Introduction: Cities, Multiplicity, and Contemporary Urban Worlds

> "Each neighbourhood of the city appeared to be made of a different substance, each seemed to have a different air pressure, a different psychic weight: the bright lights and shuttered shops, the housing projects and luxury hotels, the fire escapes and city parks."
>
> Teju Cole, *Open City* p. 6.

> "We live in cities badly; we have built them in culpable innocence and now fret helplessly in a synthetic wilderness of our own construction. We need — more urgently than architectural utopias, ingenious traffic disposal systems, or ecological programmes — to comprehend the nature of citizenship, to make serious imaginative assessment of that special relationship between the self and the city; its unique plasticity, its privacy and freedom."
>
> Jonathan Raban, *Soft City* p. 292.

I. Introduction

We live in a world of cities. It is not just that ever more people live in cities. There are more cities and they are larger. The 19th and 20th century urbanisation of North America, Europe, Japan, and Latin America has been mirrored in the 21st century by a move to urban living in places as diverse as China, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Indian sub-continent. More than that, cities are key to some of the most important transformations occurring around the world. Cities are central to how economies are increasingly globally interdependent, to the rise of a near universal society of consumption — albeit one that is profoundly unequally distributed —, as well as to the digitalisation of everyday life, to name just a few examples. This does not mean that cities and processes of urbanisation are becoming evermore similar. How a city in North America manages the challenges of globalisation is in all sorts of ways different to how a city in South America does so. Consumption patterns in an Indian city are not the same as cities in China. Korean cities have digitalised in ways distinctive to those in Kenya or Nigeria or South Africa. Rather than homogenising, there has been a multiplication in what cities are, how they work, and how they develop. Kinshasa is not New York. But nor is it Luanda or

Lagos. Kolkata is different to Beijing. Sao Paulo has developed in ways not seen in Los Angeles, or Miami, or Phoenix. Guangzhou is the workshop of the world but in ways distinctive to that of the Ruhrgebiet. The growth of new Chinese cities like Xiongan or Shenzhen, is starkly different to the experience of other planned cities like Brasilia, or Canberra, or Milton Keynes. The challenge for the contemporary urban researcher is how to make sense of this diversity? How to develop theories and models that account for this complexity? How to tell coherent stories about the expanding world of cities that we inhabit?

One way to start thinking about this urban complexity is to think about the historical periodisation of urban development. Contemporary cities are in a range of essential ways different to those of earlier pre-industrial cities. Those cities were smaller, less numerous, less focussed on production than those that emerged through the industrial revolutions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries (Clark, 2015; Yoffee, 2015). The modern industrial city and the processes of urbanisation that formed it marks a break from earlier forms of urbanism — a movement from the pre- to the modern city; from a pre-modern urbanism, to a modern urbanism. Indeed, many social scientists and theorists have suggested that the 18th and 19th century industrial metropolis was also the birth place of modernity, a privileged site that was the forcing house of the modern world. The modern city — and the modernity it embodied — was defined through its newness, its historical depthless-ness, through its unrelenting presentism. It was, and is, a world where, in the words of Karl Marx, "all that is solid melts into air" (Berman, 1982).

But, and here's the problem, contemporary cities are also different in all sorts of ways to the 'modern' industrial city of the 19th and early 20th century. Much of what was new then is not so now. Technologies that defined an earlier modernity — railways, typewriters, ocean liners, the industrial conglomerate, radio, cinema, newspapers to name just a few — have been superseded. Parts of cities that had been central to the emergence of the modern 19th century metropolis — historical retail districts, arcades, inner-city department stores, inner-city manufacturing districts — have become defined by their heritage; what was modern now drips with nostalgia. And whereas industry and mass production were in all kinds of ways central to the rise of the modern North American and European metropolis, these are no longer central in the 21st century (see *The City: Modernity Vols 1-4*). If the modern city was an industrial city, many cities now seem to be defined by the lack of industry — they are post-industrial spaces. Of course things do get made in these agglomerations. But they are less and less tangible things, more a string of intangible entities; knowledge, software, money, services, expertise, style, culture. And if modern cities were defined by their density, their ineffable city-ness,

many contemporary urban agglomerations are characterised by nothing so much as their low density suburban sprawl. Then, looking beyond the North American, European and Japanese urban experience, it is clear that the dynamics of contemporary urbanisation in other parts of the world do not straightforwardly mirror those that unfolded in earlier times elsewhere. The cities of the so-called global South are inventing all sorts of novel and surprising urban forms and ways of life — from sprawling mega-cities, to the complex informal economies of the cities of sub-Saharan Africa — that are neither copies of, nor modelled on, examples from the 'developed' world's cities.

One way to think about this proliferation of urbanities is to suggest that the contemporary moment is no longer defined by its modernity. It is defined by its post-modernity; it has gone beyond modernity and shifted into something related but also distinctly different. If modernity is defined by a sense of historical singularity — that it is a uniquely rational, technologically advanced, progress driven, epoch —, then post-modernity is defined by a self-awareness of its temporal multiplicity; it is modern, but that modernity, is mixed in with all sorts of more archaic and traditional ways of being (Lyotard, 1984; Jameson, 1991; Bauman, 1992; Jencks, 2010). And just as the modern industrial city was the material embodiment of the spirit of modernity, then so too is the post-modern city. Except the post-modern city, and the post-modern urbanism of which it is part, is not defined by the singularities of the modern city, it is rather defined by a plurality of ways of urbanising and of city forms (Harvey, 1989; Watson and Gibson, 1994; Sandercock, 2003). And that, in part is what *The City: Post-Modernity* documents: the various ways scholarship on contemporary cities makes sense of this plurality. Nonetheless, the collection is agnostic about the usefulness or otherwise of both concepts 'post-modernity', and 'post-modern city'. Rather than try and describe an epochal cut between between the modern and the post-modern, modernity and post-modernity, it might be more useful to think about cities (both now and in the past) as defined by multiple modernities.

