# SECTION 2
# Development and Urbanization

## Editors' Introduction

Development and urbanization are closely articulated fields of study and practice. While urbanization and cities are not an invention of the development era or the industrialized world, the discourse of development has helped shape the discourses of contemporary urbanization. How development is defined, how it is measured, whose development experience is counted and recognized, contemporary all have been the subject of debate and critique with significant implications for urban policies in the global South. The overall goal of this introduction is to highlight the shifting terrain of discourses, institutions, and actors of development and urbanization and their impact. "*Whose development?*" and "*whose cities?*" are two questions looming large in these debates, around which we organize this brief introduction.

### KEY ISSUES

#### Discursive shifts: whose development?

Since World War II, the record of the development enterprise and its glaring failure to bring about a dignified livelihood for the majority in the global South has invoked a range of important critiques from various corners. In the 1960s and 1970s, against the backdrop of policies that understood development as national economic growth, scholars looking at economic growth and poverty in growing cities declared that development was not benefiting the poor. Some called for a kind of development that addressed the basic needs of people and advocated "growth with equity" (Streeten 1995; Burkey 1996). Others advocated a self-help movement in housing that learned from the poor and their informal strategies (Turner 1977). These critics were joined by feminist scholars and activists who in the 1970s had scrutinized agricultural modernization from a gendered perspective (Boserup 1970). In the 1980s they demonstrated that economic development as promoted through modernization and industrialization policies was also not beneficial for poor women in urban areas. They argued that development diminished the socio-economic status of women and their power within the household, even as it increased their domestic burden (Brydon and Chant 1989; Potts 1999; Mies et al. 1988; Crewe and Harrison 1998). In the same period, environmental movements demonstrated that decades of implementing development policies and projects for economic growth had increased environmental problems with devastating consequences for the poor, particularly for indigenous communities. They declared development as not only excluding the poor but also damaging to the earth (Esteva and Prasak 1997; Peet and Watts 1993; Hecht 2004; Mies and Shiva 1993). By the 1990s, post-developmentalist scholars and activists pushed these oppositional voices further, arguing that development was not good for humanity, period. They declared it was the success of development, not its failure, that we should fear (Sachs 1992; Ferguson 1994; Escobar 1995).

In their own way these critiques influenced the formulation of urban development policies and emerged from the larger global and regional political economic restructurings of their time. In the 1960s and 1970s for example, with the anxieties of the Cold War era and the fear of political radicalization of the poor in rapidly growing cities, the bilateral and multilateral development institutions and national governmental agencies paid greater attention to self-help advocates and critics who called for development with a human face to address people's basic needs. By the late 1970s, in regions like Latin America a sharp urban population growth was taking place. This shift translated to a greater urban focus in development, especially site and services projects, which adopted the incremental self-help strategies of the urban poor to access basic shelter.

With a global restructuring of capitalism in the 1980s that mandated a "leaner" central state, mainstream institutions began to pay greater attention to non-economic factors as well as local processes and actors for development issues for which feminists, along with advocates of "development with a human face" and the "basic needs approach," had long argued. For example, while prior to the late 1980s mainstream development institutions assessed development solely on national level economic performance, by 1990 the United Nations had adopted the Human Development Index (HDI), a composite measure that went beyond GNP, and GDP. Spearheaded by economists Mahbub ul Haq and Amartya Sen, HDI broadened development's definition to include gender gaps in respect to life, health, education, and income. Most importantly for purposes of our discussion, these measures included urban-rural gaps with respect to infrastructure and sanitation (Haq 1995).



An important force prompting this "local and humanist turn" among mainstream development institutions and their critics was the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1990. This unleashed the forces of free market capitalism, diminishing the role of the developmental state in the global South and the welfare state in the global North. The post-Cold War era clearly marked a severe crisis in the discourse and practice of development. While some declared development as "dead," others set out to search for alternatives (Fine 1999). Scholars of urbanization in the global South turned to the grassroots as a source of inspiration. Building on what self-help advocates of the 1970s and feminist activists of the 1980s had promoted, they emphasized the role played by a range of actors, including women who served as city builders and urbanized much of the global South through everyday acts of community building (Moser and Peake 1987). Focusing on the urban poor and how they develop their neighborhoods, Friedmann theorized alternative development with the grassroots as the new active agents. In his influential work, *Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development* (1992), Friedmann, for example, reflected on the experience of cities in Latin America and made a case for a development paradigm shift, from national level economic development plans to household and the neighborhood level livelihood strategies–what he called an "empowerment paradigm."

While some scholars searched for an alternative to development, Bretton Woods institutions such as the World Bank turned to social capitalists to offer their version of an alternative. For example, the World Bank adopted strategies of grassroots and poverty alleviation for development resuscitation (see Hart 2001). The UN took a slightly different path, declaring alleviation from abject poverty, access to basic infrastructure, and improved sanitation in cities as millennial development goals or MDGs. Gillian Hart captured the discursive tensions in the development debates taking place at this historical moment as those between the big and small D developments: the former relying on the large scale national state developmental projects, the latter relying on grassroots and civic associations for a supposedly more humane development (Hart 2001).

In search of alternative development focused on the poor and the marginalized, urban scholars and multilateral and bilateral development agencies seem to have converged on a focus on grassroots urbanization. This convergence, however, does not mean development with a capital D was abandoned. Capital D development remained alive and well but functioned through more complex institutional and regional dynamics. In the context of a rollback in government expenditure as per structural adjustment policy prescriptions, actors of development conveniently broadened beyond national governments to include international organizations and their subsidiary local NGOs, grassroots and community-based groups, as well as transnational corporations and large development companies. (See section on governance in this *Reader.*) Emerging economies like Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (known as BRICS) have increasingly been able to challenge the post-World War II order of development and its focus on particular populations (Chatterjee 2006). For instance the governments of Brazil, India, and China have gradually taken over the role that multilateral and bilateral development agencies used to play for urbanization and infrastructure development

(McGranahan and Martine 2012). The national governments of the BRICS countries use legal tools to create zones of interest and the best environment for investments domestically and abroad, particularly in the global South. The Chinese government, for example, is currently one of the largest development agencies in Africa involved in urban infrastructure and construction projects (Kragelund and Van Dijk 2009).

In the post-Cold War era, with the global unleashing of market forces, the distinctions among diverse institutional actors have increasingly blurred. Similar processes are taking place in the regional dynamics of large scale development projects. Western (Euro-American) multinational corporations, development agencies, and state agencies do not only pursue development projects on their own national territories. They are going global. Furthermore, the BRICS governments are using their large economies to engage with local, national, and international development processes and debates on their own terms. In light of shifting discursive, institutional, and regional terrains of the development enterprise, the question, "whose development?" only becomes more difficult to parse.

## Urbanization shifts: whose cities?

In the post-World War II era, strategy for economic growth in many regions of the global South focused on industrialization to substitute imports. As discussed by Goldman in the first article selection for this section, the urban bias of this development strategy created ground-shifting conditions for rapid migration (some call it displacement) of rural populations to cities. In Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, during the period of 1950 to 1975 the distribution of population changed from majority rural to majority urban–from 59 percent rural in 1950 to 61 percent urban by 1975 (Latin America United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2008). But this urbanization trend in Latin America differs from what happened in other regions at the time and what happens in the region today. While rural–urban migration has stagnated in Latin America in the last decade, this trend has increased in a number of other regions. In Africa, for example, where urbanization progressed slowly until the late 1970s, the population of cities has increased at an exponential rate since. Between the 1970s and 2005 the number of urban dwellers in Africa quadrupled. No other major world region experienced such a fast rate of urban growth. Asia's urban population, for example, tripled in that period (Zlotnick 2006:19). Some analysts link this to the effects of 1980s structural adjustment policies on agricultural livelihoods. As Potts (1999) has noted, these policies were promoted as part of the export-oriented development.

Enabled by technological improvements and decentralized forms of production in the 1980s, export-oriented development brought about distinct patterns of urbanization across regions. In Mexico, export-oriented development encouraged almost overnight *maquila* urbanizations in border areas where US industries had moved. These *maquilas* primarily drew on populations from other cities and towns in the country. East Asian Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs)–Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong later joined by Indonesia, Thailand–followed the example of Japan as an export-oriented model. However, these countries primarily drew on rural migration for their huge increases in urbanization. By suspension of labor rights and increased use of female labor, export zones in East Asian NICs, enterprise zones in the Caribbean, *maquilas* in Mexico, or Special Economic Zones in the case of China have all taken a great toll on local environments and their local labor force (Fernández-Kelly 1983; Cross 2010; Summerfield 1995).

