

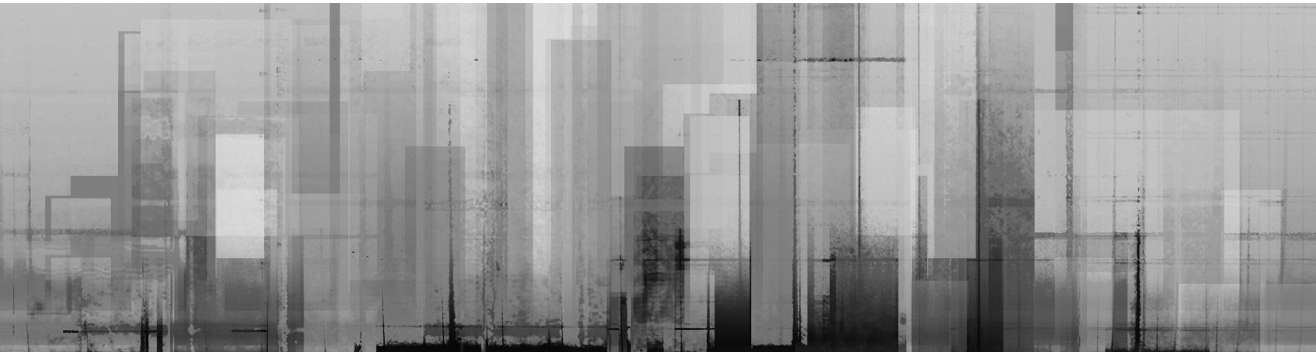
The SAGE Handbook of  
New Urban Studies



Edited by  
John Hannigan and  
Greg Richards



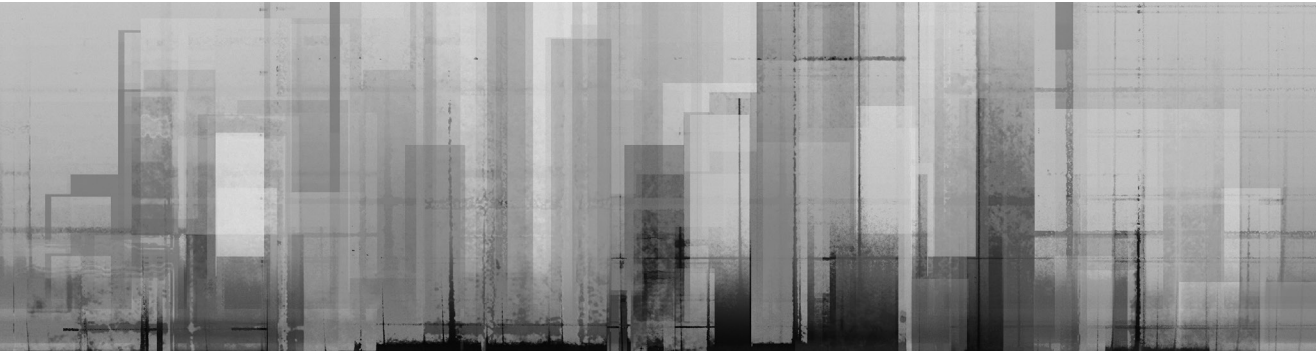
The SAGE Handbook of  
**New Urban Studies**



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# The SAGE Handbook of New Urban Studies



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Greg Richards

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# Introduction

John Hannigan and Greg Richards

When news first broke of the fatal shooting of 28 foreigners at the Splendid Hotel in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, most reporters had only the remotest idea where the West African city is located. Those who did depicted it as a dreary inland administrative centre – David Tang, the *Financial Times* of London’s resident cultural sophisticate, includes it on his list of the world’s worst cities, ‘dirty, dusty and rotten’ (Tang, 2016: 1) – popular mainly with a few hundred foreign civilians working for faith-based relief agencies. In fact, Ouagadougou is a culturally vibrant city of 1.5 million people, a third larger than Birmingham, England’s second most populous city. Ouagadougou is hardly unique. Recent urbanization along the Gulf of Guinea (West Africa) has been so rapid that the region will soon be comparable to the East Coast of the United States, with five cities over 1 million people, including one *hypercity*, Lagos Nigeria, with a population of 23 million (Davis, 2006: 5–6). Explosive urban population growth is not restricted to

the African continent. In most countries, urbanization levels have reached record levels, with some world regions becoming more than 80 per cent urban (Brenner and Keil, 2006).

This ‘planetary urbanization’ or ‘urban age’ trope has come to dominate how we think of cities. Since the late 1980s, Brenner and Schmid (2014: 312) note, the urban age thesis ‘has been embraced with increasing frequency in international urban scholarship and policy research, often by influential thinkers and practitioners as a convenient metanarrative for framing a wide variety of investigations within or about cities’ (Brenner, 2014). Arboleda (2014: 339) observes that the often heard claim that more than half the world’s population now resides in cities has become a form of ‘doxic common sense’ that determines the way in which questions regarding the urban condition are framed, both at multilateral agencies like the United Nations and the World Bank but also in ‘the conceptual repertoires of political progressive strands of

thought in urban studies'. While not disputing that the percentage of urban dwellers worldwide will soon be reaching epic proportions, Merrifield (2014: x) complains that academic experts and media commentators alike are engaging in 'Malthusian fear mongering' which 'obfuscates the class and power question surrounding our current urban question'.

Whilst urban commentators generally agree that we increasingly live in a 'world of cities', there is considerably less agreement on how to interpret and understand the contemporary urban condition. There are three interrelated points of contention.

One major fault line has developed around the degree of importance that should continue to be accorded to physical space as an organizing concept. In the classic human ecological model which dominated urban sociology and geography for its first half-century, the organization and physical layout of the city were treated as having a life of their own. Park and Burgess (Park et al., 1925) asserted that the city could be visualized as a series of concentric circles or zones rippling outwards from the core. As one moves further from the central business district, the land becomes more valuable, the housing more desirable and the population more assimilated.

When a political economy perspective finally mounted a successful paradigmatic challenge in the 1970s, physical space still held centre stage, albeit from a radically different vantage point. David Harvey (1973, 1975) asserted that urban space should be seen as a scarce resource that is distributed not by natural ecological processes, but rather by outcomes based on economic and political conflict rooted in class-based struggles (Hutter, 2007: 123). While agreeing that capital and class are regrettably missing from the human ecology paradigm, urban political economists differ widely on what an alternative treatment of space should look like. For example, Gottdiener and Hutchison (2011: 394–5) argue that neo-Marxist versions of urban political economy err in considering location merely as a container for economic processes. Their

*socio-spatial perspective* identifies real estate interests and government intervention as missing elements in explaining how the built environment changes and develops.

Inspired by Lefebvre's triadic model of the social production of space, other urban analysts adopted a more explicitly constructionist approach. Representational space, the third element of the triad, allows for new forms of understanding in physical environments that otherwise seem to be fixed and controlled by economic and political elites. The possibility exists here for the imaginative re-use and remaking of the city, drawing on a different set of cultural and historical resources (Robinson, 2004: 172–3). In the introduction to their edited collection, *Urban Imaginaries: Locating the Modern City*, Alev Çinar and Thomas Bender (2007) describe what a new perspective on the city might look like. Rather than focus on a single, defined physical space with fixed boundaries, we are urged to visualize the city as a field of experience that is socially constructed by its inhabitants. Cities are thus the products of a collective imagination, albeit one that is grounded in material space and social practice. Significantly, collective narratives about the city serve to construct, negotiate and contest boundaries, a process that inevitably leads to ethnic, racial and class conflict. Theoretically, the challenge here is to combine political economy, whose emphasis is on conflict and inequality, with more recent cultural and linguistic approaches that interpret the city as 'a space of performance, theatre and signification' (Gotham, 2002: 1739). This can potentially lead to a more sophisticated form of urban scholarship which does not lose track of the city as a site of inequality and struggle.

More recently, the politics and use of urban space have been reconfigured by a global trend towards greater entrepreneurialism, more intense inter-urban competition and the promotion of place-specific development strategies (Ooi, 2004: 11). As Greg Richards points out in Chapter 4, the increasingly competitive global environment of cities 'has

forced them to adopt different strategies to distinguish themselves and create competitive advantage in order to attract resources, talent and attention’.

One intriguing new treatment of urban space is captured by the concept of ‘gray space’. According to the Israeli political geographer Oren Yiftachel, in the early stages of the twenty-first century the structural dynamics of cities have pushed massive numbers of residents into gray space – political spaces characterized by mobility, informality, temporariness, marginality and extreme status and power disparities. This produces a structure that resembles ‘creeping urban apartheid’ (Yiftachel, 2009: 92), wherein many urban residents ‘are regarded as unrecognized, illegal, temporary or severely marginalized in urban regions in which they live and work’ (Yiftachel, 2015: 730).

A second polarity within the urban literature aligns along the treatment of diversity and difference. Hannigan (2013) identifies and contrasts two opposing approaches here. The first, the economic and prosperity model, privileges economic productivity and competitiveness, cosmopolitan urbanity, cultural consumption, governance through private-public collaboration, creativity and innovation as growth drivers. By contrast, the rights, justice and emancipation model favours the informal economy, everyday urban practices, public infrastructures and spaces, citizenship rights, social equity and redistribution, social justice and democratic hope. Whereas the former treats diversity as a ‘lure’ with which to attract tourists, investors and ‘creative people’, the latter values urban difference in its own right as the portal to a liveable and just city. Merrifield (2014) situates this chronologically in a shift that occurred in the latter decades of the twentieth century. In the 1960s and 1970s the state primarily engaged in policies that promoted collective consumption items (housing, health, social welfare) vital for social reproduction. Under pressure from the fiscal crises and economic downturn during the 1980s, this changed. With ideological

and material support from the state, financial and merchant capital actively dispossessed collective consumption budgets. Rather, it now engaged in ‘valorizing urban space as a commodity, as a pure financial asset, exploiting it as well as displacing people’ (Merrifield, 2014: xii). After a brief interregnum, this spawned neo-liberalism.

In a pair of recent papers (Scott and Storper, 2015; Storper and Scott, 2016) Allen Scott and Michael Storper have identified a third theoretical fault line that is deepening within urban theory and studies. On one side of this debate, Storper and Scott situate three influential versions of urban analysis: postcolonial urban theory, assemblage theory and planetary urbanism, each of which they find ‘seriously wanting as statements about urban realities’. On the other side, they offer up their own analytical understanding of the city, an approach which pivots on a logic conditioned by an *urban land nexus*. This features five crucial processes that shape the specifics of urbanization in different times and places: level of development; resource allocation rules; forms and levels of stratification; cultural norms and traditions; authority and power.

Of the three ‘fashionable theories of urbanization’ critiqued by Scott and Storper, postcolonial urban theory has made the biggest splash. A seminal work here is Jennifer Robinson’s book *Ordinary Cities* (2006), in which she argues that we need to break free from a theoretical agenda dominated by North American and European traditions and consider a diversity of urban practices, identities and processes. Borrowing the notion of the ‘ordinary city’ from Amin and Graham (1997), Robinson asserts that it is wrong to rank urban centres according to ‘tiers’; all cities are distinctive, unique and equally of value. As Tim Edensor and Mark Jayne (both contributors to this volume) point out in the Introduction to their edited book, *Urban Theory Beyond the West* (2012: 1), ‘urban theorists have tended to remain entrenched in conceptual and empirical approaches that have barely moved beyond the study of a

small number of Western cities which act as the template against which all other cities are judged'. It has become almost common sense, Hentschel (2014: 79) observes, to criticize the division of urban studies into 'cities of the West and cities of the South'. Roy (2009: 820) insists that 'the center of (urban) theory-making must move to the Global South'.