As such, *The City: Post-Modernity* (in parallel with *The City: Modernity)* provides a cartography of contemporary approaches to understanding contemporary cities around the world. Rather than providing a synthesis of different disciplinary approaches to understanding cities and city life, *TCP-M* present a series of explorations of contemporary cities and city life ordered through a carefully selected collection of interdisciplinary readings. These explorations are organised around four interrelated thematics that have played a central role in framing work on cities and urban agglomeration: how cities and urban development is shaped by and part of processes of globalisation; how cities function as centres of consumption and the ways this consumption is produced; cities as sites of post-coloniality; and the materialities through which

contemporary cities are made. The overall aim of the articles collected in each volume is to give readers a sense of the plurality of ways contemporary cities and urban agglomerations are theorized and interpreted within the social sciences and humanities. Those working their way through *TCP-M* will find work from spatial scientists, human geographers, as well as anthropologists, sociologists, urban planners, and public policy experts. They will also encounter work from cultural and architectural theorists. Taken as a whole the four volumes of *TCP-M* offers an overview of the liveliness, vigour, and breadth of contemporary research and writing on cities. And, it also presents readers with a range of tools and frameworks with which they might begin to think about the cities and urban agglomerations they inhabit.

II. *Globalization and the Contemporary City (Vol. 5)*

First volume of *The City: Post-Modernity's* (*Vol. 5*) focuses on globalisation. Trade — of goods, knowledge, and capital — has always been one of the defining features of urban life. As too has been the migration of people into and between cities. However, the later half of the 20th and early 21st century has, many social commentators and social scientists agree, witnessed a tremendous deepening and extension of the long distance, international linkages, that weave between national states and urban territories (Giddens, 2002; Friedman, 2005; Steglitz, 2002). Where once international trade marked the main lines of connection between places, precipitous falls in the cost of travel, transportation, and long distance communications have made it possible to efficiently build and maintain a whole range of economic and social relations over enormous distances in ways that had been heretofore been impossible. This is the principle definition of globalisation — that more and more relationships come to be defined by their spatial extension. Relations once taken for granted as being defined by locality become evermore disembedded; no longer grounded in the local they are dominated by connections that reach over regional and national boundaries. The question is, What does this mean for cities? And, to ask a further question and looking within cites, Who and what is globalising and who and what is not?

The answer offered by a great many researchers is that globalisation is transforming cities and urban life in ways both everyday and profound. For Davis (1989) in **"'Chinatown", Part Two?"** globalisation is something like a spectre floating through the Los Angeles landscape. A beneficiary of America's long post-war World War II economic boom, Los Angeles was synonymous with the development of the mass consumption oriented suburban ideal. This was an urban landscape in which home ownership had become almost universalised. And in which ordinary factory workers and other workers achieved levels of material prosperity

previously undreamt of. Los Angeles was the quintessential Fordist city, a city built on mass manufacturing and mass consumption. Davis traces the dissolution of this Fordist landscape as Los Angeles becomes more and more entangled with an emerging Pacific Rim focused globalisation. The geographers Dear and Flusty (2002) tell a near identical story in **"Los Angeles as postmodern urbanism."** They too see in Los Angeles the model of a certain paradigm of (modern) urban development, a paradigm that is being superseded by a new, globalised, emergent form of urbanism. This is an urbanism where the increasing internationalisation of production processes, increasing flows of global capital, along with all sorts of innovations in communication technologies has radically reconfigured the spatial logics of urban development. Like Davis, they think that globalisation has made Los Angeles's landscape much more opaque. And like him they think Los Angeles embodies a new paradigm of post-modern urbanism. A world in which the "urban aggregate is characterised by acute fragmentation and specialisation — a partitioned gaming board subject to perverse laws and peculiarly discrete, disjointed urban outcomes" (p. 80).

By no means all writers are convinced that the urban future can be read off Los Angeles. The sociologist Castells (1994), for example, is clear that many of the key drivers of urban change highlighted by Davis and Dear and Flusty — globalisation, flows of international capital, innovations in communication technologies — can be seen elsewhere. Surveying the economic forces driving the far reaching restructuring of advanced capitalist societies, in **"European cities, the informational society, and the global economy"** Castells suggests it is possible to trace the outline of a transition from an industrial to a global informational society. In an informational society access to and the ability to process and transform flows of information is the key source of economic and social power. This is society where the ease and speed with which information can move has created a 'space of flows' that dominates the concrete world of real places. Whilst the general trends driving this transition are common to all cities and urban regions, the ways it plays out varies enormously depending on how a particular place is integrated into the new informational economy. Whether the patterns of urbanisation that emerge from the informational transition are modern or post-modern matters less for Castells than that we develop robust conceptual tools to understand it.

A similar point is made by Lloyd and Nichols Clark (2001) in **"The city as an entertainment machine."** They too see the changing geographies of economic globalisation transforming how cities function. They, however, focus on the privileged mobility of the informational elites and the companies that employ them. Given this mobility what 'grounds' the upper-hierarchies of the informational economy are networks of high-end urban amenities — fashionable

restaurants and bars, luxury shopping, theatres, parks, to name a few examples. These are amenities concentrated in older, denser, parts of the post-industrialising metropolis. As the globalising informational economy develops, key parts of successful cities come to be defined by their affordances for elite consumption. Rather than framing this as spectacle as Davis and Dear and Flusty do, Lloyd and Nichols Clark are interested in teasing out the functional connections between transformations within urban neighbourhoods and the new economies of the 21st century city. This too is the concern of Sennett (2007). In **"A flexible city of strangers"** he argues that the rise of an increasingly, abstract, placeless, global economy has created cities and urban environments in which not just companies, but also those people who live in them, are disconnected from place.