In the case of China, the economic, political, and ideological shifts to an export-oriented model of economic growth have been drastic yet revealing of the development-urbanization connections and their cost on urban inhabitants. When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, only about 13 percent of the population lived in urban areas. Mao Zedong considered capitalist cities parasitic centers of consumption, but socialist cities necessary for production. During the Great Leap Forward campaign of 1958–1961, heavy, Soviet-style industrialization was encouraged in China's cities especially in the west, where population grew rapidly with disastrous outcomes especially in terms of the movement's impact on food supply for urban inhabitants. But during the cultural revolution of 1966–1976, many urban youth were forcibly sent back to the countryside away from the "bourgeois" cities. This reduced China's urban population almost to what it had been in 1949.

Since the adoption of an export-oriented industrialization model in the late 1970s, China has urbanized rapidly. Now more than half of its population lives in cities. This time, however, cities are swelled by rural–urban migrants who live illegally in cities despite official residence status or *hukou* in rural areas.

In addition to distinct patterns of urbanization, the global dominance of neoliberal capitalism has also given rise to a range of new city building projects that equally beg the question: "whose cities?" Goldman in the reading that follows introduces speculative cities whose *raison d'être* is creating a use for accumulated financial capital, just as Mitra (in Part III of this volume) notes the ways in which capital is anchored in cities in various ways.

Indeed, capitalism seems to have turned to urban projects to solve the problem of excess accumulation of profits. These projects take many forms–the border towns and enterprise zones of Latin America and the Caribbean, the vast expansion of construction in Chinese and Indian cities of the last decade, or the elitist City Doubles of Africa that Martin Murray (forthcoming) documents. Given the scale and nature of these projects the questions of "whose cities?" and "whose development?" may be more important than ever.



## ARTICLE SELECTIONS

There are two selections for this section: a commissioned piece by sociologist Michael Goldman, and an excerpt from an influential book by geographer Jennifer Robinson. The two pieces dovetail in their critique of the global city as an idealized Western model of what cities ought to be–a dangerous idealization that suppresses the imagination of a range of cities by and for their inhabitants. While Robinson focuses on the global city debate, Goldman sets the stage by reviewing more than six decades of development discourse in relation to urban policy interventions in the global South. He shows how ideas of development have a formative influence on urban policies and city building. In his prior research and publications, Goldman has highlighted the hegemonic role that the World Bank plays in development processes through its knowledge production about development (i.e., his 2006 volume on the greening of the World Bank titled *Imperial Nature*). In this review essay he makes a compelling case on the role that influential global financial institutions like the IMF and the World Bank play in respect to Third World urbanization, often as much through their "problem framing" as their role in the production of so called "solutions." Most recently, for example, the trope of the global city has served as a means of speculative urbanization that excludes the majority of inhabitants from an urban livelihood, with the promise of building a globally competitive city.

The second selection is from Jennifer Robinson's book *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development* (2006). With extensive research and publication on the relationship between power and space in South Africa's geographies of apartheid, Robinson is well known for her pointed critique of global cities. She argues against creating hierarchically positioned categories of cities (global cities, Third World cities, megacities) with an idealized position given to the global cities model. She suggests all cities be understood as ordinary cities that can fulfill their own potential. Her postcolonial critique of emulating certain Western cities as "global" has important implications for urban studies and practice worldwide. Her critique is important because patterns of urbanization and the types of cities people live in vary widely across contexts; but her remarks are particularly timely in an era of marketing global cities as a blueprint for consumption by city planners and city builders across the world at the cost of ordinary inhabitants of cities.

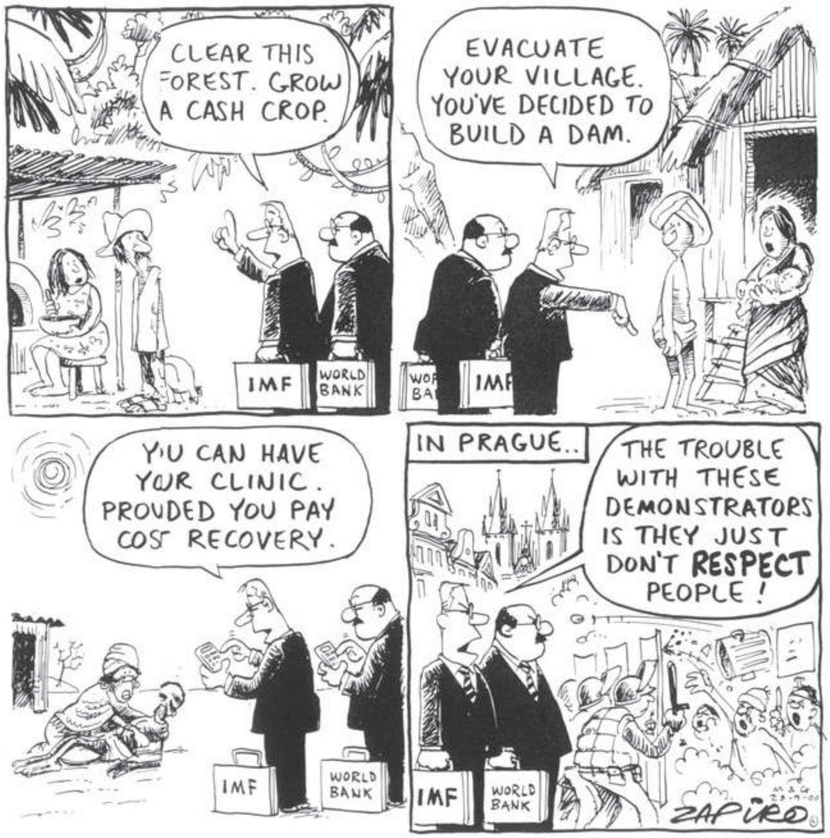


**Figure 22** Development diktats.
*Source*: © Zapiro.

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# "Development and the City"

## Essay written for *Cities of the Global South Reader* (2015)

Michael Goldman

> I have understood the population explosion intellectually for a long time. I came to understand it emotionally one stinking hot night in Delhi a few years ago. The streets seemed alive with people. People eating, people washing, people sleeping. People visiting, arguing, and screaming. . . . As we moved slowly through the mob, hand horn squawking, the dust, noise, heat and cooking fires gave the scene a hellish aspect. Would we ever get to our hotel? All three of us were, frankly, frightened . . . since that night I've known the feel of overpopulation. (Ehrlich 1968)

### REVILED AND DESIRED: SCHIZOPHRENIA OVER THE THIRD WORLD CITY

In the once-rocky fields southwest of Delhi sits triumphantly the Indian metropolis Gurgaon, built by a real estate mogul and now a magnet for Fortune Global 500 firms. Along with the fastest-growing cities in the world—Toluca in Mexico, Palembang in Indonesia, Chittagong in Bangladesh, Beihai in northern China—Gurgaon may be the next Wall Street pick for spectacular rates of financial return. Meanwhile Shanghai, home to more than 20 million people, remains the envy of and model for World Bank urban planners. Five decades after the Ehrlichs were chased from "frightening" Third World cities, how would they interpret this amazing urban turn? City planners now desire to *populate* their cities—some cities of the North are suffering from *de*-population—while China's planners expect to transform 100 towns into state-of-the-art global cities within 20 years. Too many people fighting over too few resources? On the contrary, the only scarce resource global-city planners' lament is the lack of capital investment, inadequate to keep up with the torrent pace of urban expansion in the global South.

As one British fund manager explained to me at an investors meeting in New Delhi in 2010, it is not a question of a world divided between "developed" (i.e., the North) and "emerging" (i.e., global South) markets, in which the latter is too risky for investors. US and European cities are now seen by Wall Street as "declining" and global South cities are the new "growth" markets overflowing with opportunities for high returns. "Who is still willing to invest in the dying markets of the North?" he asked with a hint of irony. Large pension funds from California, Texas, and Ottawa, and sovereign wealth funds from Abu Dhabi and China have plenty of capital and are eager to invest *if* urban governments are willing to offset the huge risks of world-city projects with guarantees of attractive financial returns.

Along with PricewaterhouseCoopers, UN Habitat, and European Chambers of Commerce, the World Bank has remapped the world as a "system of cities," emphasizing *not* Tokyo, London, and New York, but Dubai, Shanghai, and Sao Paolo as key nodes of urbanization (World Bank 2011). Rapid city growth is seen as a key factor in reversing disturbing poverty trends in Sub-Saharan Africa and throughout Asia (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2010). In 2009, the OECD Director declared in Copenhagen at the UN Climate Change Conference that one of the most important contributions to addressing the global warming problem is to invest much more capital into our expanding cities, not to reduce their size as environmentalists once demanded (OECD 2009; World Wildlife Fund 2010). In other words, to many policy experts, cities have now become the key to environmentally sustainable development, global economic growth, and poverty alleviation.