Seminal attempts to redress this shortcoming can be found in Robinson's (1997, 2008) research on South African cities; Abdou Maliq Simone's (2007, 2014) ethnographic meditations on everyday life in West African urban settlements; and Ananya Roy's (2011) discussion of 'slumdog cities' in India. One thread that runs through the work of all three authors is the strong sense of adaptability, originality and resilience that is said to characterize the urban in non-Western cities. As Robinson (2006: 4) observes, without taking into account this strong sense of creativity, 'the potential for imagining city futures is truncated'. Still, the future does not appear to be uniformly bright. Simone (2016) has recently concluded that the space for *autoconstruction* in middle-latitude cities is shrinking. By autoconstruction he means those aspects of urban life where residents build their homes and workplaces from scratch or public housing is taken over by the residents. As such, these constitute a reaction to the severe repression and domestication that accompany the rise of the private city. A more optimistic view on this can be found in Chapter 30 of the Handbook, wherein Kim Dovey employs assemblage theory to visualize how formal and informal elements in low income housing areas might be usefully reconciled.

Citing Peck (2015), Storper and Scott (2016) claim that postcolonial urban scholars have failed to satisfactorily resolve a fundamental tension between constant calls for a 'worlding' of urban analysis on the one hand, and the equally constant affirmation of a 'North/South binary' on the other. *Worlding* refers to the practices engaged in by cities outside the global North that indicate new directions for theorizing the urban

in the twenty-first century. This is most obvious in the case of Asian cities. In their edited book, *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, Roy and her colleague Aihwa Ong (2011) offer three modes for being global: *modelling* (for city futures), *inter-referencing* (bits and pieces of one place can be found, seen, imagined and transplanted in or to another place [Ren and Luger, 2015: 6]), and *new solidarities* (the creation of new 'aesthetic regimes' beyond class, city and national divisions). Storper and Scott (2016) argue that some postcolonial urbanists attempt to sidestep the contradiction between the idiosyncratic exceptionalism of cities of the Global South and their potential utility as the building blocks of a new paradigm for urban studies by embracing a 'comparative gesture' whereby it is possible to 'think across differences' as long as this avoids comparison between the North and the South.

These conflicting viewpoints notwithstanding, a strong case can nevertheless be made for treating the city as a distinctive object of scholarly analysis. Both Storper and Scott (2016) and Walker (2016) have vigorously defended the integrity of the city against suggestions by some proponents of 'planetary urbanism' (see Brenner and Schmid, 2015) that the city has faded away as an identifiable geographic entity, necessitating the abandonment of the distinction between the urban and the rural. Despite the fact that 'cities are notoriously fuzzy at the edges, variegated within and differentiated from place to place', Walker (2016: 14) insists that this does not mean that 'we can't reasonably distinguish them from their "other" in the countryside or find deep commonalities across cities in time and space'. Storper and Scott (2016) agree, calling the city 'an irreducible collectivity' whose unique character derives from its properties as a locus of agglomeration and from 'its specific daily and weekly rhythms of life'. Farías and Bender (2010: 109) offer three reasons for continuing to regard cities as a legitimate object of study and analysis despite 'urban

sprawl, urban divides, distantiated communities and the multiplicity of sociotechnical networks proliferating in urban spaces'. First, a sufficient number of cities are distinctive, in that you know you are in one place as compared to another. Second, follow networks such as those found in the financial sector or in creative industries and you still end up in the city. Third, cities can be powerful actors in terms of producing small changes that can move on to become big changes.

Continuing debates about the nature of cities and the urban are putting current 'urban concepts under stress' (Rickards et al., 2016). In the search for new concepts, models and theories, it is likely that fruitful avenues will be found along the intersections and fracture zones between established and emerging fields of enquiry. This Handbook will hopefully contribute to mapping some of these shifts and transitions.

## THE HANDBOOK

From this brief overview of the current state of urban studies it should be evident that the field is at one and the same time rapidly expanding and undergoing a period of intense self-examination. Once situated largely within the traditional disciplines of economics, geography, political science and sociology, the field has now 'widened' (Miles and Hall, 2003: 4) to include anthropology, architecture, communications, creative industries, cultural criticism design and innovation, leisure studies, organization studies and tourism. Richard Florida, arguably the most widely recognized urbanist today outside the academy, operates his 'Prosperity Institute' from within the Rotman School of Business at the University of Toronto. David Harvey, the most cited urban geographer in the English-speaking world, is Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the City University of New York. Interesting new work on the former fringes of urban studies

is testing the boundaries of the field. Traditional tools of urban representation – such as maps, models and statistics – have given way to new forms of representation such as street poetry, art and performance that 'speak to the experiences of different urban dwellers' (Hall et al., 2008: 5). While this proliferating presence of urban studies is a positive development, it can easily take the form of multiple nuclei, rather than a single dominant paradigm or paradigm shift.

All of this presents both a compelling reason to compile a *Handbook of New Urban Studies* and a rigorous challenge in so doing. We realized early on that any attempt to follow a linear narrative – from human ecology to urban political economy to postmodernism to postcolonial studies – was unlikely to succeed. Nor would it be helpful to follow the lead of past volumes and organize the material according to policy sector (environment, housing, health, transportation, social welfare), geographic region (Africa, Asia, Latin America) or type of city (economic city, rational city, gendered city, ludic city, global city, etc.).

What we decided to do was bring together a multi-disciplinary group of scholars, each of whom has been working at the leading edge of urban studies, and ask them to produce an original paper. In so doing, four broad types of Handbook chapters emerged. Some of our authors produced an overview and update of current concepts, topics, debates and policies. Thus, Tom Slater reviews and extends the concept of 'territorial stigmatization'; Mark Jayne and his co-authors explain the practice of 'town twinning' in the context of inter-urban competition; and Kevin Gotham and Brad Powers critically assess the seemingly ubiquitous notion of 'resilience' in post-disaster communities, showing how it is constructed and contested. Other contributors reprise and elaborate on an intriguing concept or idea that they themselves have previously introduced, demonstrating its potential efficacy. Accordingly, Adam Dixon expands on his typology of 'frontier cities' and Dan Silver

riffs on the cultural meanings embedded in urban 'scenes'. Third, several contributors apply cutting-edge methodologies or theoretical notions to new contexts. Kim Dovey, for example, draws upon *assemblage theory*, which Scott and Storper cite as one of the three 'fashionable theories of urbanization' (see above). Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt demonstrates how Actor-Network Theory (ANT), an approach developed in the field of science and technology studies (STS) and often linked to urban assemblages (Fariás and Bender, 2010), can be used to analyse what 'makes things happen'. Fourth, we commissioned several contributors to write about cities, urbanization and academic analysis in regions outside of Europe and North America. Thus, Shenjing He and Junxi Qian describe the footprint and challenges created by rapid urbanization in China and point to new frontiers in researching Chinese cities and urbanism; while Garth Myers explores 'African ideas of the urban', and considers how these might be brought back into urban theorizing about the divided city in America.

Given the diversity of perspectives and approaches adopted by our contributors, we resisted the temptation to impose a single, overarching theoretical framework. We did, however, choose to devote the largest single block of chapters in the Handbook to topics and issues related to the 'culturalization' of the city. In this we follow the example of Malcolm Miles and Tim Hall (2003: 4) who right from the start inform their readers, 'Culture then, as a shaping force, is a recurring interest in this book'. The rationale for employing a cultural lens is convincingly stated by Rossi and Vanolo in their excellent text *Urban Political Geographies: A Global Perspective* (2012). Rossi and Vanolo describe the public discourse, emphasizing the role of culture and creativity (the latter representing a more energetic and growth-led variant of the former) as urban growth drivers constituting 'one of the most influential urban narratives of the last decade' (p. 19). It has been embraced by growth machines

in both the affluent North and the emerging global South.

One indicator of the rapidly proliferating importance of this cultural turn is its emerging role in Asian economies. In Chapter 20 of the Handbook, Graeme Evans foresees a time soon when China and other Asian economies (Singapore, India, South Korea) will compete directly with the creative economies of the West – which have left manufacturing (including cultural goods) largely behind. Already, Evans says, the global economic crisis and China's slowdown has moved state policy towards higher value-added production and shifted attention to creative content and the creative industries. In their review of recent research on Chinese cities and urbanism (Chapter 29), Shenjing He and Junxi Qian confirm this. In the last decade, they observe, culture-led regeneration and the cultural/creative industry have become new catchphrases in China's urban policies, and a national cultural economy is in the making. He and Qian warn us, however, that this is a top-down initiative. In most cases, culture is exploited as a value-added asset to bolster economic growth and deal with the consequences of de-industrialization.

Cultural policies and initiatives as urban growth drivers in emerging economies are anything but benign. In Chinese cities, He and Qian report, culture and creativity are more often than not deployed as hegemonic rhetorics to whitewash the capital accumulation process, inducing social displacement and exacerbating inequality and segregation. In their discussion of mega-events such as the Olympics and the football (soccer) World Cup (Chapter 18), Christoph Haferburg and Malte Steinbrink point out that these events follow different paths in emerging nations than in the urban North. In the latter, the hosting of events is often carried out in connection with brown field development of old ports, railway infrastructure or production sites. In the former, they occur at the inner peripheries of the city, notably within and adjacent to informal settlements. Drawing

on examples from Brazil and South Africa, Haferburg and Steinbrink show how the state solves the ‘image problem’ posed by low income housing located in zones earmarked for event-related development by implementing ‘invisibilization’ measures ranging from the forced removal of inhabitants to the erection of ‘visual protection screens’. Ironically, an ongoing state-directed ‘pacification’ initiative in Rio’s *favelas* is designed not only to make these neighbourhoods safer and more liveable for its residents, but also to open them up to tourists seeking experiences of ‘controlled edge’ (Hannigan, 2006).

One of the overarching effects of the culturization of urban systems has been a more holistic consideration of the different aspects of Lefebvre’s spatial triad, with the analysis of lived and representational dimensions of the urban particularly coming to the fore. The greater attention being paid to issues of ‘placemaking’ (Dovey, 2010) is redolent of this shift. Cities competing to put themselves on the global map and attract attention and mobilize resources need to orchestrate an increasingly complex range of stakeholders to ensure they become or remain attractive as places to live in, work in, invest in and visit. Culture becomes not just an output of the urban system that increases the attractiveness of places (Florida, 2002), but culture also becomes an input to the system, addressing the need to find new ways of living in the city and developing new ways of living, working and governing together.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXT

The *Handbook of New Urban Studies* is structured around nine Parts, slightly more than the seven sections in the original *Handbook of Urban Studies* (2001). As the first draft of the current Handbook was nearing completion, one of the co-editors (JH) had occasion to present a preview of the chapter line-up to a seminar organized by the

Urban Cluster at the National University of Singapore. Why, one of the participants wondered, did we eschew the usual convention in such volumes of starting with the classic theoretical pieces on cities by Benjamin, Harvey, Lefebvre, Park and Simmel in favour of a lead Part on ‘The Globalized City’? The answer, as Tim Bunnell points out in Chapter 2 of the Handbook, is that a twenty-first-century globalized world *is increasingly formed in terms of transnationally-interconnected cities*.

In the mainstream vision of contemporary globalization, advanced producer and financial services cluster in a handful of first tier urban centres at the apex of a worldwide urban hierarchy, in and through which transnational corporations coordinate their production and investment activities (Brenner and Keil, 2006: 75–6). Bunnell argues that the dominance of the world/global cities paradigm as elucidated by Saskia Sassen, Peter Taylor and others, has obscured the importance of other transnational urban connections, especially for those cities that never appear on world city maps. Among these are global immigrant or immigrant gateway cities with dense transnational migrant connections such as Dubai; urban policy networks that diffuse policies and best practices globally; and cities with a sizable population of ‘student sojourners’. Indeed, this is compatible with the ‘worlding’ approach of postcolonial scholars such as Ong and Roy discussed in the previous section.