The theme of placeless-ness, economic globalisation, and urban transformation is taken up in a range of different ways by Taylor (2005), Sassen (2002), Amin and Graham (1997), Brenner (2013), Cancilini (1995) and Hall (2015). In **"Leading world cities"** the urban geographer Taylor is interested in mapping the key metropolitan nodes of a globalising world. Taylor's argument — like that of Castells — is that globalisation has led both to a dispersal of production networks and a simultaneous concentration of certain key high order economic activities in a relatively small number of world cities. These world cities are highly interconnected constituting a distinctive and privileged web of global world city networks. Using a range of statistical sources Taylor highlights that these networks function differentially across different vectors of globalisation; networks of economic globalisation do not map cleanly onto networks of cultural, political or social globalisation. Sassen (2002) too argues for the need to understand the nodality of cities within globalising networks of urban development. **"Locating cities on global circuits"**, however, places a much greater emphasis on the changing dynamics of centrality in a rapidly globalising world. For Sassen the global economy that has emerged and hardened over the past four decades is dominated by a small number of primate global cities — such as London, New York, Tokyo, and Hong Kong — that have come to play a primary role as coordination and control centres of the global economy. Echoing Taylor she stresses that these cities are linked together in dense global intercity networks. These global city networks are interlinked with a whole range of other interregional urban networks. Crucially these regional articulations amplify the locational advantages of the primate global cities as they create the demand for evermore specialised networks of producer services to support the functionality of these networks of geographic extension.

Sassen builds a compelling model of global city development. Nonetheless, many researchers have reservations about the global city account of globalisation. It is not just that most of the world's cities and urban agglomerations are not like Tokyo, New York, London, or Hong Kong (that after all is precisely Sassen's point!) It is also to suggest that Sassen's account of an urbanised globalisation is too narrow. In its singular focus on globalising producer services it leaves aside too many dimensions of both globalisation and urbanisation. This is the view of Amin and Graham (1997) in **"The ordinary city."** Trying to summarise cities and processes of urbanisation using single terms such as 'global cities' (Sassen) or 'world cities' (Taylor) or even 'informational cities' (cf. Castells) involves over particularising from a small number of cases. Indeed, and to take a wider theoretical view, Dear and Flusty's contention that Los Angeles is paradigmatic of a 21st century globalised post-modern urbanism rests on a similar overextension of a single case. These overly partial views of the dynamics of contemporary cities and globalisation need, so Amin and Graham argue, to be replaced with theorisations of the urban that recognise the fundamental multiplicity of urban agglomerations. Cities — or parts of them — are global, are informational, are even post-modern, but they are also simultaneously much else besides.

This challenge of how contemporary cities and patterns of urbanisation might be theorised in a mode that recognises that cities are a kind of 'multiplex' is taken up by Brenner (2013) in **"Theses on urbanization."** Where Amin and Graham draw on an eclectic range of theoretical resources — science and technologies studies, poststructuralist social theory, economic geography — Brenner's key argument centres on the need to fashion a unified theory of what he label's 'planetary urbanism'; if the interplay between globalisation and urban development is to be grasped a theoretical grand synthesis is needed. Grounded in the theorisations of the French Marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1991; 1996) Brenner situates contemporary processes of globalisation within a deeper, on-going, process of capitalist planetary urbanisation. It is, Brenner writes, "the uneven extension of [the] process of capitalist creative destruction onto the scale of the entire planet, rather than the formation of a worldwide network of global cities or a single, world-encompassing megalopolis, that underpins the contemporary *problematique* of planetary urbanisation" (p. 109).

"Theses on urbanization" weaves together a dense and theoretically imaginative vision for urban research. However, it is not clear if urban studies needs the synthesising theory of 'the urban' and urbanisation that Brenner seeks to construct. Nor is it obvious that his theoretical emphasis offers greater analytical purchase than the more empirically grounded work of researchers like Taylor and Sassen (see Taylor, 2004; Sassen, 1991). Certainly Canclini (1995)

and Hall (2015) with their focus on the intricacies of street level urban life suggest that compelling accounts of globalisation and cities can be written without it. **"Mexico: cultural globalization in a disintegrating city"** is a sweeping anthropological survey of the ways globalisation is woven into the everyday lives of residents of Mexico City. This is a rather different view of globalisation to that provided by world or global city researchers, and certainly one that feels removed from Brenner's planetary ambitions. The sociologist Hall provides a similarly fine grained account of the ways London is being remade by its many immigrant communities in **"Super-diverse street."**

The work of Taylor, Sassen, Amin and Graham, and Brenner focused on globalisation as a set of economic transformations and processes, whilst Canclini and Hall examined globalisation as a social process. Globalisation, however, can also be understood as a political project. A political project that has been instantiated by a range of political, economic, and institutional actors. Harvey (2009) and Smith (2002) frame globalisation as a neoliberal political project — where neoliberalism is understood as an ideology that prioritises private enterprise over state provision, and encourages privatisation, commodification, and free trade. In **"Neoliberalism as creative destruction"** Harvey argues that a neoliberal 'commonsense' has been forced onto the world through a range of military, economic, and political interventions. The paper foregrounds the work of transnational organisations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO), think tanks such as The Heritage Foundation, as well as US and UK foreign and domestic policies in establishing a global neoliberal agenda. In **"New globalism, new urbanism"** Smith argues that urban regeneration projects are key actors in neoliberal globalisation because of the ways in which they restructure the urban environment, displacing the working class and 'retaking the city for the middle classes' (p. 443). These are self-consciously radical accounts rooted in a Marxian political economy. A political economy that is keen to underscore the class dimensions of urban politics, and highlights the ways in which certain policy agendas create an uneven distribution of winners and losers.

Harvey and Smith's accounts of neoliberal globalisation hum with a revolutionary verve, but they do verge on the totalising; as Harvey (p. 23) puts it '[n]eoliberalization has in effect swept across the world like a vast tidal wave of institutional reform and discursive adjustment'. Peck, Theodore and Brenner (2009) push back on this to some degree. **"Neoliberal urbanism"** offers a more geographically textured analysis of the spread of the global neoliberal political project. It draws attention to particular moments in the destruction of existing social arrangements, and the creation of new market opportunities. Rather than talking about neo-liberalism as a singular project, Peck et al. prefer to talk of 'actually existing neoliberalism' —

a phrase designed to draw attention to the historical and geographical specificity of particular manifestations of neoliberalism. This tonal shift is important. The 'tidal wave' of neoliberalism is not absolute, but historically and geographically contingent. Policies do not move uniformly around the world. Moreover it is apparent that cities do not only share policies on how to best privatise the urban environment, but progressive best practice is shared too. McCann's (2009) **"Expertise, truth, and urban policy mobilities"** uses a case study of progressive drug reform in Vancouver, Canada to explore how cities teach, learn, and cooperate with one another. The focus is on how knowledge gets made and shared. This is a mundane world of conferences, intermediary institutions and powerpoint presentations, as relational geographies are established and developed. The subtext to McCann's paper is that progressive activists can tap into the global networks of knowledge production and policy mobility too.

