Editorial: 'Planetary' urbanisation: insecure foundations, the commodification of knowledge, and paradigm shift

Bob Catterall

Published online: 15 Feb 2016.

Submit your article to this journal ⊡

Article views: 641

View related articles ⊡

View Crossmark data ⊡

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Editorial: 'Planetary' urbanisation: insecure foundations, the commodification of knowledge, and paradigm shift

'We've received an update this morning to say that Chennai is still being seriously affected by flooding due to further torrential rain. This has resulted in widespread disruption, there is no power, mobile communication is very badly affected with systems down and people unable to charge their phones and, internet connectivity is also very badly affected. Staff have not been able to come to the office, and given the conditions we have asked them not to try, when we have been able to contact them at all.'[1] (Internal memorandum, 3.12.15)

That was the situation as reported that morning in Chennai, India, in, December 2015 as the just completed issue of CITY, 19.6, awaited publication. In one sense there had been a breakdown in communications under adverse weather conditions – that was all. But in another sense, looking at what was to be and eventually was transmitted, the breakdown can also be regarded as more than that, as, on the one hand, an example of the fragility of our technological condition, an intricate array of communication systems and work patterns, at a time of increasing globalisation and acute climatic change, but also, on the other, of the fragility of our knowledge and understanding of our condition, and underlying this, despite easy talk (how easy will be shown later) about contestation, of reform versus revolution (now safely evaded through resilience?), the creation/destruction opposition (now safely amalgamated?), of 'urban' versus the rural and 'the city', of commodities and

commodification, paradigms, and epistemologies ... These are insecure foundations. There was and is a failure, almost a will not to, to engage with the fundamentals (including communication processes) of our disciplines and, indeed of the planet itself (that is when mainstream urbanists can admit to the possibility of its existence, of such a fluid association of living entities, a para-structure rather than an infrastructure).

The title of that issue (19.6, see Figure 1) of the journal -momentarily lodged in Chennai through the apparent agency of a cyclone, rain, water, floods, deaths (nearing twice as many as those rightly mourned in Paris – the actual title extracted from one of the papers, 'Where is the world at and where is it headed?') signalled a further episode in the long-term commitment, over two decades, of this journal to grappling with such problems. The cover photo shows 'a living ad', a man struggling against the wind and rain, trying to stay on his feet and to hold on to his billboard. The film scene is a re-enactment of what the director, Tsai Ming-liang, had first seen ten years previously in Taipei, and then seen it 'mushroom into an industry' of homeless men advertising real estate. 'It was', he said, 'as if their time had become worthless.' It is the development of many such scenes coupled with the rising wealth and corruption of the estate industry and its clients that led former architect turned planning consultant and activist, Adrian Atkinson, after a generation of work in

Figure 1 'Where is the world at and where is it headed?' Lee Kang-sheng as a living ad in Taipei, *Stray Dogs*, dir. Tsai Ming-liang (Photo: William Laxton).

Vietnam and elsewhere to raise the question 'Where is the world at and where is it heading?'

Where is the world heading? What is happening? Insofar as the theoretical and empirical basis of understanding such

Figure 2 'To "the city of refuge"'. Axel Braun, "Budapest, Keleti Pályaudvar, 2015". © Axel Braun, www.axelbraun.org

Figure 3   'We are here'. The Jerusalem poster: 'We are here'. Photographer: Haim Jacobi.

happenings is concerned there are signs of an absolutely crucial revival and development in red-green theory, a necessary part of a fundamental paradigm shift beyond (but not excluding) critical urban theory's deliberate concentration on the

Figure 4   'You're surrounded…'. Cosmopolitan multinational musical group, Greenmarket Square, Cape Town. Photo: David Simon.

social as distinct from the 'natural' environment. The bridging work here was particularly the still largely aborted discovery of late Marx ('Russian Marx' but not only that) by Teodor Shanin in the 1980s, and again by John Bellamy Foster at the turn of the century still, in a sense, struggling against the 'critical' zeitgeist. There are also signs of the potential in taking up the late work of Herbert Marcuse (to be considered in CITY later this year) as part of an equally crucial deepening understanding of culture/nature in Doreen Massey's work and in some of the work associated with the Badiou-Zizek new communist/commonist movement (see section 4 below) and in Kate Shaw's recent CITY roll/role-call (and also recent work by Hyun Bang Shin, Marcelo Lopes de Souza, Elvin Wyly, Mark Davidson and Sharon Meagher).

The analytical moves here, drawing in part on readings of East Asian experience and on critical urban and 'green' theory, towards answering the posed questions, had been preceded only a week and a half earlier by 'the Paris attacks', and (traced in earlier issues) only weeks earlier by the journeys of Syrian and other refugees across Europe, 'To "the city of refuge"' (19.5, see Figure 2), and earlier, in the summer, by the stilling and reversal of the great Greek revolt, with its focus (perhaps an excessive focus) on Syriza, 'We are here' (19.4, see Figure 3), by 'the troika'.

1 'You're surrounded ...'

These quasi-narratives of recent times were preceded by a double issue (19.2-3, see Figure 4), ('You're surrounded ... ', part of the title of an included paper by AbdouMaliq Simone) in which Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid's 'Towards a new epistemology of the urban?' followed by Richard Walker's 'Building a better theory of the urban: A response to "Towards a new epistemology of the urban?"' was published.

The two papers were indeed surrounded, followed by a wealth of other papers, and preceded by a long editorial (as is a distinctive practice in this journal, defined of late as a transdisciplinary, rather than a multidisciplinary, reading of its contents), both to an interpretive editorial reading of its various papers and related to what was seen as an image central to the issues' major overlapping themes, a photograph, taken and deployed in his paper on African urban environments by David Simon, of Greenmarket Square, Cape Town.

Some implications of Simon's photograph and text are discussed (in that issue, p. 148), also quoting from correspondence with him. The discussion concludes, linking that reference to an aspect of Walker's paper, that a key absence from Brenner and Schmid's paper, current rural/urban developments that Walker and Simon address, 'predetermines the difficulties Brenner and Schmid encounter with "the rural"' (not even addressing the deeper problem of 'nature').

The two contrasting papers were indeed surrounded. But the practice of selective downloading (so modern, so convenient, so taken-for-granted but so destructive of meanings and meaning) from an electronic version of what was and, though marginalised to some extent, still is, the fully edited hard copy of the journal, is no respecter of such contexts. This tendency coupled with the occasional preference of some authors to publish their work without adjacent critical commentary (which would, of course, not be added in the case of a relatively inexperienced and 'unknown' author) led on this occasion in some quarters to a furore of moral (academic) panic, scapegoating and a general sense that the fire had come *this* time.

Others saw little or nothing in the way of incendiary practices, just an impassioned but well-informed debate primed by an editor's right to decide what/when/where to publish an item that had just arrived (encouraged in principle by our much-valued colleague, Brenner, himself) for the journal, and to do so with some celerity as real fires,

floods and other disasters seem to be accumulating and devastating at an accelerating rate.

Responses need to be recorded, analysed and discussed with some sense of urgency so that appropriate actions can be taken in good time. For those who prefer to proceed in a more seemly, stately or 'scientific' (but see below) pace, there are other journals - though there is, of course, the danger that by the time that such leisurely alarm has been spread and action authorised, loss will have been maximised rather than minimised.

If this imbroglio was just a matter of hurt pride on both sides there would be no point in returning to it. But there is a point. There lies much behind the sound, fury (and tears) that is significant both for the disciplines associated with the currently elusive 'urban' and beyond it. As editor of another urban journal, in hiding, playfully perhaps, under a pseudonym as the missives and missiles flew and the tears had not yet dried, put it:

> 'I am in love with Brenner and Schmid's intentions "to ignite and advance further debate on the epistemological foundations for critical urban theory and practice," and also with Walker's goal of engaging Brenner and Schmid "in a spirit of friendly combat." The key issue is that urbanization concentrates everything — economic productivity and innovation, technological change, rates of change of political alliances, the evolutionary dynamics of human cultures, traditions, and institutions — and also present-day conflict and disagreement.'[2]

The writer concluded:

> 'But "productivity" can, in certain circumstances, be measured in terms of the magnitude of the audience willing to reconsider the epistemological foundations of urbanism as a way of life—or of those engaging with friendly combat over which assumptions we should in this abandon and which intergenerational achievements should be preserved or extended. What is most crucial is that we all acknowledge and engage our disagreements in the urban agora, in City …'

CITY has gone on to further conceptualise and demonstrate the value of considering its work across the academe/agora divide.

2. Commodified knowledge?

Returning, then, to one of the distinctive features of the journal, the central image on the cover of each issue and adjacent to the editorial, and usually selected from that issue, the image - in this case (20.1) taken from 19.6 but with updated comment here - is of floods in Vietnam suggesting perhaps relations (the function of such images in CITY is exploratory rather than literally illustrative) to foundational/fundamental tendencies presented here through six, to some extent discrete, areas of knowledge, some of them deployed with reference to mounting catastrophe. They are (in order of appearance): 'justice and urban public space', 'the sanitary city', 'migration and diversity', 'resilience', 'the slum' and 'relational urbanism'.

Setha Low and Kurt Iveson's propositions do offer experienced guidance for those for whom praxis refer to actual liberatory actions and practices. Sophie Schramm's deployment of urban political ecology does illuminate the problems and the fragility of planning for the 'modern' sanitary city in riverrun Hanoi. The contributors to the special feature do provide—drawing on research on Athens, Milan's Chinatown, on immigrants from Turkey and former Yugoslavia in Vienna, on transitory migration in Singapore, and Afro-Colombian integration in Bogota—some insights and their implications for understanding diversity in urban spaces. The contributors to the debate on resilience do cast light on the redemption of the concept and on the potential of practices guided by it. Sukriti Issor reviewing Liza Weinstein's book on Dharavi in Mumbai, *The Durable Slum*, does set out its paradoxes without the acute dissatisfaction with the term displayed in an earlier special feature in this journal. And Colin McFarlane's review of Ola Soderstrumm's edited collection on urban development in Hanoi and

Ouagadougou does in his references to 'global' rather than 'planetary', urbanisation, indicate that a field more limited than that implied by the uncritical use of 'planetary' is being studied.

These papers convey valuable information, but they are also as vulnerable as the technology that carries them, not only in relation to the occasionally threatened existence of the entities and knowledge to which they refer but also in relation to their overall potentially holistic and even cumulative value and meaning.

Probing deeper, the fragility or even the mystificatory potential of much mainstream academic work can be seen to arise from some aspects of this situation, one of the production of knowledge itself within 'planetary urbanisation', the global economy/society, late capitalism or the Anthropocene era – to take some of the currently available labels on offer by the specialist fields of legitimised commodified knowledge, the socio-spatial 'sciences' of the early twenty-first century.

On this occasion we have returned, principally, to the 'surroundings' and supposed core of 19.2-3 in order to further clarify the procedures we adopt, and their import. We question - on this occasion there is enough space only to question - two particularly prevalent and omnivorous (of space, time and attention) projects, labelled as 'planetary urbanisation' and powered by some apparently well-mannered notion of 'science', and conclude with further reference to one of our accelerating dangers.

3.   Paradigm shift: 'normal' to 'revolutionary' science?

> 'The new view of reality was by no means easy to accept ... The exploration of ... [that] reality brought them in contact with a strange and unexpected reality. In their struggle to grasp this new reality, [they] became painfully aware that their basic concepts, their language, and their whole way of thinking were inadequate ... Their problems were not merely intellectual but amounted to an intense emotional and, one could say, even existential crisis.'

This description of what may at some level have been going on recently underneath the posturing about shocking improprieties, these references to painful awareness (though rarely declared) of the inadequacy of basic concepts, a shared language, a 'whole way of thinking', to something that was not just intellectual (or merely academic), to 'an intense emotional and, one could say, even existential crisis'. This may have the ring of truth for those with some experience of people and ideas excluded from seminars, platforms, publication (the background talk behind such decisions sometimes slips out) when *earthed* paradigms and epistemologies—i.e., acknowledging the planet's biocultural nature otherwise regarded as its inert, lifeless quality—are introduced.

