

2012 ROTCH SCHOLARSHIP
RESEARCH PROPOSAL

MIGRATING COASTLINES

LAND RECLAMATION AND 'TERRA NOVUS'

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RESEARCH STATEMENT

This great, unprecedented structure has changed the map of South Korea.

- South Korean President Lee Myung-Bak announcing the completion of the first phase of the Saemangeum reclamation project

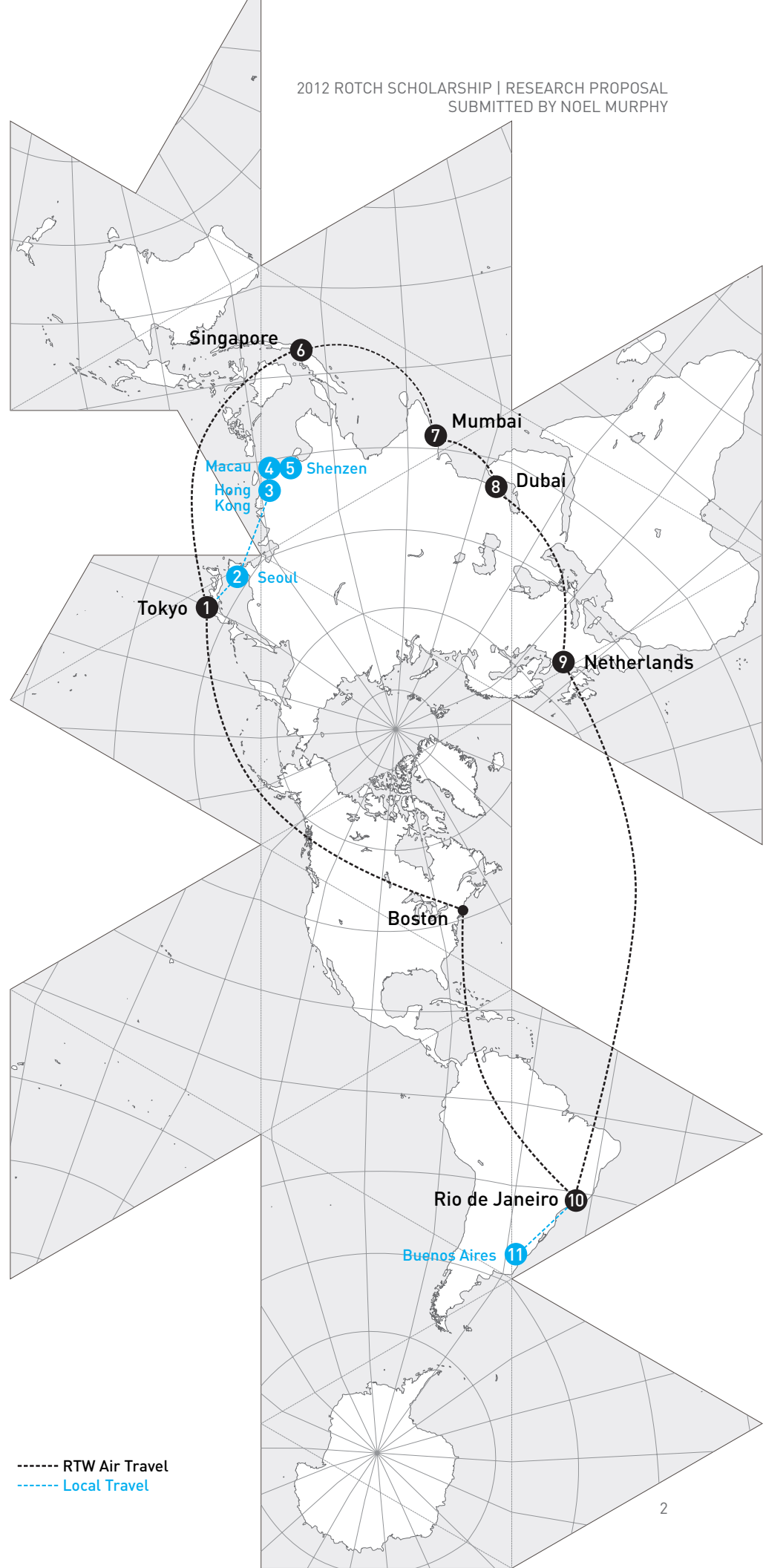
The practice of land reclamation has played a significant role in the transformation of coastal cities. The fabrication of new land for occupation is not a new phenomenon – its history dates to early urban settlements, including Tenochtitlán and Constantinople. Today, urbanized coastal areas are faced with the triple challenge of erosion, land scarcity, and rapid demographic growth. Cities, governments, and corporations have turned to land reclamation as an instrument for handling these pressures. These interventions – terra firma augmented by 'terra novus' - present new opportunities for investigating the coastal city and imagining its future.

Contemporary land reclamation projects are rapidly accelerating in scope and ambition. South Korea's Saemangeum project began with the construction of the world's longest seawall, a vast 33 kilometer structure completed in 2006. Here a waterfront city, Ariul, is planned for construction on a 6,730 hectare site. The last major land reclamation project in Asia was the construction of Chek Lap Kok, Hong Kong's island airport. At the time, 80 percent of the world's dredging equipment was involved. But at just a little over 12 square kilometers, Chek Lap Kok is a mere sandbar compared to Saemangeum. The current record holder for land reclamation is the Palm Deira, currently under construction in Dubai. If Dubai's artificial growth into the sea suggests a mirage, the development of Saemangeum presents an alternate reality. When complete, Saemangeum will be 8 times larger and provide a combination agricultural, industrial, residential and tourist facilities.

Land reclamation has many manifestations and the territorial effect on the city results from a complex interplay of politics and ethics coupled with a multitude of geo and hydraulic engineering techniques, land use programs, and environmental variables. This research proposes the examination of land reclamation as a global project. It will explore key historical precedents in-situ to understand the impacts of migrating coastlines within individual cities. Additionally, visits will be made to sites where reclamation is planned or in process. Finally, speculations will be offered – in the form of diagrams and mappings - regarding future potentials and consequences for 'terra novus.'

TRAVEL ITINERARY

- 1. Tokyo**
Tokyo Bay (various projects)
- 2. Seoul**
*Incheon
Saemangeum*
- 3. Hong Kong**
*Praya Reclamation Scheme
Chek Lak Kok / Hong Kong Disneyland
West Kowloon*
- 4. Macau**
*Taipa
Coloane*
- 5. Shenzhen**
*Baoan International Airport
Shenzhen Special Economic Zone*
- 6. Singapore**
*Marina City
Changi Airport
Jurong Island*
- 7. Mumbai**
*Colaba Causeway
Back Bay Reclamation Project*
- 8. Dubai**
*Palms / The World
Sowwah Island
Port Jebel Ali*
- 9. Netherlands**
*Ijburg
Flevopolder/Flevoland
Haarlemmermeer
Beemster*
- 11. Rio de Janeiro**
Baia de Guanabara (various projects)
- 12. Buenos Aires**
*Port of Buenos Aires
River Coast Park*



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----- Local Travel