How did this happen? Why did this remarkable *global urban turn* in Northern expertise on development occur? Once disparagingly represented as "megacities" with intractable mega-problems, global South cities are now positively portrayed as "global cities," beacons of a new regime of urbanism and planetary sustainability. What has been the effect on the poor of this push to transform cities into global cities? What impact has the new urban turn had on other cities that have no appeal to global investors? How has this priority shift affected the majority urban populations that struggle daily to gain access to basic urban goods and services?

The goal of this chapter is to review the scholarly literature on development and the city, highlight the shifts in the development enterprise's approach to the city (e.g., how the World Bank and its partner organizations understand cities of the Third World), and delineate some of the most pressing issues for inhabitants of these rapidly changing urban landscapes. The chapter emphasizes the making of global cities because that is the trend today in global urban planning, a trend worthy of scrutiny. I question the policy to shift resources to these projects and away from what Jennifer Robinson (see next chapter) calls "ordinary cities." These more established cities are now off the radar of investment firms, business schools, and development banks, but remain home to many urban denizens who also need secure and ample access to the public goods and services, living wages, and social support systems that cities can provide (Robinson 2006; Watson 2009). The chapter concludes by highlighting themes and questions from scholars interested in creating an analytic framework and policy approach that more accurately captures the diverse lived experiences and histories of urban dwellers. I review perspectives that take seriously the past effects of colonial exploitation on city life, as well as current global capitalist practices, in order to appreciate why social inequalities seem to increase over time even with development policy infusions. Finally, I consider scholarship on more localized forms of power that have constrained and enabled non-elite majorities in efforts to make their cities livable based on their own, and not global, standards of city life.

## DEVELOPMENT AFTER WORLD WAR II, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CITY MAKING

The twentieth century was full of nationalist hope and ambition. In the post-World War II era, declarations of fulfilling "basic needs" of providing food, home, and security to the majority, by developing with a strong state and an economy geared toward producing for the nation became the goal. These goals included the desire to nationalize resources and industries controlled by ex-imperial powers abroad. As countries fought for national independence, the political question for nationalist movements was how to keep national wealth circulating *within* the country and *across* social classes so that the uneven and exploitative circuits of the colonial past could be broken and new social relations around production could be created, nationally and globally.

Some Southern countries experimented with a political-economic regime called "import substitution industrialization" (ISI) between the 1930s and 1970s, which countered the demands of Europe and the US for raw materials-producing countries to make these resources cheaply available. With the worldwide depression of the 1930s, the new strategy—among newly independent nations as well as many Latin American countries—was to protect national industries and populations from the extreme volatilities and uncertainties that triggered crisis for the global economy. Bryan Roberts explains how ISI worked in Latin America: because of the relative weakness of local capital, the Latin American state became an active agent in urban development (Roberts 1999). State employment was high and concentrated in cities; cities became "places of refuge" for a rural and small town population "for whom the agrarian structure no longer provides sufficient income for household subsistence" (Roberts 1999: 674). Government-led industrialization created internal demand for locally produced goods, created jobs, set rent controls for affordable housing (government built), offered food subsidies, and supported relatively strong trade union-backed rights.

Across the globe in Bandung, Indonesia, 29 independence leaders representing more than 1.5 billion people met in a conference hall in April 1955 to discuss African and Asian solidarity, opposition to colonialism and the vitriolic cold war politics of the US and Soviet Union, as well as search for ways to engage each other culturally and economically (now known as the "Bandung conference"). Subsequently, progressive national leaders including Nyerere of Tanzania, Senghor of Senegal, Nkrumah of Ghana, and Touré of Guinea initiated a policy of "African socialism" (a traditional form distinct from Europe's) in which economic development was guided by a large, job-creating public sector. In 1967, Nyerere released the Arusha Declaration that promoted an African model of development based on what he called *Ujamaa*, a Swahili word meaning "extended family"—a moral compass for a national plan based on the notion of shared development.

All of these development models stood in stark contrast to those coming from European and US governments and from those Northern institutions they led, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These twin agencies were created at a meeting in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, in July 1944, as World War II was winding down and the global economy was in collapse. In response, US and British economic advisors John Maynard Keynes and Henry Morgenthau called together allied world leaders to figure out how to rebuild the global economy, secure devastated currencies, and get production back on track. The most influential development organization to emerge was the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, or the World Bank (McMichael 2009; Goldman 2005). Over time, the bank's Board of Directors and upper management comprised officials selected mainly from the UK, Germany, France, Italy, US, Canada, and Japan. Most of its earliest projects went to build up the infrastructure that fed the global economy: rebuilding the mines, power plants, railways, and ports that would expeditiously extract minerals from the mines for the industrial factories in the global North. The IMF's job was to harmonize national currencies and encourage rules to stabilize wild fluctuations in currency values and activities, and promote the unimpeded movements of capital and goods, so as to end what Morgenthau called "economic nationalism" (McMichael 2009).

From the 1950s through the 1970s, development policy makers and project lenders thus found their mission *outside* the cities, in the rural-based sectors of energy, mining, industry, agriculture, and transport. From an urban perspective, rural-based development could stop the flow of the rural poor migrating into the city in search of remunerative work; and, from the perspective of Robert McNamara, World Bank president from 1968 through 1981, such capital infusions could also stem the tide of rebellions and revolutions in the countryside of ex-colonies such as Vietnam, Indonesia, and Cambodia.

While the World Bank President justified these rural investments to his staff and clients as contributing to overall economic growth, and perhaps reducing the stress of in-migration on cities, he had a difficult time selling the idea of lending directly to large cities. Since the bank was dominated by neoclassical economists with a Wall Street business sense (all of its presidents have been Americans, and most came from Wall Street), the prickly question became: on what grounds could it justify lending money to cities? The World Bank needed to find the urban equivalent of the rural peasant, "a targetable population that could be the recipient or direct beneficiary of productive investments, not simply welfare transfers," as political scientist Edward Ramsamy put it (Ramsamy 2006: 83). In the mid-1970s when World Bank President McNamara introduced an urban department into the institution's growing bureaucracy, he was met with extreme wariness. The whole idea of lending for "the urban" sounded unfamiliar to most World Bank economists, quite different from lending for energy, farming, or transport. "Some people in the Bank were making jokes that next we are going to have suburban development, or an outer-space development program" (Ramsamy 2006: 83).

Under the rubric of "basic needs" programming, the World Bank did start to finance very small schemes for "slum upgrading" and helped in the creation of UN-Habitat in 1978, a marginally funded UN agency focused on city development to counterbalance the many UN agencies working on rural development. The belief was that if housing and access to water and sewerage facilities were improved, the poor could have their basic needs met and could be better participants in the economy.

Urban development is a complex issue, as Matthew Gandy demonstrates in his work on Lagos, Nigeria (Gandy 2006). Lagos is the largest, most prominent West African metropolis and a city in which development planners have taken a great interest. In the late 1970s, according to Gandy, development experts believed that if modern infrastructure systems were delivered to megacities, the foundation would be laid for major urban improvements. For example, urban planners confidently predicted that within 20 years Lagos would be fully connected with a water system supplying water to all its residents. All the most potent organizations worked toward this accomplishment, and yet by 2003, fewer than 5 percent of Lagos' households had a direct connection, leaving most of its 15 million denizens to buy from private tankers or vendors, or expensively dig their own bore wells (Gandy 2006).

Part of the explanation for what happened in Lagos rests with the political and developmental shift for many global South cities in the 1970s and 1980s, as the ideal of the socially planned city deteriorated due to uneven forms of capitalist urbanization in which corporate investors primarily built hotels, hospitals, and infrastructure to benefit the elite while basic infrastructure for the non-elite majority was left in disrepair. Development policies were rarely written to mitigate these inequalities, in large part because the World Bank and others encouraged investment in private property and wealth accumulation in cities, imagining a "trickle-down" effect to the poor from such private forms of accumulation. For example, a common World Bank loan would be for road construction with the intent of relieving traffic, but these loans are both expensive and only beneficial for the few who own cars. Moreover, the majority who do not own cars can often lose access to a public good such as the city road, as their modes of transport—walking, biking, moving by ox-carts, public buses—are neglected or pushed aside.