This description refers in fact to the new physics of the early twentieth century.[3] A few references to physicists and subatomic reality have been edited out here to encourage a questioning of what is going on in the social and sociospatial 'sciences' now where strangely enough the old physics still, to a large extent, lives or staggers on in a recourse to somewhat limiting forms of empiricism as a partially legitimate reaction to excessive doses of Theory. This is not the place to argue this out but to suggest to readers that they will find it argued out in CITY since its inception twenty years ago in 1996 (a review of physicist Fritjof Capra's popular but not populist work by Oxford University theoretical physicist, C.V. Sukumar,[4] was important), the second episode by Melissa Wilson, a biologist, of a chronicle of CITY's project[5] begins to follow out the path of what Thomas Kuhn's account of paradigm shifts refers to as 'revolutionary' science. Insofar as such shifts involve barricades some 'planetary' urbanisation specialists seem, sadly, to have positioned themselves on the wrong side of this one.[6]

4. The water this time?

> '[F]looding … further torrential rain … widespread disruption … no power, mobile communication very badly affected with systems down … people unable to charge their phones … internet connectivity is very badly affected. Staff not able to come to the office … we have asked them not to try, when we have been able to contact them at all.'

The scene in Chennai with which we started. Perhaps a modest beginning to the age of drowning settlements and cities were it not for the fact that the West/North seemed not to notice that nearly twice as many people died in Chennai, to repeat the ugly fact, as died in Paris and that the New Orleans disaster 'happened' over ten years ago (2005). As to what's happening, the necessary communicative (rather than merely academic/professional) part of paradigm shift), Susan Buck-Morss, in her 'commonist ethics', offers that question for the starting point of a grounded 'crude thinking' re-think of action strategy:

> 'What's happening?'(The pragmatic alternative to 'historical ontology')'[7]

She argues (differing from Lacan and Badiou), 'it is not "truth" that punches a hole in knowledge', it is a truth of engaged action, a 'pragmatics of the suddenly possible... not a bad definition of what a commonist ethics would imply.'

The photo of a flooded street in Ho Chi Minh City with which this editorial opens is modest. It is a frequent sight in the rainy season but Adrian Atkinson, whose earlier report from there we published in our previous issue, writes now (19 January, 2016):

> 'Laur (our town) that was spared only by a dyke that is now badly eroded – first a raging torrent forming a lake and then the agricultural land eroded and now a sea of gravel. Next time the town is liable to be swept away unless substantial engineering works are implemented. I had lunch today in Cabanatuan (the largest city in the province with about 300,000 population) with friends who said in the December event the water in their house was up to their knees. Earlier Julie's niece, who also lives in the city, said in the October event 'only' knee high but in the December event the water was almost up to her arm pits.'

> 'The fact is that we, here, are getting the first of the severe climate change. It is expected, however, that Pacific typhoons will be swinging further south in future and that is when Ho Chi Minh City can expect increasing problems.'

Putting Chennai, Ho Chi Minh City and Paris together do we get an old African-American[8] prophetic sequence?

> 'God gave Noah the rainbow sign,
> No more water, the fire next time.'

African Americans have, to some extent, though at massive cost, survived the water 'attacks' but as James Baldwin asserted in 1993 it is *The Fire Next Time*.

> 'Spared only by a dyke that is now badly eroded…'

An approach to urbanisation that marginalises the earthy riverrun planet, the commodification of knowledge that supports such marginalisation, such are the insecure foundations that sanitised new epistemologies hide and that a genuine paradigm shift needs to secure.

Acknowledgements

range of these phenomena and descriptions is in our view essential, as is a willingness to consider at times to what extent that struggle has turned into one for power rather than truth.

At one point these struggles surfaced between the editor of CITY and one of its finest contributors, Neil Brenner, who has made massive contributions to the work of the journal. We have throughout these debates made clear our continuing commitment to exploring the work of Neil Brenner, Christian Schmid and his associates (some of whom are also our associates).

Many thanks to colleagues who have spared time to make comments on various drafts of this editorial with a positive outcome in mind. It is to be hoped that the struggles have reached that point of mutual exploration and all are ready to begin to surpass its most difficult moments. If so, that may take the form—and there are signs that it is already taking that form—of the acknowledgement of significant differences mediated by what we have come to define as a policy of 'critical pluralism'.

The stakes are high. The CITY project is committed not just to scholarship, policy and action but to forms of praxis that we have at times expressed through the deliberately provocative slogan of 'Reclaim the City *and* the Planet!'

Notes

1 Internal memo (3.12.15 update on the position of our publisher's typesetters in Chennai as CITY awaited publication).

2 "Academe or Agora? Re-situating the Urban Epistemology Debate," by CITYzen. On the CITY editorial website, CITY-analysis.net.

3 Capra, F., *The Web of Life: A New Synthesis of Mind and Matter*. Harper Collins, 1996; London: Flamingo, 1997, p. 5.

4 See C.V. Sukumar (1996) "A New Paradigm for Science and Architecture." *City* 1 (1–2): 181–183; (1997) "Towards a New Paradigm for Sustainability – A Holistic Approach to Biology." *City* 2 (8): 154–160. My thanks to Professor Sukumar for a recent (January, 2016) discussion of these matters.

5 See Wilson, M. (2015) "CITY's Holistic and Cumulative Project (1996–2016): (2) Towards Millennium." *City* 19 (4): 585–612.

6 Not so perhaps in Brenner's edited volume *Implosions/Explosions . . .* (2014)? We shall see.

7 Buck-Morss, S. (2013) "A Commonist Ethics." In *The Idea of Communism 2*, edited by S. Zizek, 57–75. London: Verso.

8 The deep and universal significance of African-American culture has been a persistent preoccupation in *City*, most recently in the reference to 'cities of refuge' in the editorial on the current European refugee crisis (19.5). The lack of interest in that culture and in those lives displayed in so much socio-spatial 'science', except as a specialist preserve, suggests that current mainstream talk of a new paradigm or a new epistemology is perhaps a little premature?

Bob Catterall
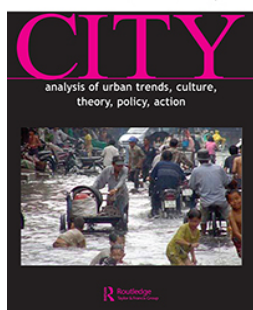
Propositions for more just urban public spaces

Setha Low & Kurt Iveson

Propositions for more just urban public spaces

Setha Low and Kurt Iveson

Across a diverse range of urban geographical contexts, the provision and governance of public spaces frequently generates conflicts of varying intensity involving urban inhabitants and urban authorities. A clear moral and philosophically based argument and evaluative framework is necessary for both critiquing and informing the positions that are taken in public space disputes. In this paper, we develop a model of socially just public space that could inform analysis of, and interventions in, these conflicts. In dialogue with the literatures on urban public space and on social and spatial justice, we offer five propositions about what makes for more just public space. The five propositions concern distributive justice, recognition, interactional justice and encounter, care and repair, and procedural justice. The application of these five propositions is exemplified through brief reflections on the politics of the street in New York City, and 'broken windows' style policing of graffiti.

Introduction: public space, conflict and socio-spatial justice

Conflicts over access to public spaces are perhaps one of the defining features of contemporary urban politics. Across a diverse range of urban geographical contexts, the provision and governance of public spaces is frequently a matter of contention for urban inhabitants and urban authorities. This contention varies in its form and intensity. Of course, the spectacular occupations of public spaces by political activists across a number of cities in recent years have been flashpoints in this ongoing politics of public space (see, e.g. Castells 2012; Kuymulu 2013; Mason 2012; Stavrides 2014). However, alongside such events, public spaces also continue to be the object of less spectacular, but no less significant, conflict.

For instance, over the past three years, a series of controversies have erupted over the management of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Centennial Parklands, two large and well-established open public spaces in inner-urban Sydney. With increasing frequency, significant sections of both of these spaces are being set aside for the exclusive use of ticket-buying patrons attending corporate-sponsored events such as opera performances, film screenings and music festivals. Given the high profile and long histories of these particular parklands as public spaces that are 'open to all', inevitably such developments have generated controversy and conflict. Park authorities argued that such events and the revenue they generate are necessary to subsidize the ongoing

maintenance of these important public spaces. They make this point in a context where they are expected to 'pay their own way' by governments no longer willing or able to fund their activities. They also argue that such events may attract new users to the spaces, thereby enhancing rather than restricting access. Critics, on the other hand, argue that access to these iconic public spaces should never be dependent on one's ability to pay. Such critics have expressed concern about the creeping corporatization of park management, and its implications for the future of free access—who will have access to these public spaces and others if the 'user pays' principle is entrenched in their ongoing governance? The issues have been debated in the daily newspapers and in Parliament (e.g. Needham 2013). In response to a current plan to cordon off large sections of the Botanic Gardens and a charge of $400 for entry on New Year's Eve, Labor politician Luke Foley (2015) argued that 'Families shouldn't have to fork out hundreds of dollars to access the Botanic Gardens on New Year's Eve. This is public space and the public should have access.'

In another example from the other side of the Pacific Ocean in Orange County, a dispute over the management of public space began over the use of fire rings that dot the sand along the southern California seashore. Fire rings have drawn beach goers for over 60 years, but in spring 2013 Newport Beach residents began to complain about smoke from the fires. They argued that the open bonfires pollute the air and lead to a host of health problems for those who live near the beach, and called on their city manager to remove the city's fire rings. This request to ban beach fires erupted in a vocal dispute between the beachfront residents and beach goers who use it as a place of recreation and relaxation. According to the beach goers, the concern over the health consequences of fire pits is just another example invented by wealthy homeowners to keep the public off public beaches (King

2013). The *Orange County Weekly* editor was quoted as saying: 'It's the elite who live at these affluent communities. They don't want the hoi polloi to come down here' (King 2013). However, the South Coast Air Quality Management District that monitors air quality agreed with the residents and introduced a proposal to ban fire rings in all of southern California. This dispute has continued with many levels of government weighing in on the issue. The Orange County Board of Supervisors voted to formally oppose the ban, but said that the county supports the right of local municipalities, such as Newport Beach, to decide the future of their fire rings. This decision led to the California Coastal Commission being asked to remove the fire rings in a number of beach communities including Newport Beach, Balboa and Corona del Mar. Other municipalities such as Huntington Beach, however, are concerned that fire rings are important for tourism and fighting to keeping theirs in place (Cowan 2013). This struggle over the beachfront illustrates how conflicting claims can become the focus of wider tensions about social inequality and control of and access to public resources.

In such controversies and many more like them, a range of actors make competing claims about what counts as 'proper' or 'legitimate' use of particular places. The idea that these places are *public spaces* is frequently deployed by participants in these conflicts to justify some claims against others. While we recognize that we cannot directly equate 'being public' with 'being in public', because the geographies of publicness exceed the places commonly referred to as 'public space' (Iveson 2007), the idea and ideal of public space continues to be useful in signaling the ongoing significance of certain kinds of places for open discussion and in some cases conflict over values and ideals (Low and Smith 2006; Mitchell 2003). As scholars whose work is focused on the politics of publicness in cities, we are interested in critically interrogating the various

meanings of public space that are mobilized in such conflicts—what kinds of claims do they privilege, what kinds of interests do they serve and what kinds of places do they seek to produce?

And yet, our interest in controversies and conflicts over public spaces such as the Sydney Botanic Gardens and the southern California beaches is more than 'academic'. We are both committed to a form of scholarship that can make contributions to these debates, which sometimes means getting involved and 'taking sides'. As such, we seek not only to critically interrogate different models of publicness, but also to offer our own model of what constitutes a 'just' public space that could inform political action and policy development.