In Chapter 3, Adam Dixon approaches this from a different vantage point. In describing and explaining the global geography of finance, one needs to look beyond the established centres of global finance to other types of financial centres, notably frontier cities, on the periphery of or distant from the epicentre of global finance. These frontier cities, which do not rank highly on the usual hierarchies of financial centres, are nonetheless important because they function in social and institutional proximity to financial capitals such as London, New York and Hong Kong. In

the third article in this set (Chapter 4), Greg Richards profiles 'eventful cities', which represent another dimension in the global transformation of cities. As Short (2014: 245) has noted, the hosting of spotlight events such as film festivals, Expos and Olympic Games provides opportunities for city elites to stage a widely accessible and globally pervasive marketing campaign. Richards writes that such major events become a tool for cities to raise their global profile, attract media attention, stimulate tourism and generate economic growth.

Central to this increased emphasis on marketing cities is the process of branding and image manipulation. In Part II, we offer up three articles that address the topic of 'Urban Entrepreneurialism, Branding and Governance'. Responses to growing inter-urban competition are discussed by Mark Jayne, Phil Hubbard and David Bell in terms of the practice of town twinning. The idea of town twinning originally emerged in post-World War Two Europe as a means of re-establishing economic, social and cultural links severed by conflict. But in recent years the twinning of cities has been reconfigured through the growth of 'new localism' tied to the emergence of neo-liberal governance. It is now a device for linking places that are spatially distant but economically proximate, creating new glocalized circuits of resources and knowledge. Looking at the UK city of Manchester, this shows that cities are now the object of what González (2011) has termed 'policy tourism', which supports the reproduction of urban models through policy networks strung between cities. In Chapter 6 Philip Lawton examines how many of these models have become solidified into the 'Barcelona Model' or the 'Nordic Model', which have changed our ideas about how a 'European City' should function. The idea of European cities as high-quality places with a human scale was promoted through the work of planners such as Jan Gehl (who worked in Copenhagen, later touted as the 'world's most liveable city'). But Lawton shows that

an aggressive approach to urban transformation has co-opted the liberal view of the European city and adapted it to the needs of a neo-liberal age. Jasper Eshuis and Erik-Hans Klijn carry on this debate in Chapter 7, examining how city branding has become the intangible form of urban development in the new Millennium. City branding targets the key segments of the neo-liberal marketplace, and tries to influence their actions in a new form of governance strategy. The emotional content of the brand is used to change perceptions and activate urban stakeholders through the way they feel about the city. This is replacing governance strategies supposedly based on rational evidence and analysis.

The corollary of neo-liberal growth strategies is the increasing marginalization of certain groups and places in the contemporary city and the growing risk attached to many urban lives. Many cities are embodying the new fractures of Ulrich Beck's (1992) 'risk society'. The chapters analysing this shift in Part III ('Marginality, Risk and Resilience') begin with Tom Slater's examination of 'territorial stigmatization' in Chapter 8. The 'Create Streets' concept in the UK was specifically designed to eradicate the stigmatized enclaves of high-rise social housing in favour of state-sponsored gentrification. This exemplifies the way in which neighbourhoods have become the problem in urban development, solutions for which are invariably sought in external intervention rather than grass-roots approaches. In an African context, Caroline Wanjiku Kihato examines the relationship between mobility and gender through the lens of cross-border women living in Johannesburg. She argues that the informal, 'liminal city' is not a ghetto, but 'a gateway where many are trapped', and suspended in a limbo between formality and informality, legality and illegality. These forces also shape the resilience of communities to external shocks, as Kevin Fox Gotham and Bradford Powers show in the case of post-Katrina New Orleans in Chapter 10. Disasters can wreak havoc with cities and

their inhabitants, but they can also create the potential for developing new urban realities, as recent work on the New Zealand city of Christchurch has shown (Swaffield, 2013). As Gotham and Powers argue, global disaster risk is increasing, intensively concentrated, and unevenly distributed, often as a result of rapid and poorly planned urban development. Confronting these risks, particularly for vulnerable communities, also means increasing the resilience of cities such as New Orleans.

In Part IV attention turns to the sprawling suburbs and processes of suburbanization. Bill Randolph shows how the physical risks discussed in the previous part are mirrored by uneven distribution of the risks of disadvantage. He notes an inversion of urban social structure with the recent resurgence of the inner city, powered by corporate investment, gentrification and the attraction of affluent mobile groups. The rise of the inner city has however been matched by a growing crisis of suburbia, which is becoming ‘unjoined’ from the rest of the city, subject to ‘transport poverty’. Suburbs are also seen as being at risk from climate change, as Ian Smith points out in Chapter 12. Smith examines different perspectives on the ability of suburban communities to respond to climate change, including systems theory, socio-technical transition, social practices and urban politics. He underlines the current lack of theorizing about the position of the suburban within the general urban context, particularly as ‘sites of rampant individualization within a notion of suburban cohesion’. John Hannigan then examines the social construction of smart growth policies, a hotly debated new policy arena. Smart growth was originally seen as an American variant of sustainable growth, although the idea is rapidly being embraced by policymakers in Europe and other world regions as well (Krueger, 2010). Originally coined as a political marketing tool, smart growth has now become a broad movement that frames the concept in many ways, including as a tool for urban improvement, as a solution for environmental problems, as a

form of environmental justice, and as a support for public health.

Part V of the Handbook deals with a pressing issue for all cities – the need to become visible and ‘distinctive’ (Turok, 2009) in a competitive urban field. As the range of contributions to this part suggests, the strategies for achieving visibility are numerous and diverse. Can Seng Ooi analyses how cities have used art as a means of putting themselves on the map and mooring mobile tastemakers. ‘Art cities’ such as New York and Paris have long attracted artists, but now policies designed to attract art dealers, investors and critics are being pursued by emerging cities such as Singapore and Dubai, changing the global geography of art markets and the position and branding of these cities. Tim Edensor looks at the way cities have positioned themselves through the use of light, transforming the night into a visual spectacle with light installations and festivals. The colonization of the night is no longer restricted to the fringes of society, but is now the realm of corporate investment and neo-liberal policymaking as well. However, more engaging forms of lighting design can also be used to re-enchant places and produce new forms of nocturnal conviviality.

The relationship between urban visibilities and invisibilities is examined by Ricardo Campos in Chapter 16. He views cities as a communicational environment, in which power can be wielded to make elements of the city and social groups visible or invisible, even though these forms of power can be countered through various tactics. Struggles around the production and eradication of graffiti (or street art, depending your position) are redolent of these arenas of (in)visibilization. Similar arguments are made by Christoph Haferburg and Malte Steinbrink (Chapter 18) in relation to the staging of mega-events in developing countries, where the undesirable elements of the urban landscape, such as shanty towns or favelas are made invisible or ‘cleaned up’ for events such as the World Cup or the Olympic Games. Pier-Luigi Sacco

(Chapter 17) also analyses the power of large-scale events to remodel the city, this time in relation the European Capital of Culture. He argues that such events can increase the visibility of cities, but that they can also form the basis for new 'creative districts' in the city, which is one of the reasons why issues of event 'legacy' are becoming more important for cities (Smith and Fox, 2007).

The turn toward the concept of the 'creative city' (Hubbard, 2006: 206–46) is examined in Part VI. Robert Hollands, Marie-Avril Berthet, Eva Nada and Virginia Bjertnes look at the way in which social movements eager to retain their 'right to party' have countered neo-liberal creative city policies. The example of 'first world urban activism' in Geneva, Switzerland is used to address wider debates about culture, creativity and politics in the neo-liberal city. The collision between alternative culture and creative city cool hunting has been extended internationally, as Graeme Evans shows in Chapter 20. Cities increasingly vie to position themselves on the kind of rankings that made Florida's (2003) analysis of the creative class so attractive for policymakers. As he notes, the failure of many 'creative city' strategies to deliver tangible benefits is one of the reasons why such policies are now being subsumed into wider 'smart city' policies. Jørgen Ole Bærenholdt (Chapter 21) also makes the point that long-term actions often work better than short-term creative branding strategies. Using the case study of Roskilde in Denmark, he argues that it is important to understand how resources such as cultural production can be used to 'make things happen' in cities. He argues that Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and new approaches to mobilities and cultural production (Urry, 2007; Edensor et al., 2010) can be useful tools in this regard.

In Chapter 22 Lénia Marques illustrates how creative clusters have been having concrete effects in cities for over 500 years. She argues that while much attention has been focused on the development of creative clusters and districts in recent years, this has often

failed to address their relationship to urban dynamics and their consequences for urban planning and policy. Each cluster needs to be considered in its particular urban context, in order to understand what makes them tick – and this situated understanding is particularly important as creative development policies are exported to new contexts in emerging economies and in the Global South. Nienke van Boom analyses the development of the creative city in Chapter 23, showing how the concept has evolved from creative planning approaches to the rise of the creative industries to strategies based on attracting the creative class. She rounds off with a situated case study of creative development in Eindhoven in the Netherlands, a post-industrial city that has employed a range of different creative strategies in search of visibility and growth.

Part VII examines the relationships between urbanization, urbanity and urban lifestyles. We start in Africa, where Paul Collier and Anthony J. Venables examine the relationship between housing and urbanization. They show that the sequence of investment in housing has been inefficient, with people arriving ahead of infrastructure provision, leading to the creation of slums. Low-density housing development, low home ownership and lack of infrastructure inhibits development, and although the situation could be ameliorated by government intervention, this has been slow to develop. In the case of a developed city – Amsterdam – Willem Boterman and Sako Musterd show in Chapter 25 that residential preferences are related to class factions. They find that social positions corresponding with specific residential orientations and, particularly, class fractions connected to creative and cultural professional spheres, are found in the most urban milieus of central Amsterdam. These data seem to confirm the link between urbanity and the creative class posited by Florida (2002) and the preference for inner city locations among certain segments of the middle classes.

Using a much wider range of data Daniel Silver argues that urban life revolves around a

series of ‘scenes’ or experiential settings, each one of which has multiple dimensions. Scenes have cultural meanings that can be quantified and compared across and within cities, even though this requires fine-grained data. Silver argues that locational decisions are not just related to objective factors such as cost or distance, but also to the extent to which people can see themselves fitting into a particular scene. A renewed concern with the role of culture as a driver of neighbourhood effects is signalled, following the lead of Sampson’s (2012) analysis of community in Chicago. Christiana Miewald, Eugene McCann and Daniela Aiello explore a more specific type of scene in Chapter 27, with an analysis of urban foodscapes in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside neighbourhood. They examine the incursions of middle- and upper-class ‘foodie culture’ into a predominantly low income area. High-end restaurants and cafés have sprung up to serve the needs of the adventurous food tourists, jostling with the food banks and low-cost stores catering to local residents. Their analysis highlights the stark contrasts between food as a vehicle of gentrification and as an essential resource for survival.