Many development scholars and practitioners diagnosed the impoverishment of the postcolonial South using an analytical framework called *modernization theory*, premised on three assumptions. First, according to modernization theory, societies go through evolutionary stages of development, from traditional to modern, from agrarian to urban. Second, technology more than social organization and structure is considered a prime engine and defining feature of social change, and third, industrialism rather than capitalism is believed to be the major force behind such "progress." In the early 1960s, a national security advisor for President Johnson during the Vietnam War, Walt Rostow, promoted his book, *Stages of Economic Growth*, and his beliefs on how countries develop economically, with a US-centric understanding of progress and development (Rostow 1960). Despite its profound shortcomings (e.g., ignoring the structural roles of European-derived colonial and capitalist relations that *underdeveloped* parts of the global South), it caught the imagination of Northern policy experts and economists. Modernization has since become the foundational framework for understanding global North–South relations, as well as the justification for the role and logic of development institutions such as the World Bank.

Another perspective emerged during the 1970s, from development consultant and scholar Michael Lipton who detected an "urban bias" within development institutions, as well as in national politics, favoring the needs of the urban elite. Lipton interpreted the large accumulation of wealth in the city as built on the backs of rural areas (Lipton 1977). He argued that resources were often sucked out of the countryside and funneled into the cities, through political pressures to keep crop prices low so that urban food prices would be kept low. This bias toward the city benefited urban workers as well as their employers who could pay them less as a result.

Other debates run through the scholarly literature around the questions of how cities grow, how they generate wealth, and how they allocate resources, public space, and social goods such as open public areas for markets and hawking. Many large Southern cities were (and some still are) important manufacturing sites and hence crucial to the national economy. By the 1980s, for example, the Bangkok metro area contributed almost 90 percent of Thailand's gross national product (GNP) in services and 75 percent in manufacturing, while having only 10 percent of the nation's population (Kasarda and Crenshaw 1991). Similarly, Lagos produced half of Nigeria's manufacturing value and Mexico City alone generated 30 percent of Mexico's GNP, as Sao Paolo did for Brazil. Yet access to basic public goods such as health care and clean water, and especially a living wage, was not part of the lives of the working majority.

By contrast, and as a strong critique, *dependency* and *world-systems* theorists challenged the dominant perspective of modernization, arguing that capitalism is a historically unique and powerful social formation (emerging from colonialism) that creates unequal structures of exploitation and expropriation (Frank 1966; Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Wallerstein 1974; Amin 1976). The beneficiaries are mostly elite classes in the major cities of the North (called "the core"), and secondarily in the urban South (or "periphery"). Some called this process "underdevelopment," whereby the wealthier classes and governments in the North *underdeveloped* governments and populations in the South (Amin 1976; Frank 1966). Such scholars argued for a historical analysis that revealed the dual processes of urbanization that inextricably linked the wealth accumulation and cosmopolitan living of New York, Paris, and London with the generation of poverty and inequities of Mexico City, Dakar, and Dhaka. Whereas modernization scholars thought of countries as discrete objects with their own internal plans and successes/failures, "developing" *sequentially*, these critical social theorists understood history in *relational* terms. That is, England became wealthy and powerful *because* it exploited India's wealth and possibilities, thereby "underdeveloping" it (McMichael 2010). In their view, as capitalism evolved after colonialism, new hierarchies and social relations emerged, such that cities like Singapore, Shanghai, and more recently Dubai contributed to the reshaping of a multi-polar system of capitalism. In either case, these scholars argued that one should not diagnose and solve developmental problems as if they exist in a vacuum, or are due to purely localized problems of "lacks" or deficiencies.

Manuel Castells added an urban dimension to the dependency school approach. Dependency, he argued, was not *only* an external condition and imposition, but also an internal set of practices, reproducing localized forms of inequality, as one can see in the social tensions within Latin American cities where he studied (Castells 1977). Therefore, he contended that one should study the interaction between global and national structures of inequality as *interdependent* processes. Simply put, local political and economic elites also have agendas that can lead to greater class disparities and social injustices, and the effects can be seen in the rise of the gated enclaves in and around cities and the vast areas of *favelas* (slums), where the poor, who do so much of the daily work for the city, live. The majority of these workers produce the wealth for the city but the city's public services provide little in terms of safe and adequate housing, drinking water, health care, waste removal, schools, and most importantly, living wages (i.e., enough income to work oneself out of poverty).

## URBAN SHOCK THERAPY: STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM

By the 1970s in Chile and Argentina, and almost everywhere else in the 1980s (except, notably, China), the state-centered model of development ended and a new approach, which privileged the private sector and "market mechanisms," was embraced. This development shift paralleled a global political project emphasized by US President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the early 1980s, which critical scholars call *neoliberalism*. This ideology reflected the belief that market actors, such as corporations, should direct national economies rather than governments (or trade unions), which are supposedly dominated by political interests. In the development industry, this political ideology drew strong support from the World Bank and the IMF, both of which pushed the idea that less regulation and more freedom of market actors such as large firms would reduce corruption, politics, and market inefficiencies. Beginning in the 1970s, the World Bank imposed *structural adjustment programs (SAPs)* on countries of the global South, with the goal of reducing the role of the state. They insisted that their borrowers sell off important national assets such as steel factories, coal mines, railways, and telecommunications companies to local or foreign firms. They also insisted that governments charge "user fees" for public services (e.g., education and health care) that were once provided for free or very cheaply to the poor majority.

This new development approach was based on the belief that firms, especially more "experienced" Northern firms, knew best how to run a business and that cities basically comprised numerous government enterprises that functioned poorly. They believed that converting these once-public services to a private, fee-for-service model would both lead to greater efficiency in their use and convert urban citizens into reliable and responsible customers. One of the sectors in which these ideas were put to the greatest test—and failed—was water (see box). Furthermore, the World Bank and the IMF required that governments devalue their currencies, cut tariffs on imports, and re-orient the output of their farms and factories toward those who could pay, namely, foreign rather than local customers. Since the Bank and the IMF held the purse strings, cash-starved countries reluctantly followed these controversial prescriptions, despite the fact that they were never promoted in Northern countries in such an extreme fashion.

The net effect was disastrous for the poorest populations. Indicators for national-level health, life expectancy, income equality, and per-capita GDP

### WATER WARS

One of the most heavily criticized development policies during the 1990s was the attempt to privatize large-city water supplies and services. The World Bank's idea of turning over public provisioning of water to European and US firms spread quickly, sweetened with the green and humanitarian promise of *finally* delivering safe and efficiently distributed water to the world's poor urban population. With governments broke and old colonial water systems woefully inadequate, the Bank sold the idea that well-capitalized international firms were better positioned than politicized governments to provide water. The free market was to be the savior. The World Bank and the IMF offered guaranteed access to much-needed capital and debt relief in exchange for government's implementing water privatization. The pressure was substantial: by 2001, all 11 of the World Bank's water and sanitation loans carried conditionalities that required borrowing governments to either privatize these services or dramatically increase the price to consumers. In that same year, IMF "poverty reduction" loans to highly indebted countries had water privatization as a key conditionality. Highly indebted countries could not receive relief without privatizing their municipal water systems.

But as water bills rose to unwieldy heights, people took to the streets: in Guinea, water prices rose more than fivefold for the majority poor; in Johannesburg the price doubled and many of the poorest were completely cut off for not being able to pay their bills. In the Bolivian city of Cochabamba, the price spiked 200 percent, and some users were fined for harvesting rain water without paying Bechtel as the contract drafted by the Bank required. Cities erupted in protest as the cost of water became prohibitive, promised pipes were never run to the poor neighborhoods, and international firms held city governments hostage to contracts that guaranteed rates of returns to the firms with no guarantees to the city that all would receive a fair share of the city's water. By the early 2000s, 80 percent of these World Bank water contracts were nullified by angry citizens, vulnerable politicians, and/or frustrated firm shareholders demanding their companies withdraw from money-losing ventures.

From Ecuador to Bolivia and Paraguay, these "water wars" fed into urban movements against resource and service privatization, which forced out neoliberal governments and replaced them with anti-World Bank, anti-privatization governments. The *urban revolution* was back on the political landscape.

*Source*: Goldman 2007.

growth, all fell dramatically during the neoliberal, structural adjustment period of the 1980s and 1990s (Weisbrot and Ray 2011; Ismi 2004). When development experts insisted that countries introduce user fees for children attending elementary schools and for families using local health clinics, attendance dropped precipitously. Mortality rates increased and life expectancies dropped. Health and education budgets, already low by comparison to the North, reached their lowest point since the colonial era (Ismi 2004). Development scholar Asad Ismi summarizes the effects on the African continent as follows: as a result of structural adjustment policies, "Africa spends four times more on debt interest payments than on health care. This combined with cutbacks in social expenditure caused health care spending in the 42 poorest African countries to fall by 50% during the 1980s" (Ismi 2004:12).