Of course, this is a tricky business—there is no simple formula for 'just public space' that can be applied across cities and their diverse neighborhoods in different geographical contexts. Nevertheless, we think that in order to have a greater impact on planning and governance practices and urban policymaking, a clearer moral and philosophically based argument and evaluative framework is necessary. A range of exclusionary developments identified in the literature on public space call for a clearer agenda and discursive strategy to press for social change. Indeed, thinking about social justice and public space has never been more important. An emphasis on democratic practices has emerged because of the new spatial relationship developing between public space and the public sphere (Low 2016). Social movements and political uprisings belie arguments that public space and the public sphere have ever been separated. The Arab Spring and the global Occupy movements drew inspiration from the jubilant atmosphere and contagious energy emanating from the crowds, but also from the urban design and significance of the public spaces where they occurred. If the public sphere can be described as 'the sphere of private people coming together as a public' (Habermas [1962] 2001, 27), it is clear that its emergence has a material and spatial context as well as a history of social meanings. If this material and spatial context is regulated in unfair ways and through its management and design communicates that some are not welcome, then not only public space becomes less accessible and diverse, but so does the public sphere.

Therefore, in this paper, we offer a set of general 'propositions' that could inform the work of scholars and activists who seek to articulate (and organize for) concrete proposals for just outcomes across different urban contexts. We propose that the provision of more just public space can be achieved through processes that seek to *redistribute* resources, *recognize* difference, foster *encounter/interaction*, establish an ethic of *care* and ensure *procedural fairness*. In formulating these five propositions, our contribution seeks to synthesize work that we have conducted independently of each other in previous publications in recent years on diversity and difference in the city, and in public space in particular (see especially Fincher and Iveson 2008; Low 2013).

The paper proceeds as follows. First, we contextualize our contribution by offering a brief sketch of the processes that are impacting upon the production of urban public space in capitalist cities. Second, we briefly survey the emerging literature on urban social and spatial justice, in order to establish the broader intellectual context for our contribution on justice and public space. Third, we set out the five 'propositions' for more just public space in turn, in order to build up a framework that might be usefully applied to critically interrogate and inform the design and regulation of public space. Fourth, we provide some brief examples of how these propositions might be applied through a discussion of streets in New York City and 'broken windows' style policing of graffiti. Finally, the paper concludes with a discussion that considers the relationship between our propositions, and their applicability across different urban contexts.

The production of public space in capitalist cities

This paper is not an attempt to identify and analyze the processes through which public spaces across different urban contexts are produced and reproduced. However, we must nonetheless contextualize the discussion of just public space to follow with some consideration of how scholars have understood the broader processes that generate the kinds of conflict and debate over public space in which our paper seeks to intervene.

Capitalist globalization and the accompanying neoliberalization of urban governance are widely accused of exacerbating socio-spatial inequality within and between cities (see, e.g. Brenner, Marcuse, and Mayer 2011). In the broader literature on urbanization, conflicts over public spaces have featured strongly as an empirical means for thinking through the transformations of urban everyday life associated with these broader structural changes. Indeed, as Soja (2010a) pointed out:

> 'For some the essential starting point in the search for spatial justice is the vigilant defense of public space against the forces of commodification, privatization, and state interference. ... Although seeking spatial justice should not be confined only to struggles over public space, such struggles are vital and can be extended in many different directions in the search for justice and the right to the city.' (45)

An ever-expanding body of literature has identified a range of processes that impact upon the accessibility of public spaces. For instance, the *gentrification* of urban neighborhoods is frequently accompanied by 'cleaning up' of urban public spaces through state- and corporate-sponsored initiatives to displace the poor and fortify the privileged (Brash 2011; Houssay-Holzchuch and Teppo 2009; Mitchell 2003; Modan 2007; Staeheli and Mitchell 2008; Watson 2006). The growing significance of corporate actors in the governance of cities is frequently exemplified by the *privatization* and *commodification* of public space, where control of many public spaces is handed over to private interests and access is therefore more likely to depend upon private means (Low and Smith 2006; Miller 2007; Mitchell 2003; Newman 2011; Németh 2010). Here, examples include the international spread of governance models such as urban redevelopment authorities established at arm's length from government and business improvement districts (BIDs), both of which tend to establish and enforce their own rules of access to public spaces beyond those that are democratically mandated through the state (Ward 2007; Maniscalco 2015). Attempts to secure the city against the threat of 'the other'—be they the poor, migrants, young people or terrorists— are frequently achieved through the *securitization* and *militarization* of public space against those perceived to be different or disorderly. This has taken many forms, not least of which are: new policing strategies such as 'zero tolerance' targeting so-called 'quality of life' infractions in public spaces like graffiti, begging and loitering; the exponential growth of the private security industry with a more assertive role in the policing of public and 'post-public' spaces; the use of architecture and design to fortify public spaces and restrict a range of potential uses and users defined as threats; and introduction of new technologies of surveillance and control such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) (Iveson 2010; Fassin 2013; Maguire, Frois, and Zurawski 2014; Lippert and Walby 2013). Of course, such processes unfold in diverse ways, in diverse combinations, with diverse effects across diverse contexts. But in cities where they have taken hold to various degrees, a wide range of groups—not least the homeless, racialized minorities, the poor, informal traders and frequently the young— have found that their access to public space has become more fraught and less secure (Low, Taplin, and Scheld 2005).

Importantly, not only are such processes uneven, they are also frequently contested.

The ongoing significance of public space for people's participation in the social, cultural, economic and political life of the city is borne out by the intensity of efforts to contest some of the processes described above. Such contests take a range of forms, giving rise to diverse processes of *politicization* that seek to enact other forms of authority and sociality in urban public spaces (Iveson 2007; Juris 2012; Maharawal 2014; Peterson 2010). For example, through the actions of a range of contemporary social and political movements, *occupations* of public space have re-emerged as an important means for their politicization (Davidson and Iveson 2014; Butler 2015). Other processes for the politicization of public space in recent times include more conventional political protests and assemblies, the use of mobile media devices and social media platforms to document and contest the actions of authorities like the police in public space (Gerbaudo 2012; Castells 2012), and so-called 'do-it-yourself' micro-interventions to transform public space (Iveson 2013). Such politicizations of public space are central to the development of this paper. The tradition of justice-thinking that informs our paper looks directly to these struggles in order to tease out the principles and propositions that might inform broader formulations of justice. Before we offer our own propositions, we will now briefly survey the emerging literature on social and spatial justice in the city to identify some of the key principles that might be applied to debates about public space.

Social and spatial justice in the city: a brief review

With these changes in public space, clearer arguments are needed to justify the criteria by which urban spatial transformations can be considered unjust, and provide a stronger juridical and political footing for public space activism and contestation. While the question of whether public space is 'open to all' frequently forms a foundation for criticism and action, simplistic renderings of the inclusion/exclusion are not up to this task. After all, certain kinds of exclusion may even be 'just' in some circumstances (Iveson 2003). We can develop a stronger juridical and political footing in dialogue with the considerable literature on the relationship between justice and urban life. This relationship has been interrogated from a number of different angles (see also Fincher and Iveson 2012). The encounter between empirical studies of the city and philosophical reflections on justice has been productive for urbanists and philosophers alike—although it is probably fair to say that while many urbanists have drawn on philosophically derived justice principles to inform their critiques of urbanization, only a few philosophers have drawn on studies of urbanization and urban politics to inform their thinking on the nature of justice.

For most philosophers concerned with the nature of justice, while the nature of city life may have held a passing interest for illustrative or evaluative purposes, it has not been either a primary concern or an integral part of their theory-building. That is to say, the attempt to generate universal justice principles has been mostly concerned to abstract from, rather than grapple with, the specific spatial configurations of the 'social' to which 'justice' relates. Perhaps one notable exception to this observation is Iris Marion Young, whose work on justice and the politics of difference over several decades explicitly engaged with the nature of urban life and politics (see Young 1990, 1999, 2001). For Young, the very possibility of group difference without oppression was embodied in both the ideal of city life and in the expression of group differences in the distinct cultures of diverse urban neighborhoods.

Of course, regardless of whether or not philosophers of justice have explicitly engaged with the urban, their work has been taken up by a range of thinkers who have sought to evaluate the justice of various urban formations and policies.

Theories of justice and rights have been drawn upon to address the concerns of planners, government agents, elected officials and other policymakers. Addressing their practical concerns is essential because without clear articulation of what we are striving for, and some measure of accountability, it is difficult to struggle effectively.

David Harvey's (1973) early work in *Social Justice and the City*, for instance, offered a set of 'liberal' and 'radical' formulations of urban social justice that explicitly drew upon Rawlsian and Marxian frameworks, respectively. His later revisions of that early work drew upon Young, whose work had sought to dismantle some of the core elements of the Rawlsian approach (Harvey 1973). Leonie Sandercock's (1997, 127) vision of the ideal city or 'cosmopolis' in which 'there is acceptance of, connection with, and respect and space for "the stranger", the possibility of working together on matters of common destiny and forging new hybrid cultures and urban projects and ways of living', also drew heavily on Young's work on both the nature of oppression and the importance of group difference.

Susan Fainstein's (2000, 2005) 'just city' formulation draws on different philosophical underpinnings. She focuses in particular on Lefebvre's (1991) 'right to the city' and Nussbaum's (2000) set of capabilities—democracy, equity, diversity, growth and sustainability—that are necessary for the full development of the individual in a just society. Fainstein discusses the inevitable trade-offs among these capabilities and questions whether a focus on diversity obscures economic structure. Ultimately, she argues for a distributive theory of justice that is substantive and material. The strength of her argument is that it moves urban planning from a normative to a visionary framework, and asks under 'what conditions can conscious human activity produce a better city for all citizens' within the constraints of a global capitalist political economy (Fainstein 2005, 121).

Also drawing on Lefebvre among others, Edward Soja (2010a) offers a more fundamentally spatial approach to justice, mobilizing the term 'spatial justice' to emphasize his core claim that justice and injustice are constituted geographically through the production of space. He argues that justice has a geography and that the equitable distribution of resources, services and access to those resources and services is a basic human right. For Soja (2010a),

> 'the concept of justice obtains a much broader meaning as the quality of being just or fair ... It links the active notion of seeking justice to other broad concepts referring to the qualities of a just society: freedom, liberty equality, democracy, civil rights.' (20)

He suggests that struggles over space and the right to the city spatially is an integral part of coalition building. Unjust geographies, in Soja's analysis, are the way that people experience the negative effects of an unjust society (see also Soja 2010b, 2011).

In our own previous work, we have sought to contribute to these discussions about justice and the city. We draw attention to that work here because, while we have drawn on different philosophical traditions and empirical studies to arrive at our conclusions, there is considerable overlap in the conclusions we have reached. The extent (and limits) of that overlap has provoked us to synthesize and extend our work as it applies to public space in this paper. In particular, our previous work has insisted on the need for an analysis of social and spatial diversity to inform theories of urban social and spatial justice, in distinction to those theories that continue to prioritize matters of redistribution and wealth over other unjust hierarchies and forms of inequality.

Ruth Fincher and Kurt Iveson (2008) approach the question of urban social justice by thinking through the different kinds of diversity that characterize urban life, and their implications for rights to the city. They proceed by defining three kinds

of intersecting diversities that have implications for justice: differences in wealth, status and hybridity (the range of possible identities available to any one group). Their work is informed by an engagement with a number of philosophers of justice, including Axel Honneth's (2004) and Young's (1999, 2001) work on recognition, and Nancy Fraser's (1990) work on the important connections between recognition and redistribution in achieving the ultimate goal of 'parity of participation'. Their analysis of intersecting diversities and injustices frames three planning goals for more just cities: (1) redistribution of space, services and facilities to address inequalities of wealth; (2) recognition of identities that are systematically devalued in unjust status hierarchies; and (3) the provision of opportunities for people to break free of fixed identities through encounters with diverse people and practices.

Setha Low's work on social justice in public space derives from ethnographic research on urban parks, plazas and gated communities (Low and Smith 2006; Low, Taplin, and Scheld 2005; Low 2003), the normative just city as proposed by Fainstein (2005), and her ethnography-based critique of Fainstein's contention that diversity should not be at the center of a social justice analysis of public space (Low 2013). Similar to Peter Marcuse (2006, 2009) who wants to go beyond a distributive theory of justice, and concentrate instead on the dimensions of solidarity and difference, Low argues that redistributive solutions alone do not result in fairness in everyday life. Much closer to the formulation of Fincher and Iveson (2008), but developed from the social and organizational psychology literature, she offers three dimensions of justice—distributive (redistribution), procedural (recognition) and interactional (encounter)—that she believes are essential to address the multiple kinds of unfairness, injustice and indignities that people suffer in public space. Because these processes have broad purchase, other theorists' conceptualizations including Honneth's (2004) recognition and dignity,

Fraser's (1990) 'parity of participation' and Andy Merrifield's (2013) notion of encounter can be subsumed within these dimensions, adding nuance and layers of political practices to their psychological derivation.

