

"Making High-rise Development in the Tropics":
A personal reflection through 5 decades of practice

Abstract

Since the invention of vertical modes of transportation in the early 19th century to the celebration of efficient pre-fabrication technologies post-war, the ambitions of the vertical city model have mushroomed to enormous proportions. In the context of Singapore's built environment, the high-rise typology is more the rule than the exception. This paper aims to discuss the potentials and the challenges of making high-rise living in the tropics. Coinciding with Singapore's 50 years of independence, I shall introduce a selection of projects undertaken in my 5 decades of practice. Using the architectural floor plan as the main mode of analysis, the works shall serve as a reflective personal account on high-rise design and the continually evolving architectural profession. Taking reference from past experience, the paper shall explore the future of the vertical city model and how it can be conceived.