This draconian development policy reversed most of the gains that countries had enjoyed during the post-independence, nation-centered development period. The worst hit countries were the poorest, those that had little choice but to follow World Bank and IMF prescriptions if they did not want to lose access to international capital and loans. Middle-income countries and China were notable exceptions, as they pursued decidedly state-led, non-neoliberal plans.

Neoliberal policies undertaken by many countries in the global South reduced employment in major cities where government offices were located; they also removed employment protections and important subsidies for public goods and services. By and large, electricity, water, health services, schooling, and waste removal were priced at levels that most consumers could not afford. With rising water and electricity prices and the loss of subsidies for locally consumed food grains, local diets often became unaffordable. Housing prices were de-subsidized and housing became part of a globally competitive real estate market, which priced many poor city dwellers out of their homes. There is a large literature about the near universal failure of these development policies to improve the poor's lives (Ismi 2004; Naiman and Watkins 1999; SAPRIN 2002; Weisbrot and Ray 2011). Ismi concludes that "after 15 years of following World Bank and IMF-imposed policies, Latin America, by the late 1990s, was going through 'its worst period of social and economic deprivation in half a century.' By 1997, nearly half of the region's 460 million people had become poor—an increase of 60 million in ten years" (Ismi 2004: 9).

But cities have also been the sites of popular protests against draconian development policies. In the 1980s, city streets broke out in "bread riots" and anti-IMF protests, closing down business and governments (Walton and Seddon 1994). Some eventually led to small and large changes, including the toppling of conservative political regimes, which often were the most compliant World Bank clients. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Latin American governments were voted out in Uruguay, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Venezuela. Election campaigns highlighted the desire to kick out the World Bank and IMF and nationalize ownership of natural resources. A new Banco del Sur (Bank of the South) was inaugurated in September 2009 with the objectives of boycotting the major development agencies and pooling capital resources from progressive Latin American governments (starting with $20 billion) to invest in social welfare and development projects in the poorest regions of Latin America, a socially progressive set of priorities that pushed against the grain of global capitalist development ideology and practices.

## SPECULATING ON GLOBAL CITIES

In 2009, World Bank President Zoellick announced:

> Infrastructure is a cornerstone of the World Bank Group's recovery strategy for the global economic crisis. These investments can create jobs today and higher productivity and growth tomorrow . . . the needs are huge: an estimated 880 million people still live without safe water; 1.5 billion people without electricity; 2.5 billion without sanitation; and more than one billion without access to an all-weather road or telephone service. The world's urban population is expected to increase from 3.3 billion to five billion by 2030—with Africa and Asia doubling their urban populations—creating new infrastructure demands for transport, housing, water, waste collection, and other amenities of modern life . . . These infrastructure choices will shape cities and lifestyles for many decades or even a century to come. (Zoellick 2009)

Thus began the current era in which the global South city itself becomes the marketable commodity, under the guidance of global development (De Soto 2000; World Bank 2008; Glaeser 2012). From the perspective of World Bank official Hernando de Soto, the misery of the South is rooted in the unvalorized potential that sits right under the poor and their land—including the public spaces they inhabit such as sidewalks, plazas, and slum areas squatted upon by hard-working but low-income populations. The solution to this problem has now become: expand the railway station into a shopping mall, the sidewalks into private property, slums into central business districts, and charge fees for government services outsourced to international firms. Streamline, upgrade, and globalize resources, services, public spaces, and land, and you can ignite the transformation of the wretched mega-city into a global city, a place where international capital and its employees would desire to invest and settle.

The development enterprise did not fall in love with the idea of globalizing cities on its own; indeed, as is true with its earlier shifts in lending policies, it tends to follow, and support, trends emerging from various other quarters. The 1980s and 1990s witnessed a tremendous consolidation and unleashing of power from what were once fairly discrete organizations of local and international capital: insurance, housing, banking, investing, real estate. This consolidation has created large pools of finance and real estate capital working across national boundaries to develop new types of investment strategies, and new social imaginaries as to how cities can be made globally competitive and more profitable for investors, and, allegedly, more developed and livable.

These global-city strategies were contrived by transnational policy networks, creating a global network of expertise on cities, led by consultants (e.g., McKinsey, PricewaterhouseCoopers), UN agencies (e.g., UN-Habitat, the UN Development Program), international finance institutions (e.g., the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank), and global forums such as the World Cities Summit and the C40 Cities Mayors Summit. These forums are often co-sponsored by real estate and capital goods firms. On one end of the spectrum, the World Bank and bilateral agencies advocate for the "urban turn" in lending and urban planning; at the other end, environmental NGOs and experts have deemed cities as the new site of green innovation for carbon-cutting built environments, living spaces, and transport systems. Whereas once these actors deplored the megacities of the Third World, today, cities are now seen as the fount of innovation and "best practices" for "ending poverty" and for "sustainable lifestyles." By 2012, the World Bank declared that financing city infrastructure was one of its most important endeavors (Rethinking Cities 2012).

The rationale for these global investment practices starts with the assumption that Southern cities have been dying under the weight of mega-city problems, including a culture of ineptitude that has made it hard for any national government or financial market to expect large cities to become drivers of a national economy. Select cities, however, do become economic powerhouses that urban boosters claim *can be* replicated elsewhere: Singapore and its city-state model of capital accumulation (Chua 2011), Shanghai and its massive infrastructural transformation, Dubai and its capital-flush real estate sector, and Bangalore and its phenomenal information technology industry. These models of urban transformation have incited ambitious master plans to convert urban landscapes into global cities with spectacular skylines and splashy must-see infrastructure.

Coupled with these assumptions and beliefs is a new agenda from the world's largest real estate and financial firms, to build up various forms of global cities. For example, in 2007, Dubai's largest developer and real estate firm, Limitless LLC, committed $15 billion to finance and build India's first privately owned small city outside of Bangalore, India's "Knowledge City," the first of five multi-billion dollar private "greenfield" cities on the rapidly urbanizing rural periphery of Bangalore. Before 2007–2008, this same firm had large-scale financial commitments for building luxurious cities adjacent to Moscow, Istanbul, Riyadh, Amman, and in and around Dubai—with ambitious names like "The World" and "The Universe." As of today, most of these projects have been stalled due to lack of capital and demand.

Meanwhile, China is planning to build more than 100 global cities over the next two decades, an extraordinary feat by any standard. It is also building a string of "eco-cities" that are hoped to become prototypes to export abroad. In its interest to acquire much-needed farm land and minerals to continue its city building campaign, China is also purchasing land and mines throughout Africa, and has agreed to build up urban infrastructure in exchange, including lavish state palaces and halls, soccer stadiums, and central business districts, and in oil-rich Angola, a $2.5 billion upscale mini-city of apartment complexes (called Nova Cidade de Kilamba) with condos selling at New York prices in a land where people make an average of $2 per day. In 2013, it sits mostly empty.

Is this the way to build up a city with equitable access to basic services, good employment, and affordable housing and clean water? These speculative, and seemingly failed, urban projects and visions can do harm to more than just their investors. For one, they require large swathes of public or farming land, discounted by governments and often with guarantees of 24/7 water, electricity, and the latest transport systems—resources that nearby communities rarely receive. World Bank loans are oftentimes featured in the lure for investors to come to town, even though the greater population must contribute to the repayment of these loans. Second, this type of speculative urbanism has sparked a new form of urban governance, one vulnerable to the rise and fall of stock markets and the whims of investment capital, whose actors are often based in cities immune to such volatilities, such as Singapore, London, Shanghai, and New York (Goldman 2011). Third, and perhaps most importantly, this type of frenetic city building displaces large populations to accommodate investors. In China alone, it is estimated that tens of millions have been displaced in the past decade from city expansion and reconstruction (Hsing 2010).

The latest trend seems to be a grand distraction from any attempts to build secure and affordable cities for the majority. Urban and rural social movements have risen in protest against what is being called "land grabbing" for these luxury enclaves.

Today, China is home to thousands of protests, especially in its smaller cities and large towns. Elsewhere, city dwellers are challenging these development processes and working to reclaim and remake their city in their own image, rather than the imagined one of global-city boosters. One prominent Africanist scholar argues it is often the Africans marginalized by failed global-city projects who mobilize “the city as a resource for reaching and operating at the level of the world” (Simone 2009). City dwellers, local governments, and even many actors in the global economy cannot cope with such volatility, as the crippling global financial crisis of 2007–2008 demonstrated.