Social justice and public space: five propositions

Drawing upon, and extending, the existing work on social justice and cities, we offer five propositions that can be used in evaluations of the justice of public spaces. As we shall see, these propositions are both integrative (in the sense that they are designed to address related but distinct dimensions of justice in relation to public space) and disjunctive (in the sense that they are not simply cumulative, because putting two or more of these propositions together can in some circumstances generate tensions and contradictions that will require contextually specific resolutions).

Public space and distributive justice

Distributive justice refers to questions of how the wealth, rewards, benefits and burdens of urban life should be distributed to achieve a just city. Do characteristics of the city such as the provision and regulation of public space contribute to the inequality of rich and poor? The discussion about distributive justice revolves around whether economic benefits and burdens should accrue to individuals equally, according to need, according to merit or disproportionately to those who are the least well off (Rawls 1971). To the extent that differences of wealth are a product of processes that systematically distribute resources and opportunities unequally, such that class inequalities take hold, advocates of distributive justice argue that they are unjust.

With respect to public space and social justice, a focus on distributive justice generates two important kinds of questions. First, what is the geographical distribution of

public spaces across the wider urban environment, and what kinds of processes generate such distributions? Does the distribution of public spaces across the landscape ensure that inhabitants across the city have access to public spaces regardless of their wealth, or do some people experience 'locational disadvantage' because they inhabit a neighborhood with less public space than other neighborhoods? According to Soja (2010a, 47), 'Distributional inequity is the most basic and obvious expression of spatial injustice.' As Soja notes, in the early literature on social justice and the city, the distribution of facilities such as doctors, schools, and other public services and infrastructure across geographical space was interrogated through the concept of 'territorial justice'. This issue of locational disadvantage with respect to public space is one that demands attention to the provision of public space across a metropolitan area, and poses questions about the distribution of resources required to provide and maintain public space across the city.

Second, a focus on the distributional dimensions of public space raises the matter of affordability—does access to public space depend on wealth and/or ability to pay, or is access ensured regardless of wealth and means? Here, the matter of access to public space is not only one of provision and location, but also one of design and governance. If people seeking to occupy public space cannot afford to spend money with nearby businesses and find themselves being 'moved on' from public spaces by hyper-vigilant private security guards employed by those very businesses, this is a form of distributive injustice. One of the reasons that public spaces such as parks and public libraries are often highly valued is that they tend to enshrine the principle of 'access for all' that takes no account of individual wealth and means (see Fincher and Iveson 2008, chap. 7). And of course, one of the reasons that shopping malls and BIDs have been so controversial is precisely because they tend to generate exclusion based on

wealth. Our example at the beginning of this paper concerning the closure of public spaces for fee-paying events is an example of a development that raises questions from the perspective of distributive justice.

Therefore, a focus on distributive justice in relation to public space directs us to examine both the distribution of public spaces across the city, and the accessibility of those public spaces to urban populations regardless of their wealth. Of course, when such examinations are conducted, it is one thing to identify unequal distributions of public space and/or unequal access to public space for the poor, it is another thing to argue that these un*equal* distributions are un*just*. Unequal outcomes are unjust to the extent that they are the product of processes that systematically produce and maintain inequalities through distributions that favor the rich over the poor. As such, any deep examination of distributive justice must examine not only the nature of public space outcomes, but also the processes that generate unequal outcomes.

The related distributional questions of locational disadvantage and affordable access are becoming ever more important as profit-seeking property developers play an increasing role in urban governance in many cities. In the UK, for example, Anna Minton (2012, xii) argues that the marketization of urban development has produced an increasingly 'divided landscape of privately owned, disconnected, high security, gated enclaves side by side with enclaves of poverty which remain untouched by the wealth around them'. Of course, similar claims have been made in cities in other parts of the world (see, e.g. Caldeira 2000; Davis 1990, 2006; Low 2003).

Public space and recognition

As noted in the previous section, a number of thinkers have drawn attention to the limitations of an exclusive focus on redistribution as a strategy for achieving social and spatial

justice. Alongside redistribution, *recognition* seeks to address the systematic devaluing and stigmatization of some urban identities and ways of life in cities. Disputes over all sorts of urban issues are instigated by groups who argue that for justice to be done, their particular values and needs ought to be taken into account in the shaping of cities. When such groups feel that their very identities and ways of being in the city are unfairly denigrated or stigmatized, justice is fundamentally a matter of status and has an inter-subjective dimension: the pursuit of equality involves working against 'cultural patterns that systematically deprecate some categories of people and the qualities associated with them' (Fraser 1998, 31).

With respect to public space and social justice, a focus on recognition directs our attention to the norms of use and behavior that are entrenched in the provision and regulation of public spaces. The formation and expression of collective identities is likely to be highly dependent on access to public spaces, where members of a given group can interact with one another. Given this, if certain ways of occupying public space are ideologically positioned as being 'out of place' in a given public space, and if such ideologies are inscribed into the regulatory practices of urban authorities and other urban inhabitants, this could result in injustice for some groups in the city (Hall and Smith 2014; Cresswell 2015; Iveson 2007). So, for instance, Low's (2000, 2006) studies on urban parks have noted the ways in which the sights, sounds, smells and practices associated with some migrant groups are discriminated against through regulations that explicitly or implicitly universalize the particular norms of groups who claim the status of 'host'.

The forms that recognition might take are still vigorously debated in social and political theory. Difficult questions are posed by the notion of recognition: what is the nature of the 'group' to be recognized? And who or what does the recognizing? Here, justice will not necessarily be served simply by allowing members of all groups to 'be themselves' in public space. For one thing, when the kinds of public spaces discussed in this paper are finite, it is always possible that the activities of one group may be incompatible with the activities of others, so unlimited recognition for all may not be possible. Further, different identity groups are themselves internally differentiated. Urban inhabitants are likely to 'belong' to many such groups, and the meaning of belonging is always far from settled. Therefore, the recognition of any given group is never likely to be entirely straightforward.

In this context, thinkers such as Fraser (1998) argue that we should pursue a *relational* form of recognition, where claims for recognition are adjudicated according to whether they address matters of *status relations* rather than positively value group identity as such. That is to say, claims for recognition should not be supported on the grounds that they help to sustain a group's distinctiveness per se. Rather, we should support those claims for recognition that seek to address institutionalized patterns of cultural value which give a particular group a subordinate status in relation to others. If we accept this premise, then the nature of interaction between different groups come sharply into focus.

Public space, encounter and interactional justice

The concept of interactional justice is about the quality of interpersonal interaction in a specific situation or place. Psychologists find that to a large extent individuals make justice appraisals based on the quality of interactional treatment they receive (Cropanzano and Randell 1993). Attributes of interactional fairness include truthfulness, respect, propriety and justification (Bies 1986).

With respect to public space and social justice, interactional justice refers to the

qualities of interactions between different users of a given public space. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish interactional justice from recognition (see above) and procedural justice (see below), since all three incorporate elements of fairness in how a person or group is treated. For instance, misrecognition may take the form of rules concerning behavior in a public space (see above), but it may also have an interactional component, in which members of a group are subject to verbal or physical abuse when occupying a public space in a particular manner. This interactional component of justice, then, focuses more specifically on the nature of *encounters* that take place in public space. It is through such encounters that urban inhabitants can establish new collective identifications with one another that are not premised on shared 'membership' of a group, but on shared activities and practices.

While the dynamics of encounter between urban inhabitants may at first seem to be a matter for morality or manners rather than policy and politics, Fincher and Iveson have argued that policy can indeed play a crucial role in enhancing both the quantity and quality of interaction among urban inhabitants. Following Peattie, they argue that more convivial atmospheres need not only a particular orientation towards strangers, but also a 'material base' for their production and maintenance:

> 'Conviviality can take place with few props: the corner out of the wind where friends drink coffee together, the vacant lot which will become a garden. But it must have some sort of material base—the right-shaped corner, the piece of vacant land and a couple of rakes—and it must have the rules that permit it. Conviviality cannot be coerced, but it can be encouraged by the right rules, the right props, and the right places and spaces. These are in the domain of planning.' (Peattie 1998, 248)

Interactional justice should not be overlooked as simply a form of procedural justice. For instance, Whitman et al. (2012) found based on a meta-analysis of empirical organizational studies that a positive interactional justice climate and respectful interpersonal behaviors significantly increased cooperation throughout the organization. Similar studies of the impact of procedural or interactional justice behaviors and/or climate have not been replicated in public space nonetheless these findings are indicative of changes that might be expected. During Occupy Wall Street and the uprisings at Tahrir Square, for example, there were repeated reports of a palpable climate of trust and cooperation that developed among the protestors who were committed to treating all participants occupying those public spaces with care and respect (Maharawal 2014).

Public space and care and repair

Since interactional justice based on respectful treatment and an absence of physical and verbal abuse contributes to increased cooperation, it follows that pro-social behavior such as caring for others and participating in the repair of the environment also constitutes an important dimension of social justice in public space. Recent years have seen a growing literature from diverse disciplinary perspectives converging around the issue of *care*. These intellectual currents include efforts within feminist economics to construct analytical frameworks for understanding the 'other economy' where the direct production and maintenance of human beings takes place, as well as methodologies for measuring and valuing it (Tronto 2013). From within social policy research there have been concerted efforts to engender welfare regimes analysis by bringing in issues of care. Dovetailing and enriching with the diverse conceptual and empirical engagements has been a philosophical conversation about the 'ethics of care', contesting the narrowness of an ethic of paid work that drives policy agendas and reforms across welfare states.

The organization and ethics of care has received less attention in the literature on

public space than matters of distribution, recognition and interaction discussed above. We believe that considerations about care have two important implications for our approach to making more just public spaces. First, structures of caregiving in any given society will have a significant impact on who is able to access public space, and so must be considered as matters of social justice. This applies most obviously to groups like children or the elderly, whose access to public space is often facilitated by caring others (such as family members and care workers). In the Western political tradition, the provision of such care has not been viewed as a matter of social justice. Instead, visions of public life have been underpinned by an 'assumption of autonomy', which takes for granted the existence of private individuals capable of participating in public life, and makes autonomy a qualification for full participation. By treating the production of autonomous individuals as a pre-political matter for the private realm, and excluding from public life those who are not considered to be autonomous, this tradition fails to acknowledge that inequalities in the provision of care actually impact upon public life. As Tronto (2013, 10) argues:

> '… once a democratic society makes a commitment to the equality of all its members, then the ways in which the inequalities of care affect different citizens' capacities to be equal has to be a central part of the society's political tasks'.

This notion suggests that social justice would include the resourcing and supporting of carers who can enable everyone's access to public space. Tom Hall and Robin Smith's (2014) study of homeless volunteers working in Cardiff, UK highlights the role that 'kindness' plays in the 'good city' and depicts a caring city as more resilient and contributing to conviviality. Caring in public space, in this sense, focuses on attending to other's needs, not just passively through recognition or interaction, but in pro-social and life-enhancing ways. An example is the street vendor at Columbus Circle in New York City who protects the safety of young mothers and children by warning them of dangerous visitors, a rat or a slippery sidewalk and calls an ambulance or the police when needed. Other 'public characters' who inhabit public space (Duneier 1999), such as the shoeshine men on Parque Central (Low 2000) in San José, Costa Rica or the self-proclaimed 'park mayor' of Denver, Colorado's central square provide care by watching out for children, the elderly and anyone lost or confused (Setha Low, field observations). Political and social solidarity is often built out of caring both for others and the environment (Fennell 2014; Fisher 2012). For example, Occupy Wall Street (OWS) in New York City was based on a politics of care that focused on insuring that everyone had a safe place to sleep, access to communication technology and collective meals. Coats, clothes and daily necessities were collected from surrounding businesses and residents to address the physical needs of OWS participants and underscore that caring for one another was a foundational part of representing the '99%' (Maharawal 2013).