Part VIII focuses on new directions in urban theory, in particular examining how new ideas can be derived from rapidly urbanizing areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Cities here can provide relevant lessons for cities elsewhere, even though usually the flow of ideas is structured in the reverse direction (e.g. OECD, 2010). Garth Myers poses the question of whether there is a particularly African idea of the urban in Chapter 28. In an interesting experiment in comparative urbanism he contrasts Zanzibar in Tanzania, which he has studied for the past quarter century, with his home city of Hartford, Connecticut. He finds that the spatially grounded spirituality of Zanzibar provides many lessons for developing policies that are relevant to the ‘shadow worlds’ inhabited by black and Latino citizens in Hartford. In Chapter 29 Shenjing He and Junxi Qian examine the vast scale of urbanization in China, where

it is expected that 60 per cent of China’s population will live in cities by 2020, compared with 53 per cent in 2012. They show that rapid urbanization has also been linked to burgeoning academic analysis of cities. This has generated debates about issues such as the attempts by Chinese cities to establish themselves on the global stage (which Can Seng Ooi also notes in his analysis of global art cities in Chapter 14), which at the same time contrast with urban poverty and growing inequality. China’s cities are also being marked by processes of commodification and ‘enclave urbanism’, while the expanding middle classes have helped to support the development of culture-led regeneration. These trends have in turn developed new debates about the ‘right to the city’ in China. In the following chapter Kim Dovey utilizes assemblage theory as a means of tracing the relationship of formal to informal practices in the city, and to provide a link to complex adaptive systems and urban resilience. These issues are important in analysing the development of informal settlements, which have been subject to the ‘invisibilization strategies’ described by Campos in Chapter 16, at the same time as they have been utilized to attract tourists. The upgrading of these areas requires an understanding of their urban processes and the very nature of ‘informality’ itself.

The final Part (IX) of the book looks towards the future, tracing different future imaginaries of the urban as well as future cityscapes and policy imperatives. In Chapter 31 Clovis Ultramari and Fábio Duarte analyse the ways in which the future of cities has been imagined through history. Using press and academic databases they show that although the future of cities is becoming relatively less popular as a research topic among academics, it is still popular with the media. They tie this popularity to the potential for transformation, which is also a reason that cities vie to attract mega events such as the Olympic Games. In Chapter 32 John Gold and Margaret Gold outline how future transformation has become an important part

of the Olympic imaginary, with increasing effort being made to secure a 'legacy' from staging the event. Even though the imagined future of Olympic cities has often been much more positive than the eventual outcome (as Kissoudi [2008] illustrates in the case of the Athens Olympics), the visioning of the future provided by events continues to provide a powerful tool for urban change (as Sacco also notes in the case of the European Capital of Culture in Chapter 17).

Anna Luusua, Johanna Ylipulli, Hannu Kukka and Timo Ojala then explore the development of the 'hybrid city' made possible by the application of digital technology in public urban places. Digital technologies have long been seen as having the potential to transform cities and our notions of community and public space (Aurigi, 2005). Using the example of the northern Finnish city of Oulo, Luusua and her colleagues contemplate the new geographies stemming from new technologies, and the possibility that high-speed Internet access will have the power to affect urban hierarchies in future.

In the concluding chapter, Sujata Shetty and Neil Reid examine the obverse of the rapidly expanding cities in emerging economies – the shrinking cities of North America. Looking at Cleveland Ohio, Buffalo, New York and Youngstown, Ohio, they illustrate how cities have tried to manage shrinkage and its consequences. This is challenging, because policymakers are oriented towards growth, and ill-equipped to cope with decline. Shetty and Reid suggest that adaptive resilience may be a useful future coping strategy, involving collaborative networks of stakeholders, information systems and data-driven interventions, and an ability to address multiple policy goals.

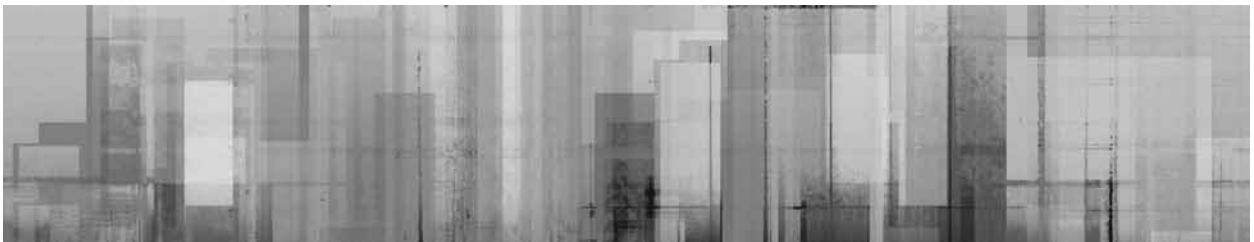
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# The Globalized City



When the original edition of the *Handbook of Urban Studies* was published by SAGE in 2001, its editor Ronan Paddison observed:

By the end of the twentieth century, an observer might be forgiven for thinking that so much of the agenda of urban studies had become dominated by the over-arching theme of globalization and of its multiple impresses on the restructuring of cities within what is widely, if not uncritically, perceived as an increasingly global world. (Paddison, 2001: 3)

Even the concepts used to proffer policy solutions to urban problems, Paddison notes, have become globalized. Fifteen years later, Paddison's observation seems prophetic. Kleibert and Kippers (2016: 374) have recently claimed that mixed-use enclaves, integrated developments of office spaces, housing and leisure are becoming a crucial feature of today's world, producing 'new, globalized cityscapes throughout the Global South'.

A number of the contributors to the 2001 volume engaged with various aspects of globalization and the city. In a chapter entitled 'Cities in the global economy' Saskia Sassen (2001) reprised her familiar thesis that the emergence of global markets for finance and specialized services has resulted in the bifurcation of late-twentieth-century cities, with a handful (London, New York, Tokyo) becoming leading centres for international financial, legal and real estate services, while most are relegated to second tier status. Mirroring this is the division in the global city between highly paid professionals in financial and high technology sectors and an underclass of poorly paid service workers. Extending Kevin Cox's (1993) notion of the 'new urban politics', Boyle and Rogerson ('Power, discourses and city trajectories' [2001]) argued that there has been a major shift in the positions of cities away from local, regional or national roles towards roles ascribed by the

global economy. This has spurred a fierce competition among cities to attract global capital, consumer expenditure (especially in the form of tourist dollars) and major cultural, sporting and political events.

Globalization remains a prominent theme in the current Handbook but it is more a starting than an end point. Departing from Sassen's thesis, Tim Bunnell (Chapter 2) argues that cities which do not currently appear on world city maps – and on sites and localities within them – nevertheless articulate important transnational connections. In an earlier recent project (Bunnell, 2015), he demonstrated this for the case of Malay ex-seafarers in Liverpool (UK) who maintained robust transnational networks sustained by a late Victorian terraced hotel that served as a meeting place. Transnationality itself, Bunnell insists, must be projected beyond the realm of the economic and financial. In particular, cities differ considerably in terms of the density of their transnational migrant connections. Dubai, for example, ranks among the very top tier of 'global immigrant cities'. Some urban centres can be classified as 'immigrant gateway cities', others host large numbers of 'student sojourners'. Another instance of transnational urban linkages are cities whose policies and best practices extend globally in the form of urban policy networks (e.g. Austin [Texas], Curitiba [Brazil], Solo [Java]). This latter example recalls Roy and Ong's (2011) concept of 'worlding cities' (see this volume's Introduction). This is not to say, however, that such cities should automatically be reclassified from the category of 'ordinary cities' to that of 'world cities'.

In Chapter 3, economic geographer Adam Dixon offers up an original variation on Sassen's globalization thesis. While acknowledging that hierarchies of financial centres can be a useful tool, he suggests that there is a need for additional conceptual tools to describe and explain the global geography of finance and the place of cities in it. To this end, he introduces the notion of frontier financial cities. This refers to financial centres that are

situated at considerable distance from capitals of global finance such as London, New York, Hong Kong and Singapore. Proximity and access here mean a lot more than just geography. Social proximity refers to the presence or absence of trust-based relations. Institutional proximity describes the sharing of formal (laws and regulations) and informal (habits and norms) institutions. By this measure, Auckland, New Zealand may be as geographically distant from New York and London as is possible, but it is socially and institutionally proximate. Dixon identifies three types of frontier financial cities: large frontier cities on the periphery of global finance (Beijing, Shanghai, Sydney, Melbourne); small cities on the frontier (most urban centres in Western Europe and North America, Abu Dhabi); and small cities on the distant frontier (Tripoli). Dixon's typology, is useful, he claims, in so far as it can help facilitate greater understanding of the place and influence of finance in contemporary urban studies, and, conversely, the place of cities in that. As does Bunnell, Dixon expands the meaning of transnationalism and globalization beyond just a small handful of elite cities.

In Chapter 4, Greg Richards expands Boyle and Roberston's theme in the original Handbook about the increasing competition among cities in the global economy. The increasingly competitive global environment of cities has forced them to adopt different strategies to distinguish themselves and secure advantage. One increasingly used strategy here is the staging of events, which has become an important tool for cities to raise their global profile, attract media attention, stimulate tourism and generate economic growth. Indeed, it is possible, he says, to talk about the eventful city. Such events can act as important catalysts for urban regeneration and focus the attention of policymakers on specific issues, for example the need for environmental improvement. At the same time, there is a clear need for cities to adopt a more holistic and long-term policy approach that ensures a more equitable distribution of value

and guarantees that an enhanced quality of life does not just accrue to a relative few.

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# Locating Transnational Urban Connections Beyond World City Networks

Tim Bunnell

The current visibility of the transdisciplinary field of urban studies owes much to processes of globalization and associated ways of seeing the world. It is no coincidence that from the last decades of the twentieth century, a world increasingly seen in globalizing and transnational terms has also been one in which cities have risen to prominence in social science research. If globalization has drawn attention to border-crossing transnational processes in general, cities and city-regions (Scott et al., 2001) are among the preferred 'subnational' territorializations of globalization, particularly for geographers. In large part this is because cities – or, more precisely, *certain* cities – are understood to have assumed a new strategic role as 'command and control' points in the global economy (Sassen, 1991). Work on world and global cities has contributed to ways of seeing the world as comprised of transnational networks rather than in terms of nation-state units of analysis (Taylor, 2000). Conversely, perhaps it was the wider unsettling of

methodological nationalism associated with recognition of 'a move towards "node and network" forms of political-economy organization' (Agnew, 1994: 65) which brought (back) into view the historically well-established long-distance connections of cities and city-states (Taylor, 2004). Whichever way round one prefers, a twenty-first-century globalized world is one increasingly framed in terms of transnationally-interconnected cities.

In this chapter, I highlight some of the limitations of the prevailing metageographical imagining of world cities as nodes in globe-spanning networks. The term 'metageography' was popularized among urban geographers through work on globalization and world cities carried out at the University of Loughborough by Peter Taylor and colleagues. Their meta-view of the world was encapsulated in a highly-cited journal article published in the first issue of the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* in the current millennium: 'World cities represent an alternative metageography, one

of networks rather than a mosaic of states' (Beaverstock et al., 2000: 123). The networks that these authors refer to are specifically those of Advanced Producer Service (APS) firms. I argue in the next section of this chapter that empirical examination of World City Networks (WCNs) has since proceeded to the relative neglect of ways in which they are grounded or territorialized in (world) cities. There is, of course, a danger here that I build from critique of a necessarily selective subset of what is in fact a diverse field of research (see Van Meeteren et al., 2016). My wider concern, however, is not to undermine the intellectual contributions of World City Network scholarship that grew out of collaborations at Loughborough. Rather, I consider some of the limiting *effects* of WCN scholars' highly influential metageographical imag(in)ings, and draw attention to alternative – in some ways complementary – more-than-national urban geographies. I sketch ways in which it is possible to locate transnational urban connections beyond WCNs.

Each of the three sections that follow elaborates on aspects of transnational urban connections that extend beyond – and may even have been obscured by – imaginings of transborder world/global city networks as the new metageography of the third millennium. After first considering how treatment of world cities as 'nodes' obscures both the local territorialization of APS firms' activities, and other 'sub-nodal' urban groundings of transnational connections in world cities, I go on to sketch some of the ways in which cities that do not currently appear on world city maps – and sites or localities within them – also articulate transnational connections. Finally, I consider historical antecedents to locally-grounded transnational urban networks that are often depicted as being new to an era of globalization based on advances in technologies of communication and transportation from the last decades of the twentieth century. In all three

sections, I am concerned with how transnational connections are anchored in particular local urban geographies.