## NEW APPROACHES TO THINKING ABOUT CITY LIFE AND LIVELIHOODS

As Achille Mbembe (2004) and other African scholars note, there is nothing new to the idea that African cities have been re-made due to transnational forces, connections, and imaginaries (see Miraftab 2012). To complement and counterbalance the premise that external forces have often dictated local realities, these scholars start from the place where the majority of city dwellers live, where they work and struggle, and create, and then assess the influences of external forces *in situ*. AbdouMaliq Simone observes that most African denizens thrive at a distance from the formal center of the city, far from where official practices and structures dominate (Simone 2004a, 2004b). That is, urban life for the majority is not solely defined by the impact of a mega-project or a development policy; rather, the African urban is constituted in large part by the multiple ways that people generate their own provisions and services, make their own markets and social goods, and feel and express their own sentiments and sensations, or what he calls “people as infrastructures.” In a similar vein, Mbembe stresses “ways of seeing” that overcome the myopic outsider’s view only of the market, either macro/economic structures of dependency or the neoliberal emphasis on markets as saviors, with the “African variation” perceived as backwards and failed. The ironclad hold of developmental thinking on the telling of Africa forecloses the possibility of understanding complex power relations beyond the narrow Western social science categories of state, market, and civil society, which always look inadequate under the Western gaze.

Instead, Africanist scholars argue that a socio-spatial approach based on ethnographic and historical readings of the African city reveal a quite different urban experience. From this perspective, the state does not have a monopoly on power, as people have successfully self-organized across numerous lines of connectivity, locally and globally, based on a wide range of needs, from food to spirituality, in efforts to fulfill their needs and generate alliances (Mbembe 2004; Simone 2004a; Watson 2009). They argue that “African cosmopolitanism” surfaces and circulates in the shadows of, and in spite of, official forms of urban power. They are calling for a more ground-up analysis of how the non-elite majority creatively constitutes the city and persists amidst injustices and scarcities (Ferguson 2006). If we can better understand how urban poverty and wealth are co-constituted and legitimated, through forms of capitalist development, we can better understand the alternatives. This approach reveals that which the developmentalist worldview often masks or erases; from this perspective, one can begin to see global South cities in their complexities and possibilities, not in caricature or in comparison to the North and its standards and misperceptions.

From this vantage point, we can also see the multiple modernities of the urban, to better understand global South peoples as *actors* making cities and histories, as *subjects* constituted in times of crises, resisting authorities and creating aspirations and livelihoods (Mbembe and Roitman 2003; Mignolo 2000; Roy 2009a). This is a perspective that does not assume a half-formed subject or a malignant modern, but it also is not a romanticized reading of reality. Instead, it starts from the premise that the same powers of creativity, expertise, and infinite possibilities that have been associated with the cosmopolitan urbanite of the global North be granted their counterpart in the Southern city. In post-apartheid South Africa, one of the most vibrant urban social movements is *Abahlali baseMjondolo*, shackdwellers pushed to the limits by the police who have had the mandate to aggressively destroy slums, especially in the brutal “clean up” prior to the 2010 FIFA soccer World Cup event. They have no party affiliation; instead they have conjured up their own definition of politics in which they demand the right to their homes and workshops and access to urban public space—the “right to the city” which so many South Africans have lost. Their ambition is to take back the urban commons that have been privatized or made accessible only to elites.

Elsewhere, urban protests against the privatization of city water services sparked a broad social justice agenda. It started in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in the early 2000s and spread across Latin American cities, where people from different backgrounds came together to roll back profitable schemes for elite politicians and international firms, whether it be selling off water, electricity, health care, education, or urban public space (or the "urban commons") such as open-air markets and the land in and surrounding slum dwellings deemed more valuable as commodified "real estate."

In sum, to more accurately understand the relationship between the development enterprise and the global South city, we need to "decenter" global urban theories in scholarship and development practice that stick to master tropes about slums, poverty, and arrested development, and instead consider the significance and worldliness of analytic perspectives that emanate from these communities and their cities (McFarlane 2008; Roy 2009b; Miraftab 2009).

## CONCLUSION: CITIES OF INFINITE POSSIBILITY?

Perhaps as momentous as in 1871 (insurrection of the Commune of Paris), 1917 (Russian Revolution), 1968 (urban revolts from Mexico City to Paris), and 1989 (Eastern European revolutions), the year 2011 erupted into a series of unexpected urban revolutions. From Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt, to Pearl Square in Manama, Bahrain, a diverse swathe of national populations barricaded the streets of major and minor cities and declared that a new world was possible, one free of autocratic rule, free of austerity and speculation, free of multiple forms of oppression. How shall we theorize the urban nature of these expressions of people's power and social change, as they unfold over the next decade?

No longer should cities such as Tunis and Tripoli be portrayed as provincial outposts far from the modern, and disconnected from the happenings of the world. History teaches us that there would be no affluent London without the work and resources of impoverished Calcutta and Kingston; no Paris without Abidjan and Saigon. Under the most exploitative conditions, global South cities have contributed enormously to our rich-and-poor modern world. How can they also be sites for a different sort of expectation and experimentation, as they are for millions of migrants entering the big city every day with hope and ambition? How can they become cities of justice, peace, and solidarity?

South and east of the tumultuous Arab Spring, one sees another sort of urban prospecting: by introducing new trade relations with resource-rich countries in Africa, China hopes to receive privileged access to the raw materials necessary to construct its newest global cities. In exchange, China is building skyscrapers, government palaces, soccer stadiums, and even Africa's largest university, transforming urban Africa. Challenging the ethics of these closed-door political deals, protest movements have emerged in Ghana, Zambia, and Tanzania. Many worry that the aspirations of Asia's urban century hinge on these highly speculative and risky activities in Africa. The extent to which these desires and practices of global accumulation stick in our cities may influence the next round of urban revolutions, the kind coming from Washington, DC and Beijing, as well as the types arising from the plazas, neighborhoods, and workshops of our lesser known cities worldwide.

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# "World Cities, or a World of Ordinary Cities?"

## *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development* (2006)

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### INTRODUCTION

Globalization has transformed urban studies. Cities are now routinely viewed as sites for much wider social and economic processes, and the focus for understanding urban processes has shifted to emphasize flows and networks that pass through cities rather than the territory of the city itself (Friedmann 1995a, Friedmann 1995b; Sassen 1991; Smith 2001). The study of cities now commonly encompasses the flows of global finance capital, the footloose wanderings of transnational manufacturing firms, and the diverse mobilities of the world's elite alongside diasporic and migrant communities from poorer countries. In many ways, urban studies has become much more cosmopolitan in its outlook. Globalizing features common to many cities around the world encourage more writers to consider cities from different regions, as well as wealthier and poorer cities, within the same field of analysis (Marcuse and van Kempen 2000; Scott 2001; Marvin and Graham 2001). This is certainly good news for a post-colonial urban studies, eager to bring different kinds of cities together in thinking about contemporary urban experiences.

The situation appears more propitious than ever, then, for an integration of urban studies across long-standing divisions of scholarship, especially between Western and other cities, including "Third World" and former socialist cities. An analytical focus on the transnational global economy could ensure that such categorizations of cities will no longer be of any relevance. Indeed, this is a claim made by the key advocates of these approaches (Sassen 1994; Taylor 2001). Does this mean that urban studies has come to be sensitive to the diversity of urban experiences, to the wide range of cities across the world? Could this be the basis for a post-colonial urban theory that refuses to privilege the experiences of some cities over those of others?

Many studies of globalization and cities have drawn on the idea of "'world" cities to understand the role of cities in the wider networks and circulations associated with globalization. Some cities outside the usual purview of Western urban theory—"Third World cities"—have been incorporated into these studies insofar as they are involved in those globalizing processes considered relevant to the definition of world cities. This is definitely a positive development in terms of ambitions to post-colonialize urban studies, to overcome the entrenched divisions between studies of "Western" and "Third World" cities. But many cities around the world remain "off the map" of this version of urban theory (Robinson 2002b). And despite the relative inclusiveness of the focus on globalization processes, developmentalism continues to pervade global- and world-city narratives, consigning poorer cities to a different theoretical world dominated by the concerns of development. Although the older categories of First and Third World may have less purchase, world cities approaches have a strong interest in hierarchies, and have invented new kinds of categories to divide up the world of cities. Perhaps most worrying for a post-colonial urban studies, world-cities approaches, by placing cities in hierarchical relation to one another, implicitly establish some cities as exemplars and others as imitators. In policy-related versions of these accounts cities either off the world-cities map or low down the supposed hierarchy have an implicit injunction to become more like those at the top of the hierarchy of cities: they need to climb up the hierarchy to get a piece of the (global) action. Being one of the top-rank global cities can be equally burdensome, though, encouraging a policy emphasis on only small, successful and globalizing segments of the economy and neglecting the diversity of urban life and urban economies in these places.