III. Lifestyle, Consumption and the Unequal City (Vol. 6)

The contemporary city has certainly been transformed by globalisation. However as has been seen in Volume 5 the ways in which these macro-social, economic, and political changes have become realised in specific urban environments is by no means predictable or straightforward. A key shift in contemporary cities is that they are increasingly defined as centres of consumption rather than production. What does this mean for the dynamics of urban development? Does it mean the urban amenities come to drive the growth (or decline) of particular cities? And what does this shift towards consumption mean socially? Does it mean that cities are becoming less or more unequal? And how are existing urban environments and neighbourhoods being reinvented and reimagined through the lens of consumption? Volume 6 of *TCP-M* makes sense of some of these changes, and the multiple ways that wider economic and social transformations reverberate through cities around the world.

In **"Flexible accumulation through urbanization"** Harvey (1987) explores how some of these structural transformations in the economy are bound up with processes of urbanisation. As a Marxist Harvey focuses on how changing patterns of wage labour, shifts in land value, and processes of capital accumulation and consumption affect cities. It is a characteristically critical analysis that uses case studies from former industrial cities in the United States such as Baltimore and St. Louis, to highlight the growth in informal social arrangements, and the emergence of new sites of spectacle (stadiums, shopping malls, and waterfront developments) oriented around middle-class consumption. Harvey is keen to underscore the class antagonisms that are emerging in these places as a consequence of the new economy. A process that Harvey briefly mentions, but is developed in more detail by Ley (2003) and Zukin

(2008), is gentrification — the displacement of working class residents from inner city neighbourhoods.

In different ways Ley and Zukin elaborate on how it is that shifts towards the new economy can result in demographic change in cities. For Ley in **"Artists, aestheticization and the field of gentrification"** the key is looking at how the contemporary economy values culture. Using empirical material from Vancouver, Toronto, and Montreal, Ley outlines the successive cohorts of increasingly affluent professionals that arrive in particular neighbourhoods following the 'cool' of artists. Here artists play an unwitting role in making certain neighbourhoods more desirable and more expensive places to live. In a similar way Zukin argues that gentrification is as much about changes in lifestyles and the configuration of the urban environment as it is about capital. Based on observations from New York, **"Consuming authenticity"** unpacks some of the new spaces that can be found in the contemporary city: organic food markets, artisanal bakeries, gourmet restaurants, and cocktail bars. Spaces associated with new creative urban lifestyles. Zukin argues that these places are successful in communicating a kind of cultural exclusion to certain unwanted others. The contemporary city has changed demographically, culturally, and spatially through transformations in the economy.

Harvey, Ley, and Zukin each provide a critical perspective on the consequences of the new economic activity occurring in cities centred around creative activity. However, others have been more focused on just why it is that this kind of economic activity occurs in cities. Florida's (2002a) **"Bohemia and economic geography"** uses geographical statistics of US cities to show how people involved in creative professions, and those with high levels of education, as well as the location of high technology are correlated. The point Florida is making, and which is developed more fully in his widely read book *The Rise of the Creative Class*, is that high concentrations of creative people are associated with a cultural environment that is conducive for the development of new economies (Florida, 2002b). For Florida these kinds of cities are dynamic and productive and are worth cultivating. Scott (2006) and Markusen (2006) both contest Florida's hypothesis, and suggest alternate causes for the cultural economies of cities. In **"Creative cities"** Scott suggests that quite traditional processes of agglomeration offer a better explanation of cultural and economic innovation than the concentration of 'bohemians'. Whilst Markusen's **"Urban development and the politics of a creative class"** highlights what might be a called an infrastructure of artistic practices: artist centres, studio buildings, and art venues, for explaining the location of artists. It seems that there is no simple policy fix that engenders cultural and economic activity. Demographics,

processes of agglomeration, and infrastructural configurations all play their role. The macro-economic changes often associated with the contemporary city are often better understood in their geographical and historical specificity.

If the production of the cultural economy is contextually contingent, then it is also worth reflecting on whether the ways in which cultural products are consumed in the city is also less straightforward than often made out. As noted above, one of the ways cities become understood as sites of consumption is through how the idea of the 'spectacle' permeates the urban environment — from events and festivals, to modern landscapes of leisure. Guy Debord (1967) developed the idea of the spectacle because he was anxious about the ways in which more and more aspects of life were being rendered as representation, and that commodities were seeping into all aspects of social life. Harvey (1987; 1989) recognised these trends in the urban environment itself, and was concerned about how more and more of the city was being consumed as spectacle. Ley and Olds (1988) and Stevens and Dovey (2004) offer an alternative to these overarching narratives.

In **"Landscape and spectacle"** Ley and Olds use survey data from Vancouver's 1986 World's Fair to show that the people at the fair were not merely passive consumers of the landscape. Indeed they suggest that such sites of spectacle are moments of fractured and negotiated power as people bring their own histories and intent to the situation. In a similar vein, Stevens and Dovey conduct a piece of close observation of Southbank, a waterfront site in Melbourne, Australia that could easily be read as a site of spectacle and mass consumption. Instead **"Appropriating the spectacle"** destabilises accepted analyses of what spectacle is and does. Rather than the contrived spectacle that is 'stimulating the senses but passivising the body' (p. 352) they find a whole range of novel and invigorating spaces. Here spectacle is less the tool of mass consumption as found in Harvey, but is something that provides new spaces which come to be inhabited in all sorts of interesting ways — where new ways of being in public emerge.

