shows historical estimates of the employment share in the agriculture sector. The horizontal axis shows GDP per head after adjusting for inflation (figures are in 2011 international US dollars) and uses multiple benchmarks for cross-country income comparisons.

Source: Our World In Data based on Herrendorf et al. (2014) and GGDC-10 (2015); Maddison Project Database (2018)

graph from: https://ourworldindata.org/employment-in-agriculture
Global Depeasantization

spatial transformation
- deruralization
- overurbanization

peasant class transformation
- differentiation
- dissolution
Sir Arthur Lewis: Economic Development with Unlimited Supply of Labor

missing from the two-sector surplus labor model:
relative surplus population (RSP)/industrial reserve army
- floating RSP
- latent RSP
- stagnant RSP
- pauperdom
Where might RSP reside?
How does state relocate RSP?

- squatter settlements, favelas, slums, and desakotas
How do different strategies of agrarian labor absorption result in different spatial configurations and processes of class transformation?

Key Concepts

- depeasantization
- agricultural surplus labor
- industrialization
- peasant class transformation
- urbanization
- social reproduction

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the Linkage Between Depeasantization and the Emergence of Desakota

- intense mixture of agricultural and nonagricultural activities
- often stretched along corridors between large city cores.
- previously characterized by dense populations engaged in agriculture
- governance “grey zone”
- dual identities of peasants

Figure 1.1. Spatial configuration of a hypothetical Asian country
Urban-Agrarian Interface

Seoul, South Korea

Jakarta, Indonesia

Shanghai, China
Creation and Absorption of Agricultural Surplus Labor

East Asia
South Korea
- 1965: Land-to-the-tiller
  end of landlord tenant system from 1945
- 1970s: Green Revolution
- Industrialization
- 1960s: food aid—provide cheap food for industry
- 60s: begin of EOI
- 62-81: South Korea industrial Reform

China
- 1978: Household Responsibility System (HRS)
- 1989: economic Reform
- 1992: terminate travel restriction on migrant workers
- 1978: Opening Reform
- Rise of TVEs from 28 million in 1978 to a peak of 135 million in 1996
- 2000: join WTO

Southeast Asia
Indonesia
- 1965: Green Revolution
  Indonesia genocide—“floating mass”
- 1967: subsidize on agriculture after food crisis
- 1980: “clean environment” (bersih lingkungan)
- 1973: first Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in North Jakarta
- 1979: World Bank-led free trade export-processing zones
- 1999: establishment of JABOTABEK
## Creation and Absorption of Agricultural Surplus Labor

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<td>- transmigration program</td>
<td>- hukou</td>
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<td>- disparity between rural and urban</td>
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Chinese Desakota Mutation

economic growth, uneven development

- household responsibility system: release agri-labor; start of the industrial sector (opening reform 1984)

- rise of TVEs “enter the industrial sector without entering the city; leave farmland without leaving homeland “进厂不进城, 离土不离乡”; absorb agricultural surplus labor in place (1984 1988);

- enter the industrial sector by entering the city; leave farmland while leaving homeland “进厂又进城, 离土又离乡” long-distance migration (1989 to now)
Chinese Desakota Mutation

1978-1988
proto-industrialization through TVE
in-place absorption of labor

1985-1998
export-oriented industrialization
absorption of both local and migrant labor

1998-present
continued industrialization and beginning of urban expansion
land conversion and real estate contribute significantly to state revenue
absorption of large number of migrant labor

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**LEGEND**
- Industries
- Labor Movement
- Capital Movement (Investment and revenue)
Migration

Change of Food Regime

- Loss of farmland
- Growing agricultural import
- Overseas agricultural investment

China’s Agricultural Imports and Exports

China's Direct Overseas Investment in Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing

Marginalized RSP

- Structural discrimination
- Lack of legal protection
- Lack of political alliance
- Lack of social welfare

images from left to right, up to down:
2. https://www.sohu.com/a/215386087_664569
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- accommodate RSP
- discipline labor
- further squeeze surplus agricultural labor productivity
- seem chaotic, but it is a deliberate political project
- boost economic growth for urban capital accumulation
- benefit the state and enterprises, not peasants
See *Desakotas in the Mirror of Favelas*

Similiar issues of depeasantization and surplus labor absorption

Different peri-urban spatial pattern
See Desakotas in the Mirror of Favelas

Potential Explanation: the Timing of Land Reform in Latin America

Potential Explanation: Precondition on Urban Fringe

urban and agricultural land near Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo

urban and agricultural land in Yangtze River Delta
Value and Future Implications of the Research

- Connect Desakota with the depeasantization
- The success of Desakota should not be evaluated only by economic output
- Future research and policy should take into account the vulnerability of RSP during the urban/agrarian transformation
Thank you!

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