So while there is much to learn from global- and world-cities approaches, this chapter suggests that there is still considerable work to be done to produce a post-colonial-form of urban studies relevant to a world of cities, rather than simply for selected "world cities." Noting especially the adverse political consequences of analyzes that emphasize hierarchies and categories and that still divide the field of urban studies along developmentalist lines, the chapter presses the importance of letting all cities be ordinary. World cities approaches, it will be suggested, operate to limit imaginations of possible urban futures, especially in relation to poorer cities, and the situation of poor and marginalized people in cities around the world. A post-colonial urban studies needs to move beyond categories and hierarchies and to abandon claims to represent some cities as exemplars for others. It needs to be able to be attentive to the diverse experiences of a world of cities. While global and world-cities approaches have much to offer, ultimately they leave these challenges unmet. Instead, this chapter makes the case that all cities should be viewed as ordinary, both distinctive and part of an interconnected world of cities. The last section spells out what this might mean. And, as we will see, an ordinary-city approach is as important for the wealthiest ("global") cities, as for the poorest.

## GLOBAL AND WORLD CITIES

World cities are thought to be different from others to the extent that they play an important role in articulating regional, national and international economies into a global economy. With the rise since the 1970s of national investment flows and the emergence of a new international division of labor based on the restructuring of manufacturing production processes, now involving integrated production processes dispersed across the globe, scholars have been drawn to rethink the role of cities in relation to the global economy. It was suggested that some cities were increasingly serving as the organizing nodes of a global economic system, rather than simply being linked into local hinterlands or part of national systems of cities. At the same time, many populations were being excluded from these new spaces of global capitalism, and thus from the field of world cities: to these writers some cities were becoming "economically irrelevant" (Knox 1995: 41).

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In a prominent contribution to the world-cities literature, Saskia Sassen (1991, 1994) coined the term "global cities" to capture what she suggests is a distinctive feature of the current (1980s on) phase of the world economy: the global organization and increasingly transnational structure of elements of the global economy. Her key take-home point is that the spatially dispersed global economy requires locally based and integrated organization and this, she suggests, takes place in global cities. Although many transnational companies no longer keep their headquarters in central areas of these major cities, the specialized firms that they rely on to produce the capabilities and innovations necessary for command and control of their global operations have remained or chosen to establish themselves there, including advanced business and producer services, legal and financial services. Moreover, it is no longer the large transnational corporations that are the center of these functions, but small parts of a few major cities that play host to and enable the effective functioning through proximity of a growing number of these new producer and business-services firms (Sassen 2001). A similar argument concerning the benefits of co-location for finance and investment firms suggests that these cutting-edge activities are produced in a few major cities. Co-location benefits both these sets of firms as this facilitates face-to-face interaction and the emergence of trust with potential partners, which is crucial in terms of enabling innovation and coping with the risk, complexity, and speculative character of many of these activities (Sassen 1994: 84).

Both global- and world-cities analyses bring into view the wider processes shaping cities in a globalizing world and economic networks amongst cities. However, the emphasis has been on a relatively small range of economic processes with a certain "global" reach. This has limited the applicability of world-cities approaches, excluding many cities from its consideration. Although status within the world-city hierarchy has traditionally been based on a range of criteria, including national standing, location of state and interstate agencies and cultural functions, the primary determination of status in this framework is economic. As Friedmann (1995a) notes, "The economic variable is likely to be decisive for all attempts at explanation" (317). This has become more, not less, apparent in the world-cities literature over time as more recent research has focused on identifying the transnational business connections that define the very top rank of world cities, Sassen's "global cities" (Beaverstock et al. 1999; Sassen 2001).

World-cities approaches have been strongly shaped by an interest in determining the existence of categories of cities and identifying hierarchical relations amongst cities. This led Friedmann to ask, in his review of "World City Research: 10 years on," whether the world-city hypothesis "is a heuristic, a way of asking questions about cities in general, or a statement about a class of particular cities—world cities—set apart from other urban agglomerations by specifiable characteristics?" (1995b: 23). He suggests that it is both, but that the tendency has been to categorize cities into a hierarchy in which world cities are at the top of the tree of influence. This league-table approach has shaped the ways in which cities around the world have been represented—or not represented at all—within the world-cities literature. From the dizzy heights of the diagrammer, certain significant cities are identified, labeled, processed, and placed in a hierarchy, with very little attentiveness to the diverse experiences of that city or even to extant literature about that place. The danger here is that out-of-date, unsuitable or unreliable data (Short et al. 1996; although see Beaverstock et al. 2000) and possibly a lack of familiarity with some of the regions being considered can lead to the production of maps that are simply inaccurate. These images of the world of important cities have been used again and again to illustrate the perspective of world-cities theorists and leave a strong impression on policy-makers, popularizing the idea that moving up the hierarchy of cities is both possible and a good thing. Peter Taylor (2000: 14) notes with disapproval, though, the "widespread reporting of [. . .] a preliminary taxonomy" of world cities. However, revised versions of these taxonomies, based on more substantial research, draw remarkably similar conclusions, and similar maps . . . In contrast to the world-city enthusiasm for categories, the global-city analysis has a strong emphasis on process. It is the locational dynamics of key sectors involved in managing the global economy that give rise to the global-city label. However, the category of global city that is identified through this subtle analysis depends on the experiences of a minor set of economic activities based in only a small part of these cities. They may constitute the more dynamic sectors of these cities' economies, but Sassen's evidence of declining location quotients for these activities in the 1990s (for example, 2001: 134–5) suggests that the concentrated growth spurt in this sector may well be over. And it is important to put the contribution of these sectors to the wider city economy into perspective. In London, for example, where transnational finance and business services are still most dynamic and highly concentrated, the London Development Agency (LDA) suggests that only "about 70 percent of employment is in firms whose main market is national rather than international" (LDA 2000: 18). Even this city, routinely at the top of world-city hierarchies, is poorly served by a reduction of its complex, diverse social and economic life to the phenomenon of globalization, and is certainly poorly described as a "global" city. There have been many criticisms of the empirical basis for claims that global cities are significantly different from other major centers in terms of the composition of economic activities, wage levels or social conditions (Abu-Lughod 1995; Short et al. 1996; Storper 1997; Smith 2001; Buck et al. 2002).

Nonetheless, the global-city hypothesis has had a powerful discursive effect in both academic and policy circles. The pithy identification of the "global city" as a category of cities which, it is claimed, are powerful in terms of the global economy, has had widespread appeal. However, this has depended on continuing, indeed strengthening, the world-city emphasis on a limited range of economic activities with a certain global reach as defining features of the global city. This has the effect of hiding most of the activities within global cities from view, while at the same time also dropping most cities in the world from its vision. The insights of the global-city analysis are very important to understanding the way in which some aspects of some cities are functioning within the global economy. But perhaps it would be more appropriate if these processes were described as an example of an "industrial" district. They could be called new industrial districts of transnational management and control. The core understanding about these novel processes would remain important both theoretically and in policy terms. [. . .] World-cities research, then, has moved on from the time of Friedmann's influential mid-1980s review of the field and, especially in the wake of Saskia Sassen's study, *The Global City*, it has adopted a strong and intensely researched empirical focus on transnational business and finance networks. (See, for example, Beaverstock et al. 1999; Taylor 2004.) In some ways, the focus of attention has narrowed, although there has been a concerted effort to focus on processes and to track connections amongst cities rather than simply to map city attributes (Beaverstock et al. 2000). However, cities still end up categorized in boxes or in diagrammatic maps and assigned a place in relation to a priori analytical hierarchies. A view of the world of cities emerges where some cities come to be seen as the pinnacle of achievement, setting up sometimes impossible ambitions for other cities. This also suggests to the most powerful cities that they need to emphasize those aspects of their cities that conform to the global and world cities account, with sometimes detrimental effects on other kinds of activities and on the wider social life of the city. (See, for example, Markusen and Gwiasda 1994; Sites 2003.) Global and world-cities approaches expose an analytical tension between assessing the characteristics and potential of cities on the basis of the processes that matter from within their diverse dynamic social and economic worlds or on the basis of criteria determined by the external theoretical construct of the world or global economy. (See also Varsanyi 2000.) This is at the heart of how a world-cities approach can limit imaginations about the futures of cities and why I propose instead to think about a world of cities, all quite ordinary.

