

Abstract

In stark contrast to the popular image of Hong Kong as an exemplifier of laissez faire capitalism, in land and housing the Hong Kong government has always been an active and influential player. In this paper I try to show how government policies have helped shape an apparent paradox: the coexistence of an exceedingly high land and housing price regime and one of the largest public housing programmes in the world. In particular, I try to illustrate how this development is intricately linked to Hong Kong's rather unique suburbanisation experience, namely, contained suburbanisation under the New Town Development Programme (NTDP). The paper concludes by highlighting the changing housing policy discourses since the 1997 handover.