The use of detailed empirical and observational research to destabilise certain critical narratives about the contemporary city is a point developed more fully by Latham (2003). In **"Urbanity, lifestyle and making sense of the new urban cultural economy"** a vibrant high street full of new cafes, bars, pubs, and restaurants are explored. However unlike Zukin (2008), what Latham finds is a set of small transformations to how people rub alongside one another, as well as a quiet emergence of spaces in which people can broaden and alter ideas around gender, race, and sexuality. Latham's point is that political economic narratives often miss these small

successes of new urban public spaces. Further evidence for this is found in the writings of Stillerman and Salcedo (2012) and Watson (2009). **"Transposing the urban to the mall"** uses an ethnographic study of shopping malls in Chile to push back at certain totalising narratives about what shopping malls represent in contemporary cities. Rather than the practices of exclusion, blind consumerism, and sterile life often found in accounts of malls (i.e. Sorkin, 1992), Stillerman and Salcedo find that malls facilitate the potential for people to practice relationships, eat, drink, and chat, and even practice subtle forms of resistance and subversion. Indeed spaces traditionally associated with consumption can be sites where care for others, social inclusion, and the experience of differences can occur — as Watson finds in **"The magic of the marketplace"**. What these accounts communicate is the importance of attending to the specificity of history, geography, material configuration, and the ways in which the new spaces created by the new economy come to be used by people living in cities. As Latham suggests, let's not be blind to the 'new solidarities and new collectivities that urban life is constantly generating' (p. 1719).

This is not to celebrate cities uncritically. Cities are diverse places, and these novel ways of being together are not uniformly distributed and experienced. Cities can be highly divided, segregated, and unequal places to live. The open sociality of markets, shopping malls, and high streets are by no means guaranteed, and the urban can become fractured in a number of ways. Caldeira (1996) suggests that an effective way to understand these processes is to attend to exaggerated cases — which the case studies of Sao Paulo and Los Angeles found in **"Fortified enclaves"** certainly are. Caldeira highlights architectural practices: wall building, gated communities, and sparsely configured public spaces, and relates this to the emergence of certain divisive cultural views. Caldeira argues that they operate together to segregate cities and close down public life, sowing mistrust between strangers in the city. This theme of prejudice against the inner city is critically reflected on by Bauder (2002) in **"Neighbourhood effects and cultural exclusion"**. And Wacquant (2007) offers a compelling account of the ways in which prejudice has socially noxious consequences in **"Territorial stigmatization in the age of advanced marginality"**. Through a comparative study of the French *banlieue*, and US ghettos, Wacquant links economic processes and fear of certain marginalised spaces, to show how capitalism can interact with racism to produce new geographies of urban exclusion.

The final paper of Volume 6 tempers this narrative of segregation and exclusion in the same way that all of the processes discussed in this section have, in some way, been pushed back at, contextualised, and tested. In **"The cosmopolitan canopy"** Anderson (2004) reminds us that social processes in the city are rarely clear cut. Through close observation of public spaces in

Philadelphia we are shown a world of people negotiating and successfully interacting with one another, people practicing 'folk-ethnography', and shown the spaces that offer a kind of refuge for those marginalised elsewhere in the city. The kinds of new public spaces critiqued by Harvey and Zukin, and recovered by Stillerman and Salcedo and Watson, here serve as important spaces in which people can shelter from and engage with the prejudice they encounter. We are left with an impression of diverse people interacting with common infrastructural elements. The structural transformations of the economy involve a complex set of processes that create new spaces, new employment opportunities, and new things to do in the contemporary city — which people come to encounter and negotiate in multiple ways. A recurring theme of this section has been the fracturing of grand narratives, how singular stories about what is happening in cities rarely hold up under scrutiny, and that there exists a multiplicity of outcomes in the contemporary city.

IV. Multiple modernities and the Postcolonial City (Vol. 7)

What we know about what is happening in the cities is an issue that gets placed front and centre when perspective shifts to include all kinds of cities from all around the world. The modern city was largely premised on Eurocentric ideals. Empirical evidence and theoretical development tended to come from a quite narrow set of cities; cities like New York, London, Chicago, Paris, and Los Angeles. These cases were what it meant to talk about the urban. A vibrant school of writing has developed that challenges the notion of European or North American cities as privileged sites of modernity. The articles in Volume 7 of *TCP-M* cover a quite different set of urban situations including: Cairo, São Paulo, Bogotá, Mumbai, Johannesburg, and Shanghai. These cities come out of a very different set of economic processes, histories, geographical settings, cultures, and political configurations — forcing consideration of what can be learnt about the urban by researching and theorising from these locations. However underlying this, and often central to the arguments presented, are challenging questions directed at the interdisciplinary pursuit of studying the urban. What does it mean to conduct urban theory, or make statements about contemporary cities, when there is such an abundance and diversity of cities that rarely constitute the 'core' and are all too often at the 'periphery' of urban knowledges? Does the abundance and diversity of urban situations fit, bend, or break, certain accepted ways of knowing and frames of understanding? Volume 7 of *TCP-M* engages with the postcolonial city in depth, not only to better understand the urban, but to reflect on the very ways in which we come to know about the urban.

The promises of attending to a world of urban situations are manifold, however the methodological challenges this can pose are substantial. Abu-Lughod's (1975) **"The legitimacy of comparisons in comparative urban studies"** offers one way of approaching this. Through a close study of Cairo, Tunis, and Rabat-Salé, Abu-Lughod, first outlines what each city has in common, then their differences, before proposing the processes at work which lead to the differences that can be observed. The tension animating this method is between case study specificity, and general theoretical explanation. A need to account for the infinite complexity of case, but also a desire to offer an explanatory framework for how these cities came to be. As King (1995) discusses in **"The times and spaces of modernity (Or who needs postmodernism?)"** the risk of not attending to the specificity of urban situations around the world has led to some problematic grand narratives. King observes that much of what we consider to be 'post-modern' existed in cities outside the West well before western cities became 'modern'. The theory of modernization, and the trajectories that cities and society advance through, is only tenable without reference to the lives of those in the global South through history.