If global- and world-cities approaches offer only a limited window onto those cities that make it into the league tables, and even those at the top, we should also be concerned about the effect of these hierarchies and league tables on those cities that are quite literally off the maps of the global- and world-cities theorists. Millions of people and hundreds of cities are dropped off the map of much research in urban studies to service the very restricted view that the global and world cities analyses encourage regarding the significance or (ir)relevance of cities in relation to certain rather narrow sections of the global economy. For the purposes of developing a post-colonial urban studies relevant for a world of cities, global and world cities approaches have some serious limitations.

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It is hard to disagree that some countries and cities have lost many of the trading and investment links that characterized an earlier era of global economic relations. A country like Zambia, for example, now one of the most heavily indebted nations in the world and certainly one of the poorest, has seen the value of its primary export, copper, plummet on the world market since the 1970s. Its position within an older international division of labor is no longer economically viable, and it has yet to find a successful path for future economic growth. En route it has suffered the consequences of one of the World Bank/IMF's most ruthless Structural Adjustment Programs (Young 1988; Clark 1989). However, Zambia is also one of the most urbanized countries on the African continent, and its capital city Lusaka is a testimony to the modernist dreams of both the former colonial powers and the post-independence government (Hansen 1997). Today, though, with over 70 percent of the population in Lusaka dependent on earnings from the informal sector (government bureaucrats are known to earn less than some street traders: see Moser and Holland 1997), the once bright economic and social future of this city must feel itself like a dream—albeit one which was for a time very real to many people (Ferguson 1999).

Lusaka is certainly not a player in the "major economic processes that fuel economic growth in the new global economy" (Sassen 1994: 198). But copper is still exported, as are agricultural goods and opportunities for investment as state assets are privatized. Despite the lack of foreign currency (and sometimes because of it) all sorts of links and connections to the global economy persist. From the World Bank, to aid agencies, international political organizations and trade in second-hand clothing and other goods and services, Lusaka is still constituted and reproduced through its relations with other parts of the country, other cities, and other parts of the region and globe (see, for example, Hansen 1994, 1997). The city continues to perform its functions of national and regional centrality in relation to political and financial services, and operates as a significant market (and occasionally production site) for goods and services from across the country and the world.

It is one thing, though, to agree that global links are changing and that power relations, inequalities, and poverty shape the quality of those links. It is quite another to suggest that poor cities and countries are irrelevant to the global economy. When looked at from the point of view of these places that are allegedly "off the map," the global economy is of enormous significance in shaping the futures and fortunes of cities around the world. For many poor, "structurally irrelevant" cities, the significance of flows of ideas, practices, and resources beyond and into the city concerned from around the world stand in stark contrast to these claims of irrelevance. As Gavin Shatkin writes about Phnom Penh, "In order to arrive at a proper understanding of the process of urbanization in LDCs [less developed countries], it is necessary to examine the ways in which countries interface with the global economy, as well as the social, cultural and historical legacies that each country carries into the era of globalization" (1998: 381).

The historical legacies of these cities, it is clear from his account, are also products of earlier global encounters. Even the poorest cities have long histories of interactions and contacts with other places and have over time been drawn into the global economy in different roles, for trade, production, extraction or cultural exchange. These connections, perhaps transformed, can remain vital components of contemporary urban dynamics.

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## THE CASE FOR ORDINARY CITIES

So far . . . I have identified the importance of thinking about cities without privileging the experiences of only certain kinds of cities in our analyses; the value of learning how to think differently about cities by exploring different ways of life in other cities; and the benefits of a cosmopolitan approach to cities, including attending to the wider circulations and flows that shape them in order to appreciate the potential creativity and dynamism of all cities. A number of tactics—dislocating ethnocentric accounts, deploying comparative and cosmopolitan approaches—have been drawn on to move us towards a post-colonial form of urban theorizing. At the same time, they have brought into view the ordinary city. Instead of seeing some cities as more advanced or dynamic than others, or assuming that some cities display the futures of others, or dividing cities into incommensurable groupings through hierarchizing categories, I have proposed the value of seeing all cities as ordinary, part of the same field of analysis. The consequence of this is to bring into view different aspects of cities than those which are highlighted in global and world cities analyses.

First, ordinary cities can be understood as unique assemblages of wider processes—they are all distinctive, in a category of one. Of course there are differences amongst cities, but I have suggested that these are best thought of as distributed promiscuously across cities, rather than neatly allocated according to pre-given categories. And even when there are vast differences, between very wealthy and very poor cities, for example, I have suggested that scholars of these cities have much to learn from one another.

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Second, and learning much from global- and world-cities approaches, ordinary cities exist within a world of interactions and flows. However, in place of the global- and world-cities approaches that focus on a small range of economic and political activities within the restrictive frame of the global, ordinary cities bring together a vast array of networks and circulations of varying spatial reach and assemble many different kinds of social, economic and political processes. Ordinary cities are diverse, complex, and internally differentiated.

The consequences of thinking of cities as ordinary are substantial, with implications for the direction of urban policy and for our assessment of the potential futures of all sorts of different cities. Amin and Graham (1997), setting out their account of "The Ordinary City," suggest that thinking about cities as distinctive combinations of overlapping networks of interaction leads very quickly to an account of the capacity of cities to foster creativity. In Western policy circles, they note, there has been a rediscovery of "the powers of agglomeration," and an excitement about cities as creative centers. Agreeing that many accounts of cities highlight only certain elements of the city (finance services, information flows) or certain parts of the city—both leading to a problem of synecdoche—they rather describe (all) cities as "the co-presence of multiple spaces, multiple times and multiple webs of relations, tying local sites, subjects and fragments into globalizing networks of economic, social and cultural change. [. . .] as a set of spaces where diverse ranges of relational webs coalesce, interconnect and fragment" (Amin and Graham 1997: 417–18).

It is the overlapping networks of interaction within the city—networks that stretch beyond the physical form of the city and place it within a range of connections to other places in the world—which, for Amin and Graham (1997), are a source of potential dynamism and change. The range of potential international or transnational connections is substantial: cultural, political, urban design, urban planning, informal trading, religious influences, financial, institutional, intergovernmental, and so on (Smith 2001). To the extent that it is a form of economic reductionism (and reductionism to only a small segment of economic activity) that sustains the regulating fiction of the global city, this spatialized account of the multiple webs of social relations that produce ordinary cities could help to displace some of the hierarchizing and excluding effects of this approach. For with so many different processes shaping cities and so many potential interactions amongst them, it would be difficult to decide against which criteria to raise a judgment about rank.

Categorizing cities and carving up the realm of urban studies has had substantial effects on how cities around the world are understood and has played a role in limiting the scope of imagination about possible futures for cities. This is as true for cities declared "global" as for those that have fallen off the map of urban studies. The global-cities hypothesis has described cities such as New York and London as "dual cities," with the global functions drawing in not only a highly professional and well-paid skilled labor force, but also relying on an unskilled, very poorly paid and often immigrant work force to service the global companies (Sassen 1991; Allen and Henry 1995). These two extremes by no means capture the range of employment opportunities or social circumstances in these cities (Fainstein et al. 1992; Buck et al. 2002). It is possible that these cities, allegedly at the top of the global hierarchy, could also benefit from being imagined as "ordinary." The multiplicity of economic, social and cultural networks that make up these cities could then be drawn on to imagine possible paths to improving living conditions and enhancing economic growth across the whole-city.

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## CONCLUSION

Global- and world-cities analyses have been enormously productive in refocusing urban studies on the wider processes and networks that shape cities; and they have announced a new, more inclusive geography of the role of cities in globalization. But they have left intact earlier assumptions about hierarchical relations amongst cities, with potentially damaging consequences especially, but not only, for poorer cities. They have, in fact, consigned a large number of cities around the world to theoretical irrelevance. Building on global- and world-cities approaches, but mindful of these criticisms, other writers have turned to the ordinary city—diverse, contested, distinctive—as a better starting point for understanding a world of cities. Ordinary cities also emerge from a post-colonial critique of urban studies and signal a new era for urban studies research characterized by a more cosmopolitan approach to understanding cityness and city futures. This can underpin a field of study that encompasses all cities and that distributes the differences amongst cities as diversity rather than as hierarchical categories. It is the ordinary city, then, that comes into view within post-colonialized urban studies.

More than this, the overlapping and multiple networks highlighted in the ordinary city approaches can be drawn on to inspire alternative models of urban development. These would be approaches that see the potential for productive connections supporting the diverse range of economic activities with varying spatial reaches that come together in cities. Approaches that explore the diversity of economic activities present in any (ordinary) city (Jacobs 1961: 180—81) and that emphasize the general creative potential of all cities could help to counter those that encourage policy-makers to support one (global) sector to the detriment of others.

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