



# Jakarta, Drawing the City Near

*AbdouMaliq Simone*

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## **Jakarta, Drawing the City Near** AbdouMaliq Simone

Jakarta, a city rife with disparities like many cities in the Global South, is undergoing rapid change. Alongside its megastructures, high-rise residential buildings, and franchised convenience stores, Jakarta's massive slums and off-hour street markets foster an unsettled urban population surviving in difficult conditions. But where does the vast middle of urban life fit into this dichotomy? In *Jakarta, Drawing the City Near*, AbdouMaliq Simone examines how people who the largest part of the population, such as the craftsmen, shopkeepers, and public servants, navigate and affect positive developments.

In a city where people of diverse occupations operate in close proximity to each other, appearance can be very deceptive. Set in a place that on the surface seems remarkably dysfunctional, Simone guides readers through urban spaces and encounters, detailing households, institutions, markets, mosques, and schools. Over five years he engaged with residents from three different districts, and now he parses out the practices, politics, and economies that form present-day Jakarta while revealing how those who face uncertainty manage to improve their lives.

Simone illustrates how the majority of Jakarta's population, caught between intense wealth and utter poverty, handle confluence and contradictions in their everyday lives. By exploring how inhabitants from different backgrounds regard each other, how they work together or keep their distance in order to make the city in which they reside endure, *Jakarta, Drawing the City Near* offers a powerful new way of thinking about urban life.

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