The second implication of the literature on care for social justice in public space concerns caring *for* places. While not well-developed as a concept in public space planning and policy, women's environmental activism is often described in maternalist terms—as if motherhood and caring for the environment go hand in hand (MacGregor 2006) and the core of ecological integrity and social justice is based on the politics of care (Morgan 2010). An ethic of caring in public space would also include 'repair'—the often overlooked acts of maintenance and upkeep which keep the city and its residents going. Small-scale acts of kindness and activities of repair such as picking up trash or adding flowers to a public space are not simply reassuring, but contribute to a sense of well-being and enable other forms of justice and recognition

to flourish (Tronto 2013; Fisher 2012). Acts of repair may also include more structured and resourced activities of upkeep and maintenance through a range of formal urban services like trash collection, signage, gardening and the like. As Amin (2008, 22) points out, while such activities are often 'invisible' until they go wrong, they are vital for the production of a just civic culture in public space:

> 'The quality of urban maintenance … affects the urban civic culture. When the basics of shelter, sanitation, sustenance, water, communication and the like are missing, the experience of the city, of the commons and of others, is severely compromised, producing solidarities of largely an exclusionary and wretched nature.'

Caring and repair can be understood and evaluated as part of social justice in public space because it speaks to and represents a tolerance for others that provides the groundwork for a socially just place. Across both of the registers we have discussed—care for people and care for places—the influence of neoliberalism discussed earlier has been a pernicious effect, pushing care back into the private market realm as a matter of personal or community responsibility, rather than acknowledging the need for collective effort and resources (Tronto 2013, 37–40). Further, some forms of care have been more focused on punitive approaches to so-called 'anti-social behavior' that contribute to status inequalities (see recognition and interaction above), rather than focusing on more pro-social forms of care for people and place.

Public space and procedural justice

We have seen that each of the previous four propositions about justice in public space generate questions about the *processes* through which public spaces are produced—through what processes are resources allocated to their provision and maintenance, and

through what processes are their rules of use and norms of interaction established?

While we agree with critics who argue that justice in urban outcomes must not be reduced to a matter of procedural fairness (e.g. Fainstein 2000), justice undeniably has a procedural component. With respect to public space and social justice, a concern with procedural justice focuses our attention on the ways in which decisions about public spaces are made—to what extent are public spaces themselves the object of genuinely democratic and inclusive public debate in the wider urban public sphere, and to what extent are such debates captured by powerful interests or constrained by existing societal structures such as, for example, entrenched concepts of private property (e.g. Iveson 2007; Low and Smith 2006; Staeheli and Mitchell 2008).

Importantly, the processes of negotiation and decision-making that shape public spaces have a significant influence on fairness and our *perceptions* of fairness. Psychologists have found that distributional outcomes are not the only relevant issue when determining people's perception of fairness (Tyler and Blader 2003; Tyler 2000, 2005). The way that a person is included in decision-making processes is equally important. While early research on social justice supported the findings that people felt most satisfied when outcomes were distributed fairly, subsequent research found that distributive justice outcomes were often biased, and that the favorability of an outcome was less crucial when the underlying allocation process was perceived as fair (Tyler and Blader 2003; Cropanzano and Randall 1993). Recent research on contacts with the police in Australia found that a relational model of authority that emphasizes the role of procedural justice was associated with 'higher perceived legitimacy, outcome fairness and satisfaction with the contact' (Elliot, Thomas, and Ogloff 2011, 592). Further, a climate of procedural justice may also be manifest in emotional contagion and a sense of trust more generally (Whitman et al. 2012).

Crucially, such research suggests that public spaces will not be perceived as just if people are systematically locked-out of decision-making processes that shape their use—either through direct forms of exclusion that put decision-making behind closed doors, or through indirect forms of exclusion where the rules of participation in decision-making systematically favor some groups over others.

Putting our propositions to work: two examples

What use are such propositions for urban analysis and action? They are not designed to act as philosophical principles that stand completely outside of context, to be simply 'applied' as either a neutral analytical tool or an inflexible prescription for action. Rather, in the critical theoretical tradition, we have sought to articulate a set of propositions that are derived from an engagement with diverse social and spatial struggles, and might continue to inform and respond to future actions in pursuit of more just cities. We refer to them as 'propositions' precisely to signal that they are intended as useful and adaptable contributions to ongoing dialogue and action about public spaces in different contexts.

Given this, the propositions we have developed above could be applied in a number of different ways in different contexts. In this section, we briefly illustrate two distinct ways in which our framework might be applied. First, we illustrate how these propositions might be used for quite general assessments and overviews of public spaces in a given city. We do this through a brief assessment of street conditions in New York City from a justice perspective, drawing on propositions about distributive, interactional and procedural justice as well as recognition and an ethics of caring and repair. Here, propositions are combined to provide a generalized overview. Second, we show how the different propositions can also be used to interrogate specific policies

relating to public space. We do this with a brief discussion of broken windows approaches to the policing of graffiti in public space. This discussion shows how exclusionary approaches to the 'care and repair' of public space can be distinguished from more progressive approaches, by putting care into dialogue with our other justice propositions such as redistribution and recognition.

Streets and sidewalks in New York City

Public space in New York City has been a flashpoint in the wider politics of social inequality, gentrification and neighborhood resource equity. Thus, in New York City *distributive* justice must take into consideration the entire city to consider where and when the distribution of streets and sidewalks are equal or unequal to the needs of users. Most residents and visitors to New York City would agree that while there seems to be an equal distribution of streets due their general grid plan layout, in some parts of the city streets and sidewalks are inadequate for the flow of people, in poor repair or are appropriated by restaurants for cafés and by retailers for displaying merchandise. Many New York City sidewalks are privatized in a variety of ways. for example, Broadway between 34th and 35th is lined with large, protective planters that restrict where people can walk (Figure 1) and the commercial establishments along Broadway as it runs through Times Square have multiple elements of privatization such as placards, tables, mannequins blocking the flow of pedestrians.

At the same time some of the Times Square streets have been barricaded and made into new, flexible public spaces that give pedestrians places to rest, eat, perform, talk and meet friends and encouraging pedestrians to enjoy the area (Figure 2). Automobile drivers including taxis and car service companies, however, complain that this privileging of streets for pedestrians (and bicycle lanes

Figure 1   Protective planters along Broadway between 34th and 35th (Photo: Setha Low).

for bikers) is unjust with regard to their need to move quickly through the streets of the city to make a living.

In terms of *recognition*, studies of Times Square and Herald Square (Chesluk 2008; Brash 2011; Miller 2007; Low 2013) suggest

that Senegalese vendors, individuals and families who are homeless, immigrants waiting for work, panhandlers, some kinds of vendors and transient individuals, and some groups of teenagers of color are not recognized as legitimate public space users.

Figure 2 Sense of place in Times Square, NYC (Photo: Setha Low).

Rules and regulations about loitering and sleeping in public space are used as ways to chase stigmatized and marginalized people away and restrict their presence.

Interactional justice on New York City streets varies considerably depending on who you are, the time of day and the day of the week. Police officers can become abusive especially at night or on weekends when there are large numbers of people and large crowds. At these moments, it is particularly clear that the police first ask 'misrecognized' people to move along using force if necessary. These misrecognized groups of people and individuals also can find themselves targets of discrimination on sidewalks and in public facilities such as train, bus and subway stations where recognized users are protected and secure, while youth of color, homeless individuals, buskers and vendors are given tickets or even arrested. Socially just interactions are further complicated by friction between cars

and other cars, pedestrians and cars, pedestrians and bicycles, and bicycles and cars where encounters can become quite harsh, irritating and even violent.

On the other hand, interactional justice can be found in the diversity of residents, pedestrians and workers who inhabit New York City streets and their tolerance of the wide range of often conflicting activities that take place at one time in the same space. Among people who work and perform on the streets and sidewalks or even among those who panhandle there can be conflicts over the use of prime performance and vendor locations, but these problems can also be attributed to the lack of procedural justice in allocation of these prime spots by the city.

An *ethic of caring and repair* cushions some of these negative interactions that occur daily on the street. Religious, charity and volunteer organizations such as the Midnight Run and Godard Services offer daily meals for people living in parks, the underground and on sidewalks, and panhandlers are often rewarded with 'spare change' and food from passersby. Police and security guards offer tourist advice and help people find their way or even to get home if lost. Caring, while adding to a more just atmosphere, nevertheless, does not necessarily reduce the direct impact of discrimination by authorities of misrecognized citizens and street residents.

In this brief set of considerations, we can see that socially just public space has multiple dimensions. In any given context, the nature of inequality and injustice may be such that one or more of our five propositions is more important than another. Further, as we will see in our next example, each of the five propositions/principles that we have elaborated above can usefully be used to interrogate the others.

Broken windows and the policing of graffiti

As well as helping with general assessments of public space provision and regulation in a given city, our framework can also be used

for critical interrogations of specific public space policies and practices. For instance, the propositions we have set out above can be used to critically engage with the widely influential 'broken windows' approach to the policing of public space.

Advocates of the 'broken windows' approach to the policing of public space argue for a targeted policing of so-called anti-social behavior as a means to make public space safe. The 'broken window' is a metaphor for the impact of apparently minor 'anti-social' behaviors on public space—if one window is left unrepaired in a neighborhood, this is said to send a message to the world that 'no-one cares' about that neighborhood (Wilson and Kelling 1982). According to the theory, this signal will be interpreted by the anti-social as an invitation to escalate their behavior—'if no-one cares about the broken window, then no-one will care if I break other norms and rules'. The 'broken window' is made to represent a much wider range of 'minor infractions' and 'everyday annoyances' such as graffiti, begging, rough sleeping, etc., all of which have become the target of police operations and corporate and civilian interventions designed to 'clean up' the neighborhood.

Of course, this form of policing has not been without its critics, many of whom have associated it with a punitive (even 'revanchist') turn in urban governance in neoliberalizing cities. They point out that some people's annoyances tend to be universalized, and that punitive approaches to these annoyances end up having unequal effects for different groups—with the young, minorities and the poor typically the targets (e.g. Herbert and Brown 2006). We too are critical for reasons which we discuss below. However, we think it is useful to recast this debate as one about *care* for urban public spaces, and its relationship to other justice principles.

It is important to acknowledge the fact that the embrace of broken windows influenced policing and governance of public space is not, at least for all who embrace it, a politics

of revenge and hate. For many, it is a common-sense statement about *care* for their neighborhood. Broken windows initiatives frequently mobilize citizens to take part in the management of public space, inviting them to 'take responsibility for their community'. In a specific example of broken windows policy in Sydney, for several years citizens have been invited by the NSW State Government, in partnership with Clean Up Australia, to participate in 'Graffiti Action Day'. The idea here is for citizens to play a role in caring for their communities, by donning some overalls, grabbing some paint rollers and covering up any graffiti that they could find in their neighborhood. Materials are provided by the event's sponsors, and the Government's registration page is used to put citizens in a given neighborhood in touch with one another for the day. The purpose of Graffiti Action Day is not only the practical work of graffiti removal, but also to 'send a message' to graffiti writers that their actions hurt communities and that people care enough about their neighborhood to 'fight back'. There can be no doubt about the sincerity of many participants, who care deeply about their neighborhoods—enough to spend a day of their weekend with others working to re-paint walls and fences.

We have made the case above that *care* is crucial in making public space more just—in the form of care for people to enable them to access public space, and care for the places themselves. But of itself, care is not necessarily just. As theorists of care emphasize, a key political dynamic to unpack here is not so much the difference between care and its absence, but the difference between different configurations of care, influenced as they are by particular ideologies and policy frameworks (Barnes 2012; Tronto 2013). The justice propositions we develop above can be useful in this task.

If we interrogate the 'broken windows' form of care embodied by Graffiti Action Day from the perspectives of *redistribution*, *recognition* and *interaction/encounter*, we can see its limits and its potentially harmful impacts in perpetuating some forms of urban injustice. From the perspective of the NSW Government, Graffiti Action Day positioned graffiti removal as a form of care, and graffiti as a form of 'wrecking' (or at best, as an absence of care). The organizers of this event refuse to *recognize* the cultures and values of the young (and not so young) people who practice and appreciate different forms of graffiti and street art. This is not to suggest that such cultures and values should simply be uncritically 'celebrated'. It is, however, to insist that such cultures and values be *recognized* and engaged with, through an acknowledgement of disagreement about urban aesthetics.