## BEYOND WORLD/GLOBAL CITIES AS NODES

So well established by now is the imagining within urban studies of world cities as 'nodes' in globe-spanning advanced producer service firm networks, that it is perhaps heretical to question this belief in a handbook for the field. My initial concern is that while APS firms may be concentrated in certain cities – those which have come to be labeled as 'world' or 'global' – this does not mean that the offices or socio-economic activities concerned are grounded or operationally territorialized at the level or scale of the 'city'. Rather, APS activities are overwhelmingly conducted in certain *parts* or *districts* of world cities (in the case of London, rather confusingly, the most well-known of those parts happens to be named 'The City'). Certainly, there are highly influential strands of research on financial and producer service centers that have foregrounded such locatedness or 'localization' (Amin and Thrift, 1992). Saskia Sassen's seminal global cities work pointed to the importance of 'proximity' among the specialized service firms that are said to produce the capacity for global economic control (Sassen, 1991). However, subsequent strands of world/global city scholarship that have focused on transnational intra-firm networks, and sought to map the metageography of a World City Network (WCN), have largely lost sight (and *site*?) of firm locatedness and urban geographies of APS activity. The outcome has been that 'in some WCN analyses, the city appears to be simply a point in Cartesian space' (Coe et al., 2010: 145; though see Beaverstock, 2005 on the 'translocal' grounding of the social and organizational networks of managerial elites). Ironically, therefore, some of the

most influential work on cities in recent decades – work which has made a significant contribution to the prominence of urban studies in debates on globalization – does not have much to say about the ‘urban’. The WCN metageography underspecifies, and even serves to occlude, urban geographies of APS activities.

To the extent that WCN scholars cast their contributions as building on earlier work by Sassen, a related concern has to do with the problem of ‘synecdoche’ (Amin and Graham, 1997). Agenda-setting WCN scholarship directed attention to (intra-firm) networks rather than their territorial grounding precisely because it was considered that much was already known about the ‘attributes of world cities’ (Beaverstock et al., 2000: 124), and the ‘servicing of capital in localized complexes’ (p. 125). However, by mapping intra-firm networks as interconnecting city-level nodes or by implicitly scaling up from sub-nodal translocalities without reference to the wider supporting ecology of the city in which they are located (Beaverstock, 2005), WCN scholars made transnationally-connected local producer-service complexes stand for ‘the city’. Metageographical mappings that are built on this synecdoche are problematic for urban studies in part because they obscure other (world) city localities that articulate other kinds of more-than-national networks and connections.

Let me be clear here that in highlighting this concern, I am not merely echoing existing critiques of WCN scholars for their focus on APS networks per se – a (de)limitation which proponents of WCN work itself have themselves long acknowledged. Rather, my concern is that the reach and citational force of the (de)limited WCN way of seeing – the metageographical imaginings that it has *generated*, rather than merely (re)presented – has overshadowed other ways of seeing the urban in an era of globalization, and other ways of doing urban studies. Here it is worth revisiting Jennifer Robinson’s influential efforts to ‘postcolonialize’ urban studies (Robinson,

2002, 2006). Robinson’s work has often been taken as a call to take seriously ‘ordinary cities’, *as opposed* to those that appear on world/global city maps. Yet as Robinson’s initial 2002 statement makes clear, her intention was not to establish ‘ordinary cities’ as a category in itself – as a set of cities differentiated from world/global cities – but to resist a priori categorization of cities and to see *all* cities as (extra)ordinary. Bringing an expanded range of urban experiences into urban theory, or making it more ‘cosmopolitan’, then, does not necessarily mean looking away from ‘world cities’ or ‘global cities’. Rather, it could mean looking at cities that have come to be categorized in this way as more than just world/global cities – as cities with diverse territorial and relational urban geographies (McCann and Ward, 2010; see also Bunnell and Maringanti, 2010), including a wide variety of constitutive connections that extend across national borders.

There is a range of existing work, much of it at the nexus of migration and urban studies, which considers the transnational connections of a diversity of localities within both established and ‘wannabe’ world cities (Yeoh, 2004). In London, a city that has repeatedly been placed at the ‘top’ of world/global city rankings, Ayona Datta’s work on Polish migrants is among recent scholarship to consider how migrants construct the city through localized neighborhoods that are connected up to a range of other localities within and across national boundaries (Datta, 2011). A city which has not featured so prominently (if at all) on WCN maps but which has attracted the attention of both urban and migration scholars because of its world city aspirations and transnational migrant linkages, is Dubai. Dubai is far from unusual in having made efforts to ‘ascend’ the world city hierarchy through investment in spectacular urban infrastructure (Acuto, 2010). In addition, in common with more established world cities, Dubai’s transnational migrant connections are not limited to the APS professionals who work in the city’s, world class, downtown

buildings. Yasser Elsheshtawy has drawn attention to a range of ‘hidden’ or ‘forgotten’ sites and areas of Dubai in which migrants meet and sustain connections back to scores of national homelands (Elsheshtawy, 2008). In an ‘urban immigrant index’ based on proportions of foreign-born residents, Dubai ranks among the very top tier of ‘global immigrant cities’ (Benton-Short et al., 2005). If one was to map such migrant connections then surely the metageographical effect would be one of urban nodes and networks, not dissimilar to the WCN. This does not in any way undermine scholarship on WCNs. Rather, the point is that one does not necessarily need analysis of APS networks in order to discern or map an alternative metageography to that based on more-or-less bounded nation-states (unless one sees all contemporary transnational migrant connections as epiphenomena of APS-defined world city-ness). In addition, perhaps the attention given specifically to APS networks – again reflecting the very ‘success’ of WCN scholarship – has served to obscure other more-than-national connections from parts of world cities beyond financial enclaves.

## BEYOND CITIES ON CONTEMPORARY WCN MAPS

Although extending beyond understandings of world cities as ‘nodes’ for APS brings into view a range of other transnational connections, these (unlike APS intra-firm networks) are not limited to the subset of cities that appear on WCN maps. As early as 2000, geographers were seeking to widen the range of cities brought into scholarly conversations about contemporary global processes by arguing that ‘almost any city can act as a gateway for the transmission of economic, political and cultural globalization’ (Short et al., 2000: 318). Continuing initially in this section with the theme of migration, clearly there are many cities that are not home to a

significant concentration of APS expertise or associated firms, but which do house migrant groups who sustain connections with diverse extra-national elsewhere. It is unfair to criticize WCN scholars for failing to examine such migrant connections or networks. Their empirical focus was, quite reasonably, on that sub-set of cities considered to be most important in terms of APS firms. My concern is, rather, with the way in which a global network metageography has been sketched solely on the transnational linkages of APS firms in world cities. World cities occupy a particular position in global economic processes, but other cities, positioned in a variety of other ways, are also bound up in economic and migrant networks that extend beyond national scale geographies (Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2009). Anthropologists Nina Glick Schiller and Ayse Çağlar have sought to specify a range of structural political economic positions occupied by different cities. Each of these positions offers different pathways of migrant incorporation within the city concerned, and also different kinds of transnational economic opportunities. Other urban scholars have sought to identify alternative types of transnationally-constituted cities, such as ‘immigrant gateway cities’ (Price and Benton-Short, 2008), which attract particularly significant migrant flows and may therefore sustain wide-ranging transnational migrant connections. Immigrant gateways include, but are not limited to, cities that are conventionally classified as world/global cities.

Such work shows that it is not only world/global cities that constitute a more-than-national metageography based on transnational networks. It is important to be mindful of ways in which these non-APS networks, no less than the activities of APS firms in and across world cities, may be grounded or territorialized in particular localities. Geographers have long noted a tendency for transnational discourse to focus on cross-border socio-spatial relations rather than on the sites from or to which nation-state borders are crossed

(see Mitchell, 1997). Until the 1990s, when transnationalized worlds were conceptually territorialized, it tended to be in terms of the abstract 'city' rather than any grounded site of urban social interaction. Brenda Yeoh and colleagues (2000: 149) were among the first to point out that the city needs to be understood instead as a 'space of transnational people flows anchored in and articulated with specific local urban geographies' (see

also Smith, 2001, 2005). The metaphor of 'anchoring' is particularly apt for some of my own recent work in the city of Liverpool (UK), which has focused on Malay ex-seafarers whose social networks and transnational ties back to homelands in Southeast Asia were sustained in large part through a house that served as a club and local meeting place (see Box 2.1 and Bunnell, 2016). Work on international student mobilities, meanwhile,

### Box 2.1 Liverpool's more-than-world city translocal linkages (from Bunnell, 2016)

As a maritime and commercial centre of the British Empire, in the 1880s, Liverpool was described as a 'world city'. Clearly there are important differences between the colonial division of labour during that era as compared to the late twentieth century geopolitical, geoeconomic and technological conditions under which the 'world city' and 'global city' rose to prominence in academic urban studies. Yet similarities between imperial world city Liverpool on the one hand and the world/global cities of the new international division of labour and ICTs on the other are not merely nominal. Liverpool, or, rather, certain parts of this maritime world city, functioned as the coordinating centre of a world-wide network of shipping routes. Just as the importance of spatial proximity among the specialized service firms that produce the capacity for global economic control today is recognized in the urban studies literature, historical work on Liverpool has noted how ship owners and providers of other kinds of service functions to mercantile activity clustered on specific streets. The case of Liverpool shows not only that the geographically extensive command centre functions which are central to influential strands of world/global cities research over the last three decades have important historical antecedents (see also King, 1990; Arrighi, 1996), but also that such functions were associated with specific local urban geographies.

Liverpool also provides evidence of long-distance networks and associated local urban geographies that *exceeded* and *outlived* world city service functions. One example concerns the city's Malay population and its connections with the *alam Melayu* (Malay world region) in Southeast Asia. First, during the 'world city' era, Malays were among the colonial workforce whose labour sustained Liverpool-controlled maritime networks. Some of these seafaring men settled in Liverpool and maintained social connections with the *alam Melayu* that were bound up with, but not reducible to, commercial linkages. In the 1950s, a group of Malay seafarers and ex-seafarers formed a club which functioned as a meeting place for locally-based and visiting Malays. Initially, the club was located in the south docks of Liverpool. From the early 1960s Liverpool's Malay Club re-opened in a late-Victorian terrace in the Liverpool 8 area of the city. The Malay Club enabled long-distance translocal (initially *intra-imperial* rather than *transnational*) connections with the *alam Melayu* during decades before 'transnationalism' and 'globalization' entered the lexicon of Anglophone urban studies.

Second, although Liverpool fell from commercial prominence in the second half of the twentieth century and does not appear on maps or rosters of world/global cities in the new international division of labour (nor even among lists of today's leading 'world maritime cities' – Verhetsel and Sel, 2009), the city's Malay world connections continue. Some, of course, are founded specifically upon demographic legacies of Liverpool's world city past. Among such post-world city linkages are transnational family (re)connections of Liverpool-based Malay ex-seamen made possible by the increasing affordability of international flight and/or uptake of increasingly ubiquitous technologies of long-distance communication. However, it is significant that other ongoing connections, such as those associated with the decision of Malaysian citizens to study in Liverpool, may have nothing to do with the historical presence of Malay seafarers or their families in this one-time world city. In such cases, Liverpool appears not specifically as a post-world city, but simply as a non-world city. Like the overwhelming majority of cities, Liverpool is not a global centre for advanced producer services today, but it does form part of and is remade through a variety of other constitutive social as well as economic networks. SMS and internet-based technologies mean that twenty-first century cohorts of Malay student sojourners in Liverpool are not as dependent upon a clubhouse or other fixed sites of association in the city for their long-distance communication, but that does not mean that transnational social linkages have become entirely unmoored from local urban geographies.

has emphasized how the lives of relatively short-term migrants or sojourners are both woven into, and serve to transform, certain inner city areas of Auckland (Collins, 2012). Consideration of transnational linkages associated with the ‘permanent temporariness’ of overlapping cohorts of student flows rather than with longer-term forms of migrant settlement, brings into view an expanded range of cities with important transnational linkages. International students are of course a significant (permanent temporary) presence in parts of cities that already feature in the WCN metageography, but they are also prominent in many other cities that do not.

