

## Evidences that Demand a Verdict: Place-making Battles in Asian World City

Mee Kam Ng

HKU

HK

This paper examines the history and politics of reclamation, a mechanism that has produced 25 percent of urban land from the sea, in Hong Kong. Through detailed review of historical records and documents, the 感 heroic conquest?of the sea by reclamation in Hong Kong in the past 168 years can be divided in four broad phases: a tug-of-war between the pro-reclamation colonial Government and the anti-reclamation British military force and the private sector in the first forty years in the City of Victoria; a prolonged period from the 1880s to the Second World War with Government-planned but private sector-driven reclamations spread to Kowloon, annexed in 1860; the post-war decades up to the 1990s when public-sector led reclamation had been instrumental in accommodating and fueling industrialization and urban growth spatially and financially; and finally in the last decade when the civil society groups have been proactive in arresting further Harbour reclamation and demanding a right to design an accessible, vibrant and sustainable Harbourfront. This historical review offers us a window to decipher the politics of place-making in an evolving open market economy 懷 acilitated?by an executive-led government increasingly challenged by a developing post-colonial civil society.