Of course, such recognition and engagement would also require opportunities for *interaction* between graffiti writers and their detractors. Such opportunities are typically denied to graffiti artists and writers on the pre-determined stereotype that they are 'bad', 'anti-social'. Finally, we might also note that the substance of the disagreement between graffiti writers and their detractors concerns a *distributional* question—in their practice, graffiti writers put the surfaces of the city to work as a space that can be used by anyone as a space for communication, instead of being locked away behind property rights determined in the market sphere of exchange.

On the same day as Graffiti Action Day in 2010, a small group of graffiti writers, community-based youth workers and academics (including Iveson) organized a parallel action called 'Keep Australia Colourful'. Instead of painting over existing graffiti, they created new works—negotiating with several property owners to get access to walls and trucks for murals (Figure 3). They handed out leaflets to passers-by, explaining what they were doing, and engaging them in conversation about their skills and work. They talked to journalists, and their work featured in full color in the next day's edition of a major metropolitan newspaper

Figure 3 Mural produced as part of 'Keep Australia Colourful'. Artwork by Beastman, Numskull, Roach and Saynt (Photo: Kurt Iveson).

(Corderoy and Christopher 2010). Their work was positioned as a different kind of care for the environment, through its co-production by residents and artists in dialogue that both *recognized* the culture of street art and was built on a process of interaction and engagement. It did not challenge the sovereign rights of private property owners—but contributed to efforts to crack apart the consensus that all graffiti is bad, and that the only way to care for your neighborhood is to keep it colorless.

Conclusion

This paper proposes five propositions that can be used to guide efforts to make urban public spaces more just, in order to contest their restriction and homogenization by neoliberal governance strategies. We have purposively chosen not to define public space narrowly in the hopes of using the term in a general sense that includes public infrastructure (such as transit systems), public institutions (such as libraries) as well as appropriated public spaces (such transitional, borrowed and in-between spaces) and performative and temporary public space (such as pop-up art shows and playgrounds). We argue that increasingly public space has become a crucial location for the production of a politically and social diverse public sphere. For all of these reasons, then, it seems crucial that the production of public space reflects multiple dimensions of social justice. If public spaces are not socially just in a number of ways, an unjust politics of exclusion, rather than of inclusion will continue through the current regime of urban civility.

This paper was written to provide an opening for a broader discussion on what constitutes a socially just city. Existing models of urban social justice and/or the just city, as important as they are, are not specific to the problem of protecting and transforming public space. Yet public space has become even more important to the

public sphere (Low 2016). For these reasons we are also interested in developing a notion of social justice that can be applied to public spaces with the idea that a more robust definition of socially just public space could be practical and implementable even in a neoliberal world. By clearly defining what we think just public space should be we have unearthed a multi-dimensional grounding for social justice analysis and political organizing. While any one of the five propositions we offer is not necessarily radical or new in and of itself, we believe that drawing them into dialogue with one another gives us new perspectives on old problems and offers an innovative basis of critique and action.

We realize that these propositions are only a beginning and offer them in the hopes that others will expand, critique and criticize our attempt. They emerged through our fieldwork and activism in the USA, Australia and parts of Latin America. We hope that they will be useful to people beyond these places, but we leave it to activists and thinkers working in other cultural and political contexts to consider their utility. At the very least, we anticipate that these different propositions will apply differently in distinct and varying situations and state/national/transnational structures. For example, sometimes social injustice will revolve around the redistribution of public space such as the lack of playgrounds in poorer neighborhoods. Other times, it could be the way people treat one another in a city where there is a fair distribution of space, but racist and discriminatory practices make it impossible for some people to be recognized as citizens much less treated respectfully in their day-to-day movements through public space. We look forward to responses to this initial attempt to develop our ideas and articulate a set of general propositions that we think will be useful.

We worry that the propositions we have outlined here are not radical enough to produce the kinds of changes we want in our cities. It is certainly true that the forces stacked against the kinds of measures we have outlined are great, and that not all forms of redistribution, recognition, interaction, care and procedural inclusion will result in transformation of the processes that generate inequalities in the first place. And yet, even relatively modest movements towards more just provision and governance of public space can have potentially transformative urban effects. Widening access to public spaces for all has significant political potential. Public spaces are not only crucial sites in the formation of habits of co-presence and togetherness that can break down unjust hierarchies (Amin 2008). They also remain crucial sites in processes of political subjectification by which 'the people' can articulate and enact new forms of equality in our increasingly unequal societies (Castells 2012; Davidson and Iveson 2014; Low 2016). Yes, in our networked cities public spaces are deployed in concert with various media in these processes of habitation and subjectification. But they are no less vital for that, and so the pursuit of more just public spaces is not only an end in itself, but potentially a means to a greater end for those of us seeking more radical transformations of urban life.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

Amin, Ash. 2008. "Collective Culture and Urban Public Space." *City* 12 (1): 5–24.

Barnes, Marian. 2012. *Care in Everyday Life: an Ethic of Care in Practice.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Bies, R. J. 1986. "Interactional Justice." In *Research on Negotiations in Organizations*, edited by R. J. Lewicki, B. H. Sheppard, & M. Bazerman, 43–55. Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press.

Brash, Julian. 2011. *Bloomberg's New York: Class and Governance in the Luxury City.* Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press.

Brenner, Neil, Peter Marcuse, and Margit Mayer. eds. 2011. *Cities for People, not for Profit: Critical Urban*

Theory and the Right to the City. London and New York: Routledge.

Butler, Judith. 2015. *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly.* Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.

Caldeira, Teresa. 2000. *City of Walls: Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in Sao Paulo.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Castells, M. 2012. *Networks of Outrage and Hope: Social Movements in the Internet Age.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Chesluk, Benjamin. 2008. *Money Jungle. Imaging the New Times Square.* New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press.

Corderoy, Amy and Lissa Christopher. 2010. "'Keep Australia Colourful' Campaign Thwarts Premier's Anti-Graffiti Drive." *Sydney Morning Herald.* May 3.

Cowan, Jill. 2013. "Orange County Supervisors to Weigh in on Beach Fire Ring Ban." *Los Angeles Times,* April 22. http://articles.latimes.com/2013/apr22/news/la-orange-county-supervisors-to-weigh-in-on.

Cresswell, Tim. 2015. *Place: An Introduction.* Malden and Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

Cropanzano, R. and M. L. Randall. 1993. "Injustice and Work Behavior: A Historical Review." In *Justice in the Workplace: Approaching Fairnesss in Human Resource Management,* edited by R. Cropanzano, 3–20. Hillsdate, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Davidson, Mark, and Kurt Iveson. 2014. "Occupations, Mediations, Subjectifications: Fabricating Politics." *Space and Polity* 18 (2): 137–152.

Davis, Mike. 1990. *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angles.* London: Verso.

Davis, Mike. 2006. *Planet of Slums.* London: Verso.

Duneier, Mitchell. 1999. *Sidewalk.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Elliott, Irina, Stuart, D. M. Thomas, and James, R. P. Ogloff. 2011. "Procedural Justice in Contacts with the Police: Testing a Relational Model of Authority in a Mixed Methods Study." *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 17 (4): 592–610.

Fainstein, Susan S. 2000. "New Directions in Planning Theory." *Urban Affairs Review* 35 (4): 451–478.

Fainstein, Susan S. 2005. "Planning Theory and the City." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 25: 121–130.

Fassin, Didier. 2013. *Enforcing Order: An Ethnography of Urban Policing.* Malden and Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fennell, Catherine. 2014. "Experiments in Vulnerability: Sociability and Care in Chicago's Redeveloping Public Housing." *City and Society* 26 (2): 262–284.

Fincher, Ruth, and Kurt Iveson. 2008. *Planning and Diversity in the City: Redistribution, Recognition and Encounter.* Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Fincher, Ruth, and Kurt Iveson. 2012. "Justice and Injustice in the City." *Geographical Research* 50 (3): 231–241.

Fisher, Daniel. 2012. "Running Amok or Just Sleeping Rough? Long-Grass Camping and the Politics of Care

in Northern Australia." *American Ethnologist* 39 (1): 171–186.

Foley, Luke. 2015. "Government Sells out Sydney Harbour NYE Vantage Point at Expense of Families." http://www.lukefoley.com.au/government_sells_out, accessed June 3 2015.

Fraser, Nancy. 1998. "Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, Recognition and Participation." *Tanner Lectures in Human Values* Vol 19.

Fraser, Nancy. 1990. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to Actually Existing Democracy." *Social Text* 25/26: 56–79.

Gerbaudo, Paolo. 2012. *Tweets and the Streets: Social Media and Contemporary Activism.* London: Pluto Press.

Habermas, J. [1962] 2001. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Hall, Tom, and Robin Smith. 2014. "Care and Repair and the Politics of Urban Kindness." *Sociology,* 1–16.

Harvey, David. 1973. *Social Justice and the City.* London: Edward Arnold.

Herbert, S., and E. Brown. 2006. "Conceptions of Space and Crime in the Punitive Neoliberal City." *Antipode* 38 (4): 755–777.

Honneth, Axel. 2004. "Recognition and Justice: Outline of a Plural Theory of Justice." *Acta Sociologica* 47 (4): 351–364.

Houssay-Holzchuch, Myriam, and Annika Teppo. 2009. "A Mall for All: Race and Public Space in Post-Apartheid Cape Town." *Cultural Geographies* 16: 351–379.

Iveson, Kurt. 2003. "Justifying Exclusion: the Politics of Public Space and the Dispute Over Access to McIvers Ladies' Baths, Sydney." *Gender, Place and Culture* 10 (3): 215–228.

Iveson, Kurt. 2007. *Publics and the City.* Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Iveson, Kurt. 2010. "The Wars on Graffiti and the New Military Urbanism." *City* 14 (1): 115–134.

Iveson, Kurt. 2013. "Cities within the City: Do-It-Yourself Urbanism and the Right to the City." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (3): 941–956.

Juris, Jeffrey S. 2012. "Reflections on #Occupy Everywhere: Social Media, Public Space, and Emerging Logics of Aggregation." *American Ethnologist* 39 (2): 259–279.

King, Noel. 2013. "Beach Fire Pits Spark Battle Between Private Interests and Public Land." *Marketplace.* Monday, April 8. http://www.marketplace.org/topics/wealth-poverty/beach-fire-pits-spark-battle.

Kuymulu, M. 2013. "Reclaiming the Right to the City: Reflections on the Urban Uprisings in Turkey." *City* 17 (3): 274–278.

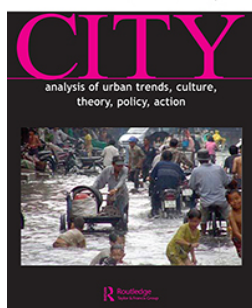Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The Production of Space.* Cambridge and New York: Blackwell.

Lippert, Randy K., and Kevin Walby. 2013. *Policing Cities: Urban Securitizaton and Regulation in A Twenty-First Century World.* London and New York: Routledge.

Low, Setha. 2000. *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Low, Setha. 2003. *Behind the Gates: Life, Security and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America.* New York: Routledge.

Low, Setha. 2006. "The Erosion of Public Space and the Public Realm: Paranoia, Surveillance and Privatization in New York City." *City and Society,* 18 (1): 43–49.

Low, Setha. 2013. "Public Space and Diversity: Distribution, Procedural and Interactive Justice for Parks." In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Planning and Culture,* edited by Greg Young and D. Stevenson, 295–310. Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate.

Low, Setha. 2016. *Spatializing Culture: The Ethnography of Space and Place.* London and New York: Routledge.

Low, Setha, and Neil Smith. 2006. *The Politics of Public Space.* New York and London: Routledge.

Low, Setha, Dana Taplin, and Suzanne Scheld. 2005. *Rethinking Urban Park: Public Space and Cultural Diversity.* Austin: University of Texas.