A rather different way in which a wider variety of cities (or, again, more precisely, *parts of cities*) than WCN nodes are enrolled in more-than-national networks is through the world of policy-making and mobilities. Eugene McCann and Kevin Ward (2010: 175) have detailed how city as well as national policy-makers ‘scan’ the world for ‘ready-made, off-the-shelf policies and best practices’, and are involved in travels and transfers constituting ‘networks that extend globally’. While world/global cities certainly figure in mental maps of best practice or model cities, including through offering putative lessons or ‘pathways’ for ascending the world city hierarchy (Bunnell, 2015), global policy networks also include a more diverse range of cities. Among the most well-known examples in Anglophone urban studies are Austin, Curitiba, Manchester, Porto Alegre and Vancouver (McCann and Ward, 2010). In Southeast Asia, the small city of Solo (or ‘Surakarta’) in the province of Central Java, Indonesia, has been vaunted as a model for, amongst other things, the rejuvenation of traditional markets, and has received study tours from municipalities in neighboring countries (Phelps et al., 2014). Municipal and policy networks are among the ways in which provincial cities such as Solo – a city which, unlike the Indonesian national capital, Jakarta, has little scope for transnational migrant linkages and is never talked about in

terms of ‘world city’ potential (cf. Firman, 1999 on world city Jakarta) – operate beyond national boundaries. More widely, however, the proper noun toponym of a city can be a convenient but often inadequate ‘shorthand’ for innovative policies, practices and initiatives that are in fact associated with more locally-specific sites/sights (Bunnell et al., 2013; McCann and Ward, 2010). A more-than-national metageography of contemporary policy mobilities is thus perhaps more accurately conceptualized as ‘transurban’ than inter-city (Harris and Moore, 2013).

## **BEYOND CONTEMPORARY TRANSNATIONAL AND TRANSLOCAL URBAN NETWORKS**

To what extent are transnational urban networks new to the current era of ‘globalization’? Following on directly from the previous section, it is worth noting Colin McFarlane’s critique of the ‘presentism’ of the recent literature on urban policy mobilities (McFarlane, 2011: 116). McFarlane shows that much of the presumed novelty of the ‘neoliberal’ networks and practices of policy transfer is diminished when viewed in a wider historical perspective that includes work on colonial urban planning practices and international municipal policy networks. This is not the occasion to review such arguments in detail (though see also Clarke, 2012; Jacobs, 2012). I note them here in order to raise the wider issue of whether the ostensibly recent transnational urban metageography, and the anchoring of long-distance networks in specific urban localities, has longstanding antecedents. The city of Liverpool is again a productive location from which to consider this possibility, having been described as a ‘world city’ in a late nineteenth-century international economy that shared many of the supposedly defining features of contemporary globalization dynamics (Wilks-Heeg, 2003; and see Hirst

and Thompson, 1999 on an earlier era of economic 'globalization' between 1870 and 1914). Well beyond 1914, cartographies of world trade and associated commercial services gave prominence to relations between cities. A map of shipping routes of the Liverpool-headquartered Blue Funnel Line in the 1930s, which is displayed at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool, for example, shows connections between port cities around the world, but no state boundaries. At one level, such maps are legacies of a world of maritime commerce that was, at best, fading by the 1930s and which was entirely dismantled through postcolonial state formation in the second half of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, imaginings of a world of transnational city networks surely lived on given popular as well as commercial cartographic imagery of transport links between ports (and, subsequently, airports). In this light, transnational urban networks are not a new metageography that unsettled dominant state-centered imaginings. There are important historical antecedents if one looks beyond specifically APS networks.

As is also the case for contemporary transnational networks, it is important to think about historical long-distance economic linkages and associated social networks as having been located or placed. Historians of Liverpool have noted how ship owners and providers of other kinds of service functions to mercantile activity clustered on particular streets, and that 'none of these clusters could be too far from any of the others' (Milne, 2006: 297). In the case of Alfred Holt and Co., owners of the Blue Funnel Line, this meant Water Street, on which the company's new India Buildings headquarters were constructed in the 1930s. India Buildings became the coordinating center of a worldwide network of shipping routes. Many of the Liverpool-based Malay seafarers in my study were recruited to work along these routes in Singapore in the 1940s and 1950s. These men sustained long-distance social networks

that were clearly interwoven with, but not entirely reducible to, structures of imperial trade. And these social networks, too, were anchored in particular places (see Box 2.1 above). Historically further back still, into the era of sailing ships, dockside parts of port towns and cities were described by one maritime scholar as forming part of an interconnected, globe-spanning 'Sailortown' (Hugill, 1967).

If the role of cities and more specific urban spaces in anchoring geographically extensive commercial and social networks has clear historical antecedents, then what is new about contemporary transnational urban networks? Few would go so far as to suggest that the international economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wholly anticipated 'globalization' today, many pointing instead to ways in which the current phase of economic globalization has fundamentally reshaped economic organization in terms of the degree of integration and functional interdependence through cross-border economic activity (for example, Dicken, 2011). Similarly, while the term 'world city' was used to describe Liverpool's maritime commerce as early as the 1880s, and can be traced back even further (see Taylor, 2012), WCN proponents followed in the wake of a much more recent meaning of the term in the social sciences. This was of course associated with ways in which late twentieth-century developments in information and communications technologies (ICTs) enabled economic command and control on a global scale (for example, Beaverstock et al., 2000). Saskia Sassen (1991) preferred the term 'global city' precisely in order to make the historical distinction clearer.

ICTs are also recognized as having impacted urban policy worlds – 'the overall scope, pace and intensity of transnational urban policy transfer activity has increased significantly over the past two decades' (Harris and Moore, 2013: 1504) – as well as possibilities for transnational social linkages. Reacting against what they saw as the

‘spurious extension’ of the term ‘transnationalism’, Alejandro Portes and colleagues pointed to late twentieth-century advances in ICTs and transport technologies that made possible regular and sustained social linkages at a distance, although they did also acknowledge important historical antecedents, such as various trade diasporas (Portes et al., 1999). If the maritime linkages of Liverpool-based Malay seafarers in the middle decades of the twentieth century were sufficiently regular and sustained to count among such historical antecedents, then the applicability of the term ‘transnational’ rests on whether the linkages extended across nation-state boundaries (something which arguably only applies to parts of British Malaya after they gained political independence from Britain). The question of whether translocal maritime urban networks were also historically *transnational*, in other words, is a matter of political geography (Bunnell, 2016). And so what might be historically most novel about the WCN and a wider transnational urban metageography at the start of the third millennium is not so much its inter-city or transurban networks as the fact that these are overlaid on a supposedly prior metageography of territorially-bounded nation-states.

## CONCLUSION

The influence and reach of WCN scholarship partly accounts for the current prominence of urban studies in discussions of globalization. Among my concerns with WCN work considered in this chapter is under-specification of the ‘urban’ associated with territorialization of APS networks in world city ‘nodes’. I have acknowledged that it is unfair to couch this concern as a direct criticism given that WCN scholars sought to build upon earlier work by Saskia Sassen that did highlight sub-nodal dynamics. In addition, it is of course understandable, even inevitable, that meta-scale analyses miss sub-nodal details.

Nonetheless, in a new handbook of urban studies, it is worth raising the possibility that powerful WCN ways of seeing have served to obscure smaller-scale urban processes and territorializations. Relational urban geographies visualized as inter-city in WCNs may be depicted more precisely as trans-urban (Harris and Moore, 2013) or translocal (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998). The urban geography of cross-border flows needs to be specified or, in the terms that I have deployed in this essay, ‘located’. While not denying that ‘the city’ remains an important analytical frame for certain kinds of urban studies, failure to question the adoption of this unit of analysis is tantamount to ‘methodological cityism’ (cf. Angelo and Wachsmuth, 2014). Ironically, some of the WCN work that has done so much to question the territorial trap of nation-state framings in social science may have fostered ways of seeing and doing urban studies that result in the city being taken for granted as a unit of analysis.

A second concern has to do with the kinds of networks that are (not) seen in the WCN metageography. As I have been at pains to stress, this is not intended as a critique of scholars for focusing on APS firms and their networks per se. That is a legitimate focus and one that reveals concentrations of such firms and connections between them. My concern is instead with why these particular networks (and associated nodal cities) are taken as the basis for an alternative world mapping to that comprised of a mosaic of nation-states. Cities that are classified as world/global economic nodes articulate, or include localities that articulate, border-crossing connections other than APS networks. What is more, these other networks – migrants, student sojourners and urban policy networks are among the examples that I have given – are found in many other cities, beyond world or global cities.

This leads on to the third concern that I have considered, which is to do with why other cities – those that do not appear on contemporary maps of world/global cities – are particularly important to any critical take on

transnational urban metageographies. Most contemporary world/global cities have historical international economic, political and/or imperial linkages which mean that, even in the face of state-centric thinking, they have always been recognized as more-than-national in one way or another. Many other cities, in contrast, have been much more easily contained within national scale or provincial imaginings. It may be suggested that WCN mappings perpetuate that imaginative containment by locating boundary-crossing networks specifically in world/global cities. It is important, therefore, for urban studies to treat WCNs not as a new metageography but as diagnostic of wider relational urban geographies. These have certainly proliferated through processes of globalization and associated advances in technologies of transportation and communication in recent decades, but they also have important historical antecedents extending back prior to the nation-state-centered metageography of the end of the second millennium.

Few would doubt that constitutive connections between far-flung urban territories are as important a part of urban studies today as are consideration of what goes on 'within' those territories or their position in national scale systems and framings. There is inevitable disagreement about how to conceptualize diverse connections, the relative priority that is afforded to different kinds of connections and the ways in which they should be approached or studied empirically. Scholars who have prioritized APS connections as a way of understanding global economic command and control, have mapped and visualized world/global city networks fostering (not merely re-presenting) an alternative metageographical way of seeing the world to that based on a mosaic of state containers. The concerns that I have raised with this WCN scholarship echo, in part, existing postcolonial urban studies critique. Yet it is worth recalling that like WCN scholarship, many non-WCN strands of urban studies work, including some couched in postcolonial

urban terms, deal with transborder, relational urban geographies of various kinds. Not all scholars of urban policy circulations or migrant social linkages see their work as 'global' or meta-scaled, of course, but they do map fragments of more-than-national urban worlds of connection. This is a simple observation but it highlights a significant commonality between those who study APS expertise across world/global cities and those (including but not only postcolonial urban studies scholars) who study other kinds of connections in other cities and urban sites. Moving forward, there are thus further possibilities for approaches that have often been held apart to be intertwined in new and productive ways.

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# Frontier Financial Cities

Adam D. Dixon

## INTRODUCTION

New York and London are booming. They are buzzing with activity. New skyscrapers are being built and wealth is omnipresent. If aliens arrived in New York or London, or any other major international financial center such as Hong Kong, they would find it unbelievable that the largest financial crisis since the Great Depression occurred within the last decade. If remnants of financial crisis exist, one would be hard pressed to find them in these global financial cities. The alien visitors would be forgiven for thinking that anything had happened. The Global Financial Crisis did not cut the legs off New York and London – the two places that facilitated the subprime boom and bust – reducing the power and influence of these global cities in the ebb and flow of global financial capitalism (Gordon, 2011). Nor did the crisis result in some fundamental reset in the rules of the game, despite extended social protests

from the Occupy Movement, among others. It seems that they got away with it.