How different cases around the world are compared continues to be debated. In **"Thinking cities through elsewhere"** Robinson (2016) leans towards a radically open approach, 'a reformulated comparativism can start theorizing anywhere, [and] imagine any city as a destination for thinking from elsewhere' (p. 23). This is a completely de-centred idea of comparison, where all can be compared with all, and anywhere can be theorised through anywhere else. This is a bold ambition — and indeed might improve the concepts, vocabularies, and cases utilised to make sense of the urban environment. However Lemanski's (2014) **"Hybrid gentrification in South Africa"** offers a more precise, and perhaps more productive method. Lemanski uses two concepts that describe class based displacement of residents, gentrification and downward raiding. The former term was derived through work in the global North, and the latter through work on slums in the global South. Lemanski brings these two terms together in the context of Johannesburg, to help refine yet broaden our understanding of what is going on in this context. The key to this study is specificity in what is being compared, how it is being compared, and why.

Awareness of the breadth of urban contexts has challenged certain notions of how we think about the urban. One of the areas in which certain accepted concepts are being refined through a more global perspective is citizenship. Here the anthropologist Holston (2009) is exemplary. In **"Insurgent citizenship in an era of global urban peripheries"** he engages closely with how local social movements in the peripheries of São Paulo are articulating novel

forms of citizenship. These are claims on the state that are rooted in the specific legal structures, geographical locations, historical trajectories, and struggles over social reproduction present in the urban peripheries of Brazil (see also Holston, 2007). Extraordinary urbanization combined with extraordinary levels of inequality, are forcing innovations in the ways that living together are managed in cities around the world. If Holston's insurgent citizenship is a demand from the people, then Baiocchi's (2001) **"Participation, activism and politics"** is a response from the state. It outlines a detailed case from Porto Alegre of an experiment with localised participatory budgeting. It details how meetings were organised, how interfaces with civil society were designed, and how the challenges of inequality to ensure parity of participation were negotiated. It offers a neat addendum to theories of democracy in an urban context.

Zeiderman's (2013) ethnographic fieldwork in Bogotá, Colombia, explore the terrain on which claims to citizenship are being fought. If Holston and Baiocchi's cases were more concerned with economic inequality, or the right to socially reproduce, then in Zeiderman's **"Living dangerously"** we find an urban politics organised around the different ways in which spaces and domains of life are secured. This utilises Foucault's concept of biopolitics — where the state has the 'power to foster life or disallow it to the point on death' (1976: 138) — to illuminate the ways in which the Colombian government has sought to manage refugees, disease, and natural hazards where gaining recognition as rights bearing citizens is contingent. Taken together Holston, Baiocchi, and Zeiderman, suggest at how the abundance, diversity, and intensity of urban processes in the global South are reconfiguring urban politics, forcing innovations from the state and citizens, in negotiating how to live together. Moreover this throws into new light often taken-for-granted concepts developed in the context of the global North, whilst bending (rather than breaking) the ways in which they can be utilised in diverse geographical contexts.

The novel conditions in cities in the global South are also creating novel ways of dealing with planning and governance. Situations in the global South are simply quite different to that in the global North, and many of the accepted frames of rationality and official spatial organisation are incomplete, or at least more fragile. Roy's (2009) **"Why India cannot plan its cities"** provides a critical analysis of India's planning system. Roy describes the planning system as being characterised by informality. This becomes a tool of governance that allows the state to manage their territory and allocate land and resources according to slippery definitions of legal and illegal, accepted and unaccepted. For Roy, this is very much entangled within systemic processes of neoliberalism. Emerging from a quite different economic, social,

and political context, is the case of Shanghai in Wu's (2002) **"China's changing urban governance in the transition towards a more market-oriented economy"**. In this case China is undergoing a reorganisation, combining new market elements with a decentralised state apparatus. Taking these two cases of how urban space is being reorganised together, it is clear that what happens to resources in the city, the scope for civic participation, and socio-economic outcomes, can be diverse. It is evident that there are multiple ways to organise the modern city, and the precise ways in which these bureaucracies are organised is important. Moreover, there is no single way that this has been done in the 'post-colonial' city.

So far the above has tended to utilise concepts developed in the global North, and apply them in the global South albeit pushing our understand of what is meant by citizenship, planning, governance, and gentrification — broadening, altering, and refining these conceptual vocabularies. Simone has become influential for advocating ways of thinking the urban that are firmly situated within southern contexts (e.g. Simone, 2011). In Simone's (2004) **"People as infrastructure"** an ethnographic portrait of the inner city is presented. We are shown a dazzling array of informal and uncertain interactions, patchworks of security, communities of help, but also crime, xenophobia and fear, all riding atop 'underdeveloped, overused, fragmented, and often makeshift urban infrastructures' (p. 425). If Simone's Johannesburg is a gathering of humans and social ties as infrastructure, then McFarlane's (2011) São Paulo and Mumbai, is very much a gathering of materials. **"The city as assemblage"** develops the urban as a configuration of material elements that is produced through the very practice of inhabiting. With both Simone and McFarlane there is distinct sense that the authors are attempting to grapple with the disorienting abundance within cities of the global South (of people, processes, materials, histories, and spaces) — but that this abundance is key to understanding the ways in which these cities function as cities.

However where is the 'post-colonial' in these accounts? Is this really that distinct from ways we could talk about cities in the global North? Possibly not. Varley (2013) in **"Postcolonialising informality?"** addresses a similar issue through a discussion of informality in Latin America. Varley discusses the persistence of dualistic ways of thinking about the urban, where informality appears as the inversion of state-based forms of power, and the ways in which there can be a sense of the heroic in romanticised readings of the 'slum-dweller'. Varley argues there is a challenge to think informality as prosaic, and as a kind of 'quiet encroachment' rather than 'subversive invasion'. It seems there is need to understand cities of the global South not necessarily as 'post-colonial' cities, or as cities that are in someway inherently entwined with cities of the global North, but a need to understand cities

on their own terms. This is the point that Harris (2012) makes in **"The Metonymic urbanism of twenty-first-century Mumbai".** Through a case study of Mumbai, Harris explores how the city has come to stand in for other sets of processes — it becomes a metonym. Our theory-cultures, and geographical imaginations cast Mumbai in a narrow set of familiar ways: as new economy, as slum, as world-class, as resurrection of 19th Century London. Whereas Harris suggests we might understand it as a place of music production, as a place where terror is performed and represented, and where the city is changing in terms of class composition and verticality.