MacGregor, Sherilyn. 2006. *Beyond Mothering Earth: Ecological Citizenship and the Politics of Care.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Maguire, Mark, Catarina Frois, and Nils Zurawski. 2014. *The Anthropology of Security: Perspective From the Frontline of Policing, Counter-Terrorism and Border Control.* London: Pluto Press.

Maharawal, Manissa. 2013. "Occupy Wall Street and a Radical Politics of Inclusion." *Sociology Quarterly* 54(2): 177–181.

Maharawal, Manissa. 2014. "Protest of Gentrification and Eviction Technologies in San Francisco." *Progressive Planning* 199: 20–24.

Maniscalco, Anthony. 2015. *Public Spaces, Market Spaces and the Constitution: Shopping Malls and the First Amendment.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Marcuse, Peter. 2006. "What is 'The right to the city'." Unpublished Manuscript.

Marcuse, Peter. 2009. "From Critical Urban Theory to the Right to the City." *City* 13(2–3): 185–197.

Mason, P. 2012. *Why It's Kicking Off Everywhere - The New Global Revolutions.* London: Verso.

Merrifield, Andy. 2013. *The Politics of the Encounter: Urban Theory and Protest Under Planetary Urbanization.* Athens and London: University of Georgia Press.

Miller, Kristine F. 2007. *Designs on the Public: The Private Lives of New York's Public Spaces.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Minton, Anna. 2012. *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-first Century City.* London: Allen Lane.

Mitchell, Don. 2003. *The Right to the City.* New York: Guilford.

Modan, Gabrielle Gahlia. 2007. *Turf Wars: Discourse, Diversity and the Politics of Place.* Malden and Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Morgan, Kevin. 2010. "Local and Green, Global and Fair: The Ethical Foodscape and the Politics of Care." *Environment and Planning A* 42: 1852–1867.

Nussbaum, Martha Craven. 2000. *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Needham, K. 2013. "Gardens not for Raising Cash: Keating." *Sydney Morning Herald,* May 26.

Newman, Andrew. 2011. "Contested Ecologies: Environmental Activism and Urban Space in Immigrant Paris." *City and Society* 23 (2): 192–209.

Németh, Jeremy. 2010. "Security in Public Space: An Empirical Assessment of Three US Cities." *Environment and Planning A* 42: 2487–2507.

Peattie, Lisa. 1998. "Convivial cities." In *Cities and Citizens: Planning and the Rise of Civil Society in a Global Age,* edited by J. Douglass, & J. Friedmann, 247–252. Chichester: Wiley.

Peterson, Marina. 2010. *Sound, Space and the City: Civic Performance in Downtown Los Angeles.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Rawls, J. 1971. *A Theory of Justice.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Sandercock, Leonie. 1997. *Cosmopolis II: Mongrel Cities of the Twenty First Century.* London: Mansell.

Soja, Edward W. 2010a. *Seeking Spatial Justice.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Soja, Edward W. 2010b. "Spatializing the Urban, Part 1." *City* 14 (6): 629–635.

Soja, Edward W. 2011. "Spatializing Justice—Part II." *City* 15 (1): 96–102.

Staeheli, Lynn A. and Don Mitchell. 2008. *The People's Property: Power, Politics and the Public.* New York and London: Routledge.

Stavrides, S. 2014. "Emerging Common Spaces as a Challenge to the City of Crisis." *City* 18 (4–5): 546–550.

Tronto, Joan C. 2013. *Caring Democracy: Markets, Equality and Justice.* London and New York: New York University Press.

Tyler, Tom R. 2000. "Social Justice: Outcome and Procedure." *International Journal of Psychology* 35 (2): 117–125.

Tyler, Tom R. 2005. *Readings in Procedural Justice.* Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Tyler, Tom R., and S. L. Blader. 2003. "The Group Engagement Model: Procedural Justice, Social Identity, and Cooperative Behavior." *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 7 (4): 349–361.

Ward, Kevin. 2007. "Creating A Personality for Downtown: Business Improvement Districts in Milwaukee." *Urban Geography* 28 (8): 781–808.

Watson, Sophie. 2006. *City Publics: The (dis)Enchantments of Urban Encounters.* London and New York: Routledge.

Whitman, Daniel, Nichelle C. Carpenter, Margaret T. Horner, Suzette Caleo, and Jeremy B. Bernerth. 2012. "Fairness at the Collective Level: A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Consequence and Boundary Conditions of Organizational Justice Climate." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 97 (4): 776–791.

Wilson, J. Q. and G. L. Kelling. 1982. "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety." *Atlantic Monthly,* March: 29–32.

Young, Iris. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Young, Iris. 1999. "Residential Segregation and Differentiated Citizenship." *Citizenship Studies* 3 (2): 237–252.

Young, Iris. 2001. "Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy." *Political Theory* 29 (5): 670–690.

Setha Low is Professor of Environmental Psychology, Geography, Anthropology, and Women's Studies, and Director of the Public Space Research Group at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. Email: slow@gc.cuny.edu

Kurt Iveson is Associate Professor of Urban Geography in the School of Geosciences at the University of Sydney. Email: kurt.iveson@sydney.edu.au

Flooding the sanitary city

Sophie Schramm

Flooding the sanitary city
Planning discourse and the materiality of urban sanitation in Hanoi

Sophie Schramm

Urban water flows are constitutive elements of Hanoi's morphology. Regular floods across the city illustrate that Hanoi's amphibious character is a central impediment to the installation of a 'dry and sanitary city', the global modernist ideal of a separation of urban wastewater flows from public space through their redirection into large underground networks. Currently, the first attempt by the city government to construct a citywide sewerage network since the colonial period is taking place. In accordance with the ideal of the sanitary city, it aims at a unification and centralization of hitherto socio-spatially diverse arrangements of sanitation provision in the city. At the same time, rapid urbanization has radically transformed Hanoi, contributing to a continuous diversity of urban sanitation infrastructures and thus defeating the goal of unification and centralization. Starting from an urban political ecology perspective, this paper takes a historical focus to explain Hanoi's sanitation system as emerging from an interplay of discourses and material urbanization dynamics. Arguing that discourses permeate the material reproduction of urban wastewater flows and infrastructures, the paper focuses on the role of the sanitary city ideal for the reproduction of sanitation infrastructures and the contestations and stabilizations of this ideal in Hanoi. Furthermore, the paper addresses the material reproduction of urban sanitation and drainage in Hanoi as part of broader urbanization dynamics, based on a conceptualization of regular floods at the urban fringe of Hanoi as indicators for persisting socio-spatial fragmentations of the city's sanitation system.

Introduction

Hanoi literally means 'city in a river'. Urban water flows are constitutive elements of the city in the delta of the Red River. Regular floods across Hanoi illustrate that its amphibious character is a central impediment to the installation of a 'dry and sanitary city', the global modernist ideal of a separation of urban wastewater flows from public urban space through their redirection into citywide underground networks transporting wastewaters from households directly out of the city (Heidenreich 2004; Melosi 2008).

In Hanoi, the colonial period (1882–1954) and the years since doi moi (renewal) from 1986 onwards, when the country opened up to a market economy, are moments of

particular interest concerning the changing topologies of sanitation and the impacts of modernist planning. The colonial period witnessed drastic destructions of pre-existing built structures, as well as the massive growth of Hanoi (Wright 1991). The construction of a modern city included large-scale redirections of urban (waste) water flows to underground networks and the filling of formerly omnipresent lakes, ponds and swamps throughout the city (Logan 2000). While the American war and subsequent urban poverty after independence in 1954 slowed down urbanization and expansion of networked infrastructures, reforms in the course of doi moi, such as the lifting of restrictions on the influx to urban centres and on private land ownership, contributed to massive rural–urban migration and urban expansion (Leaf 1999; Quang and Kammeier 2002). For instance, according to official statistics, between 1990 and 2009, Hanoi's population has grown by about 2% annually and has reached roughly 6.4 million (GSO 2009). This growth has been accompanied by massive expansions of large infrastructure networks since the turn of the century (World Bank 2006; WHO and UNICEF 2012).

Currently, the first attempt by the city government to construct a large-scale sewerage network since colonialization is taking place (SRV and HPC 2005). In accordance with the ideal of the sanitary city, it aims at a unification and centralization of hitherto socio-spatially diverse arrangements of sanitation provision in the city. At the same time, rapid urbanization has radically transformed Hanoi's morphology and particularly the urban fringe, which displays 'a great diversity of inter-mixed landscapes' (Leaf 2002, 29), a constantly changing conglomerate of centrally planned new urban areas, rapidly urbanizing villages, industries and agriculture. This urbanization process contributes to a continuous diversity of urban sanitation infrastructures defeating the goal of

unification and centralization. The interplay of centrally planned network expansion and diverse urbanization dynamics significantly restructure the infrastructural geography of Hanoi. Floods occurring regularly at the urban fringe indicate the contradictions between centralized planning and urbanization dynamics.

Analyses of the political ecology of sanitation planning and practice suggest that the ideal of the sanitary city has been applied only partially in cities of the Global South, leading to segregated access to modern sanitation infrastructures (Gandy 2006; Kooy and Bakker 2008; McFarlane 2008). This paper interrogates the role of the ideal of the sanitary city in Hanoi's urban sanitation planning and the production of sanitation infrastructures in the colonial period and present. For this purpose, it takes an urban political ecology perspective on the material and discursive production of Hanoi's sanitation infrastructures. Sanitation planning in Hanoi today has a stronger focus on socio-spatial unification and standardization than in the colonial period, when it attempted to balance existing socio-spatial differentiations with a diversification of sanitation infrastructures. However, I argue that the political ecology of wastewater flows does not only depend on sanitation planning and policy and their respective contestations and inherent contradictions, but that it is also contingent on broader urbanization dynamics. Furthermore, I show that plans and policies have continuously misconceived these urbanization dynamics and that, since the period of colonization, contradictions have become visible at the edges of centralized network provision, the urban fringes of Hanoi. By analysing place-specific practices in the reproduction of urban space and the redirections of wastewater flows in an urban fringe area of Hanoi, this paper reveals the possibilities and limitations that urban actors have in order to shape sanitation infrastructures beyond formal planning (Figure 1).
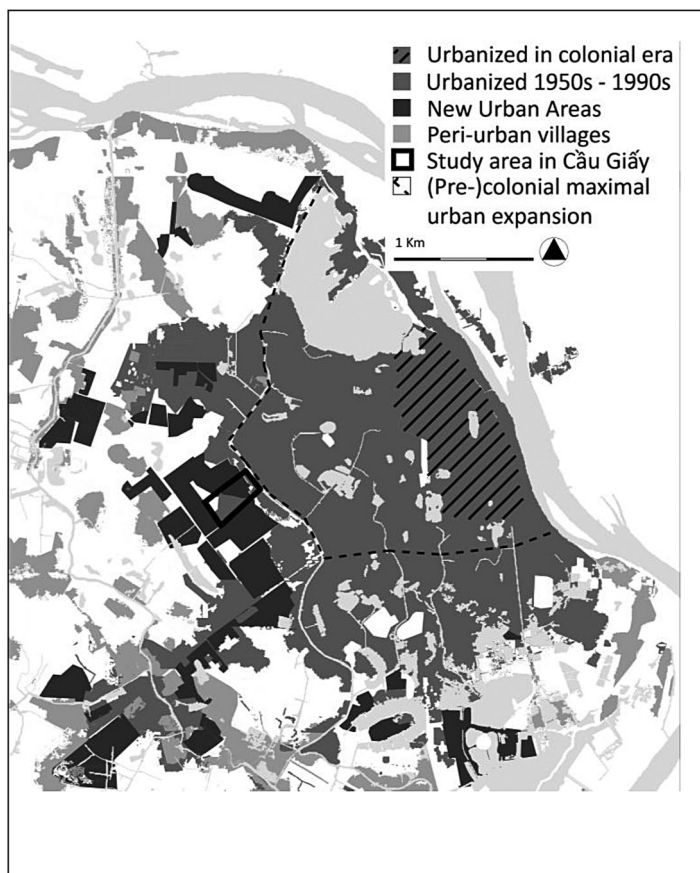
Figure 1   Areas urbanized in historical phases of Hanoi and the study area in 2010 (Author, based on Fayet 1939; Google aerial picture, 2010). (The edges of the area urbanized in the colonial era constituted the urban fringe at the time. Today, the urban fringe is the area outside the (pre-)colonial maximal expansion of Hanoi.)