There are various reasons why New York and London, and in turn the hierarchy of financial centers and the financial services industry that they represent, did not collapse, with some alternative urban geography and financial system replacing them. The irony of the Global Financial Crisis in comparison with other financial crises of the last several decades, such as the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, is that it was a developed-world financial crisis with its roots in the developed-world financial centers (Martin, 2011). Although crisis occurred in the core, the relative safety of the core vis-à-vis the periphery meant that the strength of the core remained intact. Investors did not rush to the periphery. They returned to the core. This is partly because the core, particularly New York but also London, deals in US dollars – the global numéraire (Eichengreen, 2011).

On the other hand, New York and London benefited from explicit support in the form of massive government bailouts and implicit government guarantees that the system would not be allowed to fail. At the same time, the central banks of the United States and the United Kingdom have injected trillions of dollars into the markets through quantitative easing. This explanation alone does not, however, account for the resilience and persistence of New York and London, as such bailouts and guarantees occurred elsewhere (Grossman and Woll, 2014). Another transcendent explanation is that New York and London continue to produce and benefit from major agglomeration and increasing returns effects that reinforce their size relative to other financial centers in the global hierarchy (Porteous, 1995). The Global Financial Crisis, despite the prognostications of some, did not result in a fragmentation of the global economy and increasing international autarky. Global trade and commodity prices declined in response to economic recession, but they soon bounced back as growth resumed. Globalization continued apace as before (Drezner, 2014). Without some fundamental remaking of the global geography of capitalism it would seem unlikely, then, that there would be a fundamental change in the global geography of finance and financial centers.

But it is incorrect to assume that there is not any change occurring or potential change that undercuts or could undercut the status quo and therefore the power resources of the global financial services industry and the markets they serve. There are certainly many voices that question the social and economic utility of the current status quo (see, for example, Malleison, 2014). Yet, it would seem that governments around the world are timid in challenging it. Arguably, the reforms that have been enacted and ongoing judicial enforcement of bad behavior are insufficient to effect significant change (Engelen et al., 2011). While an external institutional fix may not be forthcoming, this does not mean

that there are no possibilities for endogenous change within the wider global financial system and the cities and agents that serve that system. There are two points of consideration.

First, there is the growing community of asset owners (for example, pension funds, sovereign wealth funds, endowments, etc.) that are pushing against the principal-agent asymmetries in the investment management industry. Although small, this community of large institutional investors is rethinking how it engages and contracts with the for-profit financial services industry that populates the world's major financial centers and markets. Some are insourcing asset management functions instead of delegating to for-profit services providers, while building trans-territorial partnerships with other asset owners as a means of minimizing their reliance on the existing power structures and certain financial centers within the financial services industry (Dixon and Monk, 2014). While worthy of note, such pushback should not be taken as sufficient to alter radically the global geography of finance and financial centers. Rather, this development may be seen as the emergence of a parallel yet minor system of financial intermediation.

Second, it is unclear if the current structure of market-based financial intermediation in the world's leading financial centers is the most ideal institutional form for transferring economic resources across time and space as the structure of the world economy changes and new regions, such as mainland China, rise in prominence. At the same time, there are growing pools of capital in different regions of the world that are far from the major financial centers (Clark et al., 2013). New York, London, Hong Kong, and Singapore dominate the hierarchy of global financial centers, as their institutional foundations in the common law facilitate market-based financial intermediation. However, in much of the world, particularly in developing economies, constructing and sustaining arm's-length market-based forms of finance have had a mixed record of success (Rousseau

and Wachtel, 2011). Where markets remain underdeveloped or lacking in sufficient institutional support (for example, lax regulation and enforcement), relationship-based financial intermediation provides a wider scope for the necessary investment monitoring and control. As this would suggest, there is an increased need for greater proximity and non-market-based financial intermediation.

Although hierarchies of financial centers are a useful tool for ranking and categorizing the geography of global finance – not least because they continue to reflect an empirical reality – there is a need for additional conceptual tools for describing and explaining the global geography of finance and the place of cities in it. In that regard, this chapter, building on the author's previous work (see Dixon and Monk, 2014), presents a conceptual typology of frontier financial cities, taking into account city size and financial sector specialization, and their proximity and access to global finance in relation to social and institutional variables.

The chapter is developed as follows. The next two sections provide an overview of the economic geography of financial centers, why they emerge and what sustains them. The penultimate section presents the conceptual typology. The final section concludes.

## FORCES OF CONCENTRATION

Let us begin by considering what drives concentration in the financial services industry and the formation of financial centers. Concentration is, on the one hand, a product of the objective functions of finance in the market economy (Dixon, 2011; Levine, 1997). On the other hand, concentration of financial services in particular places is driven by economies of scale and agglomeration (Porteous, 1995, 1999). While political and social factors are important in shaping the competitive dynamics between financial centers within and between countries,

particularly in the formulation of regulatory standards, our concern in this section is with explicating how the aforementioned economic forces shape the economic landscape (cf. Leyshon and Thrift, 1997).

In a market economy two key functions of finance are: (1) to mobilize and pool economic resources; and (2) to transfer economic resources across time and space, whether in the form of payments between two parties or as investment. With respect to investment, financial centers facilitate the pooling of savings necessary for public and private large-scale industrial or infrastructure projects, the growth of larger scale-efficient firms and industrial sectors, and the development of new technologies, acting as a switching point between geographically dispersed savers and borrowers. They are, in theory, the switching point between those that provide capital and those that put it to work.

Historically, the territorial scope of these functions has followed a hierarchical pattern. Savings and investment begins locally, extending to a national center, with possible intermediate stops at regional centers, and then becoming international. Along the hierarchy specialization grows in both function and available products and financial instruments. However, this hierarchical pattern is not fixed over time. A range of forces, from geopolitical conflict to technological change, can distort or intensify the pattern (Conzen, 1977; Faulconbridge et al., 2007; Kindelberger, 1974).

A third function of finance is risk management, which in practice buttresses the concentration of financial activity in large financial centers and reinforces the hierarchy among financial centers (Merton and Bodie, 2005). The most basic form of risk management in investing is the principle of portfolio diversification. If systemic risk is not avoidable, idiosyncratic risk is. Portfolio diversification minimizes idiosyncratic risk – or rather the probability that any specific investment fails – by spreading resources across numerous investments instead of concentrating them

on one or a few (Markowitz, 1952). In effect, portfolio diversification, in theory, calls for a large range of possible investments where individual risk profiles are as uncorrelated as possible, as well as a range of financial products such as equities and fixed-income. Large financial centers are therefore attractive to investors, because they provide access to the largest range of possible investment opportunities. International financial centers are furthermore attractive, as they provide access to a larger range of geographies for investors and thus greater opportunities for portfolio diversification.

In bringing many investors together into a single place/market, the large financial center also reduces liquidity risk, which is the speed at which an asset can be converted to cash. For any investor, locking up capital for extended periods of time comes at a risk. In theory, investors are more likely to part with their capital if they can sell the corresponding security on a secondary market as and when they need cash. In a deep market with many investors, the probability of being able to convert holdings to cash quickly is much greater. Consequently, this decreased liquidity risk reduces the capital returns demanded by investors from investees (for example, firms, governments). Hence, this reduces the cost of capital for issuers of securities. The latter are furthermore attracted by the concentration of potential investment capital in larger financial centers, as demand for securities is likely to be greater. This, again, reduces the cost of capital for issuers. Put simply, issuers pay less for capital in larger financial centers than if they were limited to smaller markets with fewer potential investors.

In addition to the scale of the market for financial products, there are important increasing returns effects and agglomeration economies at work in the financial services industry that drive financial center formation and persistence. As a knowledge-based industry, financial services depend on the quality and depth of the labor market (Wójcik, 2012). The more specialized or the greater the range

of financial products and services on offer, the greater are the needs for specialized labor. Information and communications technology coupled with the increasing ease of travel have facilitated the offering of services at-a-distance, but only partially (Grote and Taube, 2006; Wójcik, 2011). Financial services firms are thus attracted to large financial centers as there are greater and more specialized labor resources. This reduces search and match costs, while also ensuring ready access to different types of product, industry, or geographical expertise. The latter is important in fast-moving environments, which is typical of financial markets generally, where rapid decision-making is essential.

Financial services workers are attracted, in turn, to larger financial centers given that there is a wider range of firms to work for and who will compete for their labor (Beaverstock and Hall, 2012). For financial services workers, this wider range of firms, or firms of significant scale, provides greater opportunities for skills development through labor switching. The opportunities are greater in a larger financial center for developing an extensive or intensive skill set. Competition for talent, and the increased remuneration this entails, likewise incentivizes financial services workers to upgrade their skills. This, consequently, raises the aggregate level of expertise available in the financial center to firms.

Large financial centers are not simply home to large banks and asset management firms, but also to a larger range of intermediate service providers, ranging from legal and accounting services, to specialist research and consulting firms (Clark, 2002). Financial services firms, just as they are with labor, are attracted to larger financial centers on account of this large range of suppliers that are in competition among themselves in offering services. Moreover, these complementary service providers are subject to the same labor market effects as the core financial services providers, where workers (for example, lawyers, accountants, consultants) are attracted to the financial center on

account of a greater range of firms to work for and who will compete for their labor. Again, this induces skills upgrading and promotes greater specialization in the financial center.

Taken alone, the scale and agglomeration economies present in large financial centers coupled with the scale and depth of the markets therein are a powerful explanation for the persistence of the hierarchy of financial centers. Firms and governments from around the world go to New York, London, and Hong Kong to issue shares and bonds, because the markets are so large. Likewise, investors from around the world go to these centers to obtain a range of services and expertise that may not be readily accessible or sufficient locally. It is true that the hierarchy of financial centers has changed over time, and there is no reason to assume that places like New York and London will remain on top forever. But replicating the scale and agglomeration economies in the financial services industry and the scale and scope of the markets in the leading global financial centers cannot be expected to happen quickly.

## INSTITUTIONS MATTER

Another important contributing factor that creates and sustains the hierarchy of financial centers are institutions. Broadly defined, institutions are the informal and formal rules of the game that define and constrain the behavior of economic agents and the structure and efficiency of markets. In finance, trust is critical to the proper functioning of financial intermediation and the functioning of markets (Morris and Vines, 2014). Absent trust, the risk and uncertainty of transacting over time and space is amplified. In most instances, trust is underwritten through regulations and the rule of law. On smaller scales trust may be sustained through informal community and familial norms, but formal institutions become increasingly necessary

as the scale and scope of the financial system increases. In other words, lending and borrowing among friends and family, or among a small community, may operate without formal rules and regulations. Familiarity and strong communal bonds underpin trust in these situations. But such familiarity and strong communal bonds are hard if not impossible to reproduce at scales above the family and the small community (Rodríguez-Pose and Storper, 2006).

Consider the following hypothetical example of three regions, A, B, and C. Region C has excess savings and minimal investment opportunities. Regions A and B have a deficit of savings, but are growing economies with many investment opportunities. Savers in region C would therefore be in a position to transfer their excess savings to regions A and B. Assume, however, that savers in region C are unlikely to know the borrowers in region A and B. There are therefore no social bonds or informal institutions to establish the trust that protects the interests of investors in region C. Yet, if regulations and recourse to the courts are in place to protect region C's savers in the course of transferring capital resources to borrowers in region A and B, these replace the trust that familiarity and strong communal bonds would potentially bring at smaller scales. Regulations on investor protection are, hence, consequential to how the financial system develops. Where investor protections are weak for outside investors that are unable to exert influence over management or the entity that is employing the capital, markets are not likely to be very liquid and the cost of capital is likely to be higher. The pool of potential investors is apt to be smaller and those that do participate are likely to demand a higher rate of return, as their interests are less well protected. Investment risk is much higher.