Rogers (2012) **"Haussmanization in the tropics"** is the final piece in Volume 7, and usefully sits at the intersection of a number of tensions highlighted by the rest of the articles. On the one hand, the close study of Managua, Nicaragua would appear as if the city is being understood through concepts and theories developed in the global North; in particular the Haussmanization of Paris in the 19th century that involved the demolition of slum-like housing to make way for wide boulevards that facilitated sanitation but also state control. On the other hand, the case is also about the ways in which Managua does not fit this easy interpolation, but offers something new about the precise situation in Managua, whilst developing additional concepts around abject urbanism and infrastructural violence. In this way this paper represents the opportunities and risks of working through the multiple modernities of cities of the global South. There is the risk of obscuring the present beneath concepts developed in other times and places, but also the opportunity to push-back, develop, elaborate on already useful organising concepts. The challenge for those studying the urban is to take care in the design of the research, to be sensitive to the specificity of the case at hand, but also feel able to contribute to the evolving conversation and collaboration about how best to understand the urban environment.

V. Complexity and Materiality (Vol. 8)

A common background theme to each of the preceding volumes has been the complex and changing materialities through which contemporary cities and urban environments are made. Volume 5 focussed on how globalisation is transforming both the internal social and economic morphologies of cities, as well as how urban agglomerations are connected up with the wider world. Volume 6 examined the changing patterns and forms of consumption within cities. And, Volume 7 explored the multiplicity of forms of urban life that attending properly to cities of the global South shows up. All of these draw attention to a host of entities and relations that are not well accounted for in conventional narratives of urban life. What exactly is

information, for example? What is a global communication network? Is it a technology? A series of technical artifacts? The people it connects? And what of fashion, or style? Mood, atmosphere, affect? What is it to consume an 'experience'? And what about all those infrastructural elements that allow urban life to go on? Are they just a silent technological background? Or something more? And what kind of an urban place is an environment where these infrastructures are missing, or fractured, or unreliable? The final volume of *TCP-M* explores how urban researchers have sought to answer these kinds of questions about the shifting materiality and complexity of cities around the world.

At this point readers might be asking a further, more fundamental question, what is meant by the term materiality? Is it more than just the physical material of which cities are constructed? In **"Cyborg urbanization"** the urban geographer Gandy (2005) suggests that to account for the material life of cities, urban researchers need to recognise that the process of urbanisation involves a hybrid mixing of machine, human bodies, and the natural. Cities are a kind of cyborg (part machine, part organic) in which a whole range of physical infrastructures — of water provision, waste disposal, power supply, transportation — functions as an extended 'exoskeleton' to the human body (p. 28). It is easy to overlook this cyborg urbanisation, not least as so much of it exists in the background of day-to-day living. To do so, however, would be a mistake. There are a myriad of ways that the infrastructural elements of the cyborg city are entangled with the politics of urban life, and constructing a cyborg urban politics is essential to making Just cities. Gandy is keen to stress that theorising cities as cyborg entities reminds us of the physical weight of cities — they are not becoming the intangible, dematerialised, spaces that urban commentators taken with the rise of new communication technologies suggest. Latham and McCormack (2005) have a different aim in **"Moving cities"**. Rather than trying to re-ground urban studies back in the more concrete physical realities of things like infrastructure, they argue that paying increased attention to the material actually requires a more expansive engagement with the immaterial. Here the focus is less on the political — which in their view remains undecided — but on the conceptual tools and frames used to think through the particular materialities of cities and urban environments. Thinking carefully about materiality pulls our attention towards entities and agencies that are often overlooked within urban research. And not just big, tangible, things like infrastructures, but also less tangible ones like feeling, mood, affect.

Both Amin (2006) and Graham and Thrift (2007) take up Gandy's arguments about the relationship between attending to cities' material constitution and urban politics. In **"The good city"** Amin questions the privileged place the city has in the political imaginary of much

progressive politics. The sheer multiplicity of people and relations that define contemporary globalised urban agglomerations means we should be sceptical of attempts to fashion some kind of unified community. Nonetheless, thinking about the materialities that sustain urban life opens up opportunities to fashion a post-humanist vision of the city as a site of solidarity. This involves considering how all sorts of ways of life in cities are sustained through complex machinic assemblages of technologies, buildings, infrastructures, information and people. A good city is one that works to develop and maintain these assemblages such that they are open to both democratic scrutiny and oriented towards the needs of all a city's inhabitants. Graham and Thrift (2007) make a parallel point in **"Out of order"**. Thinking about the material existence of urban environments, it is easy to overlook the routine work of repair and maintenance that goes into making a city function. Perhaps this is obvious in the case of the built environment. But as Graham and Thrift show cities are also built and run through extraordinarily dense networks of software and code, networks that are kept operational through a Sisyphean task of maintenance and repair.

Amidst this talk of the infrastructural and machinic dimensions of cities it is easy to lose sight of the individual human body. Bissell (2014) and Molotch and McClain (2008) present two different reminders of how bodies are entangled within, and inhabit, urban infrastructures. In **"Encountering stressed bodies"** the mobilities scholar Bissell examines the experience of long distance commuting. Telling the story of one woman's daily commute into central Sydney, Bissell examines not only the physical systems that support the work of commuting. He attends also to the affective registers involved. In this account, cities are not just made up of inert physical stuff, they are made of intensities of emotion, shared atmospheres, and corporeal sensations of tiredness and boredom. Through Bissell's writing the reader is drawn into the intense intimacies with which bodies journey through urban space. **"Things at work"** tells a parallel story. It focuses on New York Metro Transit Authority (MTA) employees and their work keeping the city's public transportation system moving. Concentrating on the everyday work tools that MTA employees have available to them, Molotch and McClain, demonstrate that for all their cyborg like features the smooth running of urban infrastructural systems still requires significant degrees of human inventiveness and discretion. Thrift (2007) **"'But malice aforethought': cities and the natural history of hatred"** returns the discussion to a more self-consciously theoretical key, exploring the entwining of the 'technological unconscious' (p. 136) of cities, with the complex affectual atmospheres that pulsate and flow through them.