The reason why the leading international financial centers are in the position they are, in addition to those discussed in the previous section, is because of the legal protections afforded to external investors, which

are strongest in common-law jurisdictions. It is not by chance that the leading financial centers are in cities where the legal system is or is derivative of English common law (La Porta et al., 1997, 2000). The United States, for example, has the largest and most liquid capital markets in the world, partly due to the very strong legal protections for minority investors (Berle and Means, 1933). Firms and other entities such as governments that issue debt or equity securities, are required to disclose regular information on their activities, and the management and the directors of companies are subject to particular legally defined fiduciary duties or codes of conduct to ensure they act in the best interests of the company (Clark and Wójcik, 2007). This does not mean that malfeasance and misfeasance does not occur, as the Global Financial Crisis demonstrated. Even so, the existence of strong investor protections in regulation and the law underwrites market efficiency, building trust among participants, which lowers the cost of capital for firms. A lower cost of capital encourages growth and development, as it makes opportunities more feasible and capital markets more appealing to firms.

Where protections for external finance are weak and therefore markets are less viable, bank intermediaries take on a larger role in the financing of firms. This does not mean that in places where markets are developed banks are less important. Indeed, for most firms capital markets do not play a very large part in their financial dealings. Capital markets are in general only the preserve of large firms or high-growth firms (Pagano et al., 1998). Moreover, capital markets are much larger and more liquid in developed high-income economies. Reflecting patterns of economic development, capital markets are much less significant in the economies of low- to middle-income countries (Beck, 2012). Despite such differences, most small and medium-sized enterprises the world over, even in high-income economies, access external financing through bank intermediaries. In comparison to the market, banks internalize

the monitoring and control functions necessary to ensure trust. Banks, in pooling assets, writing specific financial contracts and demanding different forms of collateral, are able exact influence on firms and other borrowers. But this form of non-market intermediation is not necessarily limited to banks. It also includes private equity and other direct investors.

It is true that capital markets have grown significantly over the last two decades around the world, including in many emerging market economies (Lane and Milesi-Ferretti, 2008). The ability to invest in public equity markets in the latter is not just left to sophisticated institutional investors, but is open to retail investors as well, made possible by the global financial services industry headquartered in the leading global financial centers (Sidaway and Bryson, 2002). But investing at-a-distance is pregnant with risk, particularly if access to credible information is not forthcoming and financial regulation and enforcement are underdeveloped. Coupled with the fact that proximity to markets has been shown to affect the financial performance of portfolio investors (Coval and Moskowitz, 2001), there is a role for peripheral financial centers and the service providers therein. Or rather, there are limitations to the dominance of the leading centers in the allocation of capital between countries and regions. Being there matters.

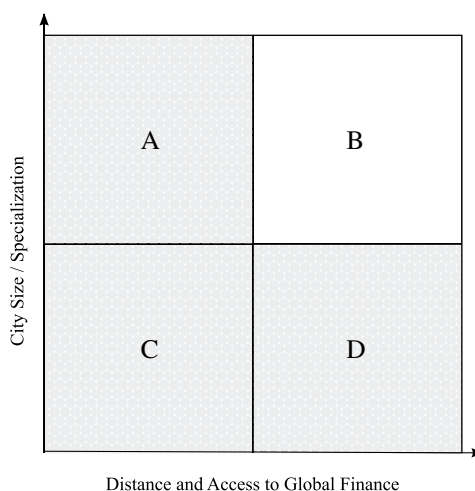
It is important likewise, as suggested above, not to overstate the scope and penetration of market-based financial intermediation. Markets, inasmuch as they exist, may be inefficient and unattractive due to underdeveloped regulation and enforcement that allows for effective monitoring and control. Or they may be of insufficient depth for investors that are concerned with liquidity risk. Put simply, not all investment opportunities are going to be accessible, or ideally accessed, via public markets. Although direct relationship-based investing through non-market channels does not solve the problem of liquidity risk – it can even exacerbate it – there is a greater capacity

for monitoring and control. Financial services providers based in the leading financial centers can certainly facilitate such investing by pooling capital in special investment vehicles that are then employed by operations closer to the investee. Making viable such close relationships and effective monitoring is limited by geographical distance. Being there matters.

## UNPACKING FRONTIER FINANCIAL CITIES

Considering the discussion in the last two sections, the dominance of global financial centers has strong foundations provided through economies of scale and agglomeration and the institutional environment. To say that the dominance of global centers is immutable is reasonable to a degree, at least in the short term, but there are clear limits. A simple hierarchy of financial centers continues to provide a clear analytical basis for comparing and explaining the global geography of finance. But simple hierarchies – just like simple core–periphery models – do not always provide an adequate or sufficiently dynamic map of economic activity and interaction across scales and between places. In Dixon and Monk (2014) a conceptual typology of cities is developed, which is rehearsed here, not as a replacement for conventional city-rankings of financial services, but as a supplemental device for explaining and describing financial centers. It should be noted that it does not specifically cover offshore tax havens and similar jurisdictions, where little actual intermediation occurs. Although, many financial centers, including the largest, offer various tax avoidance schemes (Christensen, 2012). Tax havens and financial centers are not mutually exclusive.

The typology relies on a simple two-dimensional framework. The y-axis represents city-size and financial sector specialization, including the specialization



**Figure 3.1 Modeling the frontier**

*Source:* Adapted from Dixon and Monk (2014)

of complementary services (Figure 3.1). It is assumed that larger cities have, or are better able to produce and maintain, a critical mass of financial and related intermediate services that support large-scale asset management and market making. In addition, larger cities are better placed in comparison to smaller cities to attract and retain high-skilled labor and talent. This is partly related to the greater presence on average in larger cities of cultural and social amenities that are appealing to high-income urban professionals. It is crucial to note that city size and specialization do not necessarily increase together in the same direction. Larger cities are not by default necessarily more specialized than smaller cities. Some smaller cities may be more specialized than some larger cities. The assumption remains, however, that larger cities tend to have a greater capacity for specialization across multiple domains.

The x-axis is defined as the distance and access to global finance, which includes financial services and financial flows. On the one hand, this variable is meant to capture the size and scope of the local market. It assumes that for some places the local market is closer to or subsumed into larger markets, which

consequently reduces the transaction costs associated with accessing global financial services and financial flows. For example, Toronto is the largest capital market in Canada. As the Canadian and US economies are highly integrated in various ways, Toronto easily taps into the wider market that New York covers. On the other hand, access is also concerned with the social and institutional proximity of a city and its respective national/regional political economy in relation to other cities and regions (Boschma, 2005; Gilly and Torre, 2000). Proximity and access mean a lot more than just geography. Social proximity refers to the presence, or potential presence, of trust-based relations that form at the micro-level through close social relations and experience. Institutional proximity refers to the degree of shared informal institutions (for example, habits and norms) and formal institutions (for example, laws and regulations). So, for example, although Auckland, New Zealand, is incredibly far from New York and London, it is socially and institutionally proximate. Accordingly, Auckland's access to global finance is greater than its geographic location would suggest.

The model is further specified into four quadrants, A, B, C, and D. Quadrants A, C, and D represent frontier cities, and are therefore shaded. Quadrant B, which is not shaded, represents cities at the forefront of global finance, given a large market size and the degree of specialization. Examples of cities are provided below, but these examples are by no means exhaustive.

### ***A: Large Frontier Cities***

In quadrant A are large cities that are on the periphery of global finance, meaning that they are geographically distant as well as distant in terms of social and institutional proximity. In addition, the market in these places may be relatively small or limited in scope in relation to opportunities for diversification. The latter is likely related to the

diversity of the wider national or regional economy that the city represents. Just because the city is distant from global finance, it does not mean that the city is not important as a financial center locally. Indeed, it is not a necessary condition that the scope of the market is small, as the national/regional economy that the city or cities represent may be large.

Two possible examples of large cities in quadrant A are Beijing and Shanghai. The latter is larger than the former and more specialized, as the most important financial center in mainland China. As such, Shanghai is further up on the y-axis than is Beijing. Shanghai is also further to the right than Beijing, as its global financial credentials and interconnections are more developed (Lai, 2011, 2012). But the Chinese political economy is still relatively institutionally distant from the core of global finance, due to restrictions on renminbi convertibility and capital controls, leaving Hong Kong as an important translation point for global finance into China, at least for now. Indeed, it would be wrong to assume that this situation will remain fixed indefinitely. The Chinese government has gradually internationalized the renminbi, moving closer and closer to full convertibility. Such continued internationalization would move mainland Chinese cities, namely Shanghai, further to the right along the x-axis. It is not unreasonable, then, to speculate that Shanghai could eventually overtake Hong Kong as the most important financial center in the China region.

In quadrant A are also cities like Sydney and Melbourne in Australia. The former is the center of Australian capital markets, and the latter has a significant position in the investment management of Australian superannuation funds. As a former British colony, Australia is socially and institutionally proximate with the United Kingdom. In effect, both cities sit far to the right in quadrant A. The social and institutional proximity reduces the significance of geography. Likewise, both cities are relatively well developed in terms

of the market for financial labor and complementary services. They also are diverse urban economies with amenities to attract high-income urban professionals. As a result, both cities are relatively high up on the y-axis.

However, these two cities need to be seen in the context of the Australian economy as a whole, which is dominated by the natural resource extraction industry. Hence, there are limited opportunities for diversification that pull down the possible position on the y-axis. Put simply, the opportunities for foreign and domestic investors alike is limited. What is interesting about Australia is that compulsory pension savings, which was introduced in 1992, has resulted in accumulated pension savings greater than the size of the economy.<sup>1</sup> These accumulated pension savings only continue to grow. As a consequence, the funds management industry in Melbourne and Sydney is increasingly forced into global investment. Global engagement is not a choice, but a necessity.

### ***B: Centers of Global Finance***

In quadrant B sit the world's largest financial centers. They are cities with the greatest degree of specialization and the largest in terms of market size. They are the cities where major international banks and investment services providers have their headquarters and where much of their operations occur. They are also the cities with the highest concentration of foreign banks and foreign financial services providers. They are the cities with a very high proportion of the labor force devoted to the financial services industry and complementary service providers. Furthermore, they are the premier locations where investors from around the world come to seek a range of investment services and products. Likewise, they house the markets that attract the foreign listings of large public companies and the bond issuances of governments. As expected, New York and London sit in the top far right of the

quadrant, with Hong Kong sitting relatively close to them as well. Singapore is another city whose global profile continues to expand, placing it in quadrant B. Tokyo is an interesting case, as it sits in quadrant B due to the sheer size of the Japanese economy; but Tokyo has lost much of its luster as a major global financial center. Although the Japanese economy remains one of the largest in the world, the relative decline of the country's economy and its relative openness in comparison to global cities like New York, London, and Hong Kong, places it far to the left of them in the quadrant.

### ***C: Small Cities on the Distant Frontier***

In quadrant C are the most peripheral and isolated cities in terms of distance and access to global finance. On the one hand, cities in quadrant C are highly limited in the scope, depth, and specialization of the local financial services labor market, which roughly reflects levels of economic development. Access to global financial markets and services is constrained due to either physical distance or the distance created by social and institutional factors, including political instability in some cases. As an example of the latter, for example, one could include Tripoli in Libya – a country with significant capital resources from the production of petroleum that is geographically close to European markets, yet which also has a poorly diversified local economy. Political instability and uncertainty nonetheless severely constrains the development of local capabilities as well as the capacity to access global financial services. Also included in quadrant C are cities like Astana and Almaty, Kazakhstan. The country has had a fast growing economy, largely due to petroleum production, which has resulted in increasing capital accumulation and the growth in assets under the management of the country's two sovereign wealth funds. Geographically the country is