What would it mean to take Thrift's urban 'technological unconscious' seriously? And what might that mean in terms of the kinds of non-human agencies that populate and drive urban environments? Returning to Graham and Thrift's interest in computer software, it is clear that the increasing pervasiveness of electronic sensors and networks throughout urban environments is generating a whole range of novel forms of human and non-human sentience in cities. For some commentators this is nothing but a positive development (see for example Herzberger, 2017). But for others the so-called smart city raises all kinds difficult questions. Kitchin (2014) explores these in **"The real-time city?"** The mass of data generating devices such as mobile phones, RFID chips, intelligent utility meters, smart tickets, to name just a few examples, produce a torrent of real time data about city life. And this data does present novel opportunities for city governments to better manage and calibrate their activities. However it also creates a series of risks: from that of a creeping corporate takeover over of urban management, to the creation of cities that are 'buggy, brittle and hackable' (p. 10). Mitchell (2004) is more optimistic in **"Wireless bipeds."** An architectural theorist and commentator, Mitchell is aware of the dangers inherent within the rise of urban inhabitants' increasing reliance on a range of personal networked electronic devices. Nonetheless he provides a lively, historically nuanced, guide to how digital networks are expanding individuals' experience of dwelling in cities.

The emergence of a range of novel agencies within urban environments is also central to Corburn (2007) and Lorimer (2008). Here, however, the focus is on biological and 'natural' agencies. It is also — in an echo of Kitchin's critique of smart cities — about the ways urban residents and governmental and scientific institutions co-produce knowledge about the places they live. **"Community knowledge in environmental health"** explores the 'co-production' of scientific knowledge in a heavily polluted borough of New York City. It is perhaps self-evident that environmental pollution causes all sorts of harm. Nonetheless, the pathways that produce that harm are rarely straightforward, nor is it always obvious how harm itself is manifested. Focusing on the practice of urban subsistence angling, Corburn shows the ways local knowledge of how people make ends meet shifted scientific understandings of the hazards faced by residents. What is striking about this account is both the range of knowledges involved — scientific and local, formal and informal, universal and particular — as well as the diversity of objects and relationships involved that needed to be accounted for: fish, rivers, tides, anglers, heavy metals, cancer, industry, epidemiological models, local customs, economies, food provisioning. Lorimer in **"Living roofs and brownfield wildlife"** tells a similar story. Again, here is an account of the complexities and multiple agencies involved in producing knowledge about and in urban environments.

Seto et al. (2012) and Betsill and Bulkeley (2006) are also concerned with cities and the natural environment. Cities consume resources, and in turn produce waste, pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. And urbanisation itself is a process that turns land into buildings and infrastructure. Cities leave their mark on the planet. This is to such an extent that natural scientists argue the current geological period is defined by the impact that humans have had on the planet — labelling it the 'anthropocene' (Crutzen, 2002). In **"Global forecasts of urban expansion to 2030 and direct impacts on biodiversity and carbon pools"** the environmental scientists Seto et al. use remote sensing and probabilistic statistics to forecast how much land cities will take up on the planet by 2030. They find that urban growth is a threat to biodiversity hotspots, increasing the risk of species extinction. And that cities pose a risk to tropical carbon pools through deforestation; contributing to CO_2 emissions and ultimately climate change. Here the very materiality of the urban environment can be seen to be affecting the planet in all sorts of negative ways. However in **"Cities and the Multilevel Governance of Global Climate Change"** Betsill and Bulkeley suggest that cities might also be at the forefront of responding to some of these challenges. As multi-scale actors, metropolitan governments can tap into global networks of expertise, whilst they also have policy levers for organising space locally. Cities may contribute to environmental problems, but as political organisations they also create opportunities for responding.

The final section of Volume 8 deals with the question of complexity. Each of the volumes of *TCP-M* have referenced the complexity of cities and urban environments. However, the precise meaning of this complexity, how it might be more formally defined, theorised or modelled has largely been set aside. Batty (2008), Bettencourt et al. (2007), and DeLanda (2006) present three ways to think about complexity in more depth. In **"The size, scale, and shape of cities"** Batty draws on advances from the physical and biological sciences to describe the growth dynamics of cities. Cities are complex adaptive systems; they are open, emergent, and exist in a perpetual state of non-equilibrium. And they are, for all their apparent disorder, the opposite of chaotic. To describe this order spatial scientists need the formal tools of complexity science. But they also need to consider how these new tools mesh with existing ideas about urban morphology and city life. Bettencourt et al., in **"Growth, innovation, scaling, and the pace of life in cities",** go further pulling together a formal model of the dynamics of urban growth. In their view cities are defined by a series of non-linear scaling laws that operate universally across geography and history. In **"Cities and nations"** the philosopher DeLanda makes sense of complexity by using the speculative tools of philosophy and social theory. Here scale and all kinds of social entities emerge from the aggregation of

social practices, material elements, and processes of connectivity and segregation. This engages with the emergent quality of social phenomena. And it nods towards the importance of cities as foci of social and material complexity that can stabilise certain everyday activity, but can also facilitate the rise of entities as large as nation states.

To talk about complexity is to take this introduction back to where it began, with a sense of cities as complex entities — a sense that cities have gone beyond the historical singularity associated with modernity, and have in all sorts of ways become characterised by multiplicity. The works collected in *TCP-M* grapple with the multiple modernities that exist in contemporary cities. Readers are invited to explore how globalisation has transformed cities (and vice versa!), and to make sense of how new economic configurations have given rise to a diverse set of consequences in specific urban environments. They should also consider how a more global perspective has thrown new light on what cities and urban agglomerations are and do in different places around the world. Lastly they can work with novel theories of materiality to understand the many possible ways of configuring and knowing the city. Cities are complex environments; the articles here assemble a map that guide the reader to question and think more productively and more expansively about about the cities and urban environments they inhabit.

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