The material and discursive production of urban water and sanitation infrastructures

'Socio-technical processes' of urbanization and the reproduction of urban infrastructures are complex and uneven, temporal and spatial reflections of society (Keil 2003; Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003, 907). The ways in which urban infrastructures shape urban space do not depend on infrastructural policies and interventions alone, but rather are contingent on broader urbanization processes and the distribution of resources such as land and housing (Loftus and Lumsden 2008; Zérah 2008). Starting from the assumption that the deconstruction of urban water

flows serves to unveil power relations and to understand the reproduction of urban socio-spatial inequalities, this exploration of discourses reflected in policies, planning and the material construction of Hanoi's sanitation infrastructures positions itself conceptually in the field of urban political ecology (Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003).

Deconstructing the ideal of the sanitary city

The colonial period is a critical moment for urban wastewater flows in the Global South (McFarlane 2008). In the late 19th century, large infrastructure networks became key elements of global urban landscapes, as

representations of modernity and progress (Heidenreich 2004). With regards to urban sanitation, the hegemonic ideal of a 'dry and sanitary city' has emerged from a global interplay of discourses on hygiene and citizenship, visions of urban governance and natural-scientific and technological advances in the late 19th century. The identification of pathogens in wastewater has justified the construction of large, underground networks separating wastewater from public space and flushing it out of the city. Such sociotechnical networks have been rendered possible by engineering advances of the time (cf. Melosi 2008). With regards to broader urbanization dynamics, they presuppose a bounded city, where wastewaters are produced, and which is clearly divided from a rural hinterland as the sink for these wastewaters.

The ideal of the sanitary city furthermore assumes and at the same time pursues particular state–society relations, as the operation of these large technical networks is to be regulated by the state, which thus provides ubiquitous and non-exclusive services at uniform tariffs to an urban population passively receiving these services (Gandy 2004; Oosterveer and Spaargaren 2010). The ideal expresses a bio-political vision of the state controlling the hygienic behaviour of citizens whose households are connected to large, state-regulated networks via flush toilets (cf. Bakker 2013). Kaika and Swyngedouw (2000, 125) emphasize the symbolic meaning of these technical networks and artefacts as material representations of the apparent 'mastering and taming [of] nature' by human beings. Colonialization has activated the global travel of such rationalizations, which have shaped wider urban policies worldwide. Despite the ideal's orientation towards ubiquitous access of all urban dwellers to centralized networks and thus its potential contribution to urban socio-spatial cohesion, scholars attest that the ideal of the sanitary city has regularly had reverse effects on geographies of wastewater flows in cities of the Global South (Kooy and Bakker 2008; Zérah 2008). For an

understanding of these dynamics, the concept of the 'sanitation syndrome' (Swanson 1977, 387) is insightful, as it explains how colonial urban planning, where 'urban race relations came to be widely conceived and dealt with in the imagery of infection and epidemic disease', became the ideological basis for socio-spatial segregation.

An urban political ecology approach reveals how dominant ascriptions of meaning concerning practices in urban sanitation, health and hygiene were used to construct a series of dichotomies and resulting logics of urban governance between 'colonizer' and 'indigenous', 'modern' and 'traditional', 'developed' and 'underdeveloped', 'sanitary' and 'insanitary'. It furthermore illustrates how this dichotomy has then been materially manifested in urban space through segregated and racialized access to modern sanitation infrastructures (Swyngedouw 2004; Kooy and Bakker 2008; McFarlane 2008). Urban scholars draw on this dichotomy as an explanation for the perpetual socio-spatial fragmentations of cities in the Global South that reveals the contradictory impacts of the infrastructural ideal on urban sanitation systems and its contested nature (Gandy 2006; Kooy and Bakker 2008; McFarlane 2008).

Studies on urban sanitation in the Global South establish a clear link between sanitation plans and policies in the colonial era based on the hygienist ideal of the sanitary city and socio-spatially fragmented urban spaces. However, from the 1970s onwards, the relations between formal urban planning and actual urbanization dynamics have loosened in cities of the Global South (Gandy 2004). Urban infrastructure studies suggest a change in governance rationality, with state interventions in urbanization processes and everyday lives of citizens becoming less coercive and transparent, and more indirect and incoherent (Li 2007; Kooy and Bakker 2008; Loftus and Lumsden 2008). This greater opacity concerning the influence of formal planning and governance on urban space

concurs with a blurring of the role of the ideal of the sanitary city for place-specific urban geographies of resource distribution. Along with developments such as the rise of the neo-liberal project, the idea of absolute limits to growth and the turn towards sustainability, a range of concepts and approaches to urban spatial and sanitation planning have emerged, rendering the definition of a globally circulating ideology guiding urban development and infrastructure planning worldwide extremely difficult (Castree and Braun 2001; Graham and Marvin 2001; Pincetl 2010). In light of these complexities, the study of sanitation planning and the reproduction of Hanoi's urban space and sanitation infrastructures contributes to an understanding of the changing influence of the circulating ideal on state action and planning, and on the diverse and multifaceted urbanization processes in cities of the Global South.

Discourse and materiality in urban infrastructure studies

A central concern of urban political ecology is the analysis of urban infrastructures as material mediators, transforming natural resources such as water into commodities (McFarlane and Rutherford 2008; Monstadt 2009). Some scholars argue that the critical project of urban studies, to unveil the ways in which capital flows mediate and shape urban socio-spatial inequalities and dynamics of resource distribution, cannot benefit from poststructuralist approaches (e.g. Brenner et al. 2011). However, urban political ecology in particular has drawn upon post-structuralist-inspired accounts of discourse formation and contestation and has produced new insights from it (e.g. Castree 2002; Kaika 2006; Lawhon, Ernstson, and Silver 2014). Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw (2006, 7) powerfully express these interdependences between materiality and discourse when they state that 'the material production of environments is necessarily impregnated with the mobilization of particular discourses

and understandings ... of and about nature and the environment' (cf. also Kaika 2006). Policies and plans are material artefacts and at the same time represent ascriptions of meaning, discourses about cities and infrastructures, and visions of urban futures (Brenner et al. 2011; Rutherford 2013). An examination of plans and policies thus helps to unpack rationalities and governance logics concerning the possibilities and limits to reform of certain aspects of society (Dean [1999] 2010).

However, the inclusion of formal plans and policies does not imply that the physical artefacts and networks directing urban resource flows are the intended result of a 'kind of over-arching ideological superstructure' (Latham and McCormack 2004, 711). Based on the recognition that urban materiality emerges through processes beyond central planning and control, researchers of urban infrastructures worldwide turn towards people's activities and practices in the reproduction of urban space, environments and infrastructure (Kooy and Bakker 2008; Rutherford 2013). Although the limitation of plans and policies concerning the explanation of emerging urban forms is not confined to the Global South, it is particularly apparent there, where formal policies and strategies are often distant from urban dynamics of resource distribution and living conditions (Kooy and Bakker 2008). Lawhon, Ernstson, and Silver (2014, 512) emphasize the need to study 'everyday modalities through which ordinary people link together to provide for their lives' beyond the centralized provision of services. Scholars thus focus on individuals' activities and their improvisations in the making of urban environments in order to identify new potentials for progressive change (Lawhon, Ernstson, and Silver 2014; Coutard and Guy 2007; Loftus 2012).

Starting from these developments in urban political ecologies, this paper takes a historical perspective to explain Hanoi's sanitation system as emerging from an interplay of material artefacts and practices, as well as discourses. Arguing with Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw (2006) that discourses permeate

the material reproduction of urban wastewater flows and infrastructures and that they constitute and reflect social circumstances and relations (cf. also Belina and Dzudzek 2009), this study focuses on the contestations and stabilizations of the ideal of the sanitary city in the reproduction of urban space and wastewater infrastructures in Hanoi. Conceptualizing regular floods in specific places of Hanoi as indicators for persisting socio-spatial fragmentations of sanitation systems, the paper addresses the material reproduction of urban sanitation and drainage in Hanoi as part of broader urbanization dynamics.

A dry and sanitary city or a city in flow? Sanitation planning and practice in Hanoi in the colonial era and present

Hanoi's colonial and contemporary sanitation discourses reflect particular rationalizations of the sanitary city concerning the construction of socio-spatial difference or cohesion as well as the sanitary conduct of citizens through technologies. These rationalizations as well as contradictions inherent to the ideal of the sanitary city become apparent in the contestations of sanitation planning and the material reproduction of sanitation infrastructures. Furthermore, they are contingent on broader urbanization dynamics. As I discuss below, discourses framing the city as a bounded entity are immanent to the ideal of the sanitary city and at the same time continuously contradict Hanoi's urbanization dynamics. The contradictions between the attempted construction of fixed boundaries and the moving passages constituting Hanoi's urban space and sanitation infrastructures become specifically apparent at the edges of centralized network provision, the city's urban fringes.

Addressing socio-spatial differentiations of sanitation in Hanoi

Colonial sanitation plans expressed the intention to construct a centralized citywide network at the beginning of the 20th century, but at the end of French colonial rule Hanoi's sanitation technologies were still spatially differentiated (cf. Lyard 1905; Conseil Municipal 1935). After approximately 50 years of French rule, plans were, like in many colonial towns and cities, based on a spatial segregation of ethnic groups (Figure 2).

The 36-streets area, a quarter French colonial planners reserved for the 'indigènes'—a diverse group that mostly consisted of Vietnamese and also Chinese traders and workers—was given special attention by formal urban planning (Fayet 1939). At the beginning of the 19th century, the construction of networked sewerage in this quarter contributed to an improvement of living conditions (Waibel 2002). However, for members of the late colonial urban government, the sanitary situation remained unacceptable. As the Conseil Municipal (1939, 5) reveals, they considered the prevalent night-soil collection as 'The most unsanitary we can conceive' and 'serious inconveniences'.[1] These evaluations served as a justification for the investment of a third of the costs of a 6-million-franc sanitation project into this district alone (Conseil Municipal 1939, 8). Domestic wastewater and rainwater were to be separated from toilet wastewater and flow into sewerage networks without pretreatment (Fayet 1939). Urban engineers proposed the construction of such networks in the already highly urbanized and densely populated quarter, while the colonial quarter was to rely on septic tanks and the already existing combined sewerage system. This was the less costly and less advanced technical option. Beyond investments in artefacts for citywide use, such as centralized treatment plants, urban engineers did not reserve any funds specifically for the reconstruction of the sanitation system in the colonial quarter (cf. Conseil Municipal 1939, 8). According to formal planning, sanitation in this quarter thus required less public funding and at the same time more action by individual households, as they were
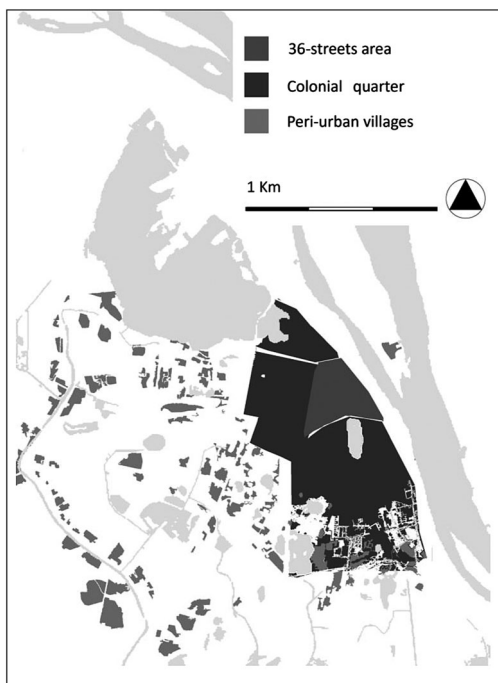
Figure 2 French colonial quarters, 36-streets area and peri-urban villages of Hanoi at the end of the colonial period (Schramm 2014, 131).

responsible for the maintenance of the septic tanks, particularly the regular emptying and cleaning of filters. Fayet's justification for the prioritization of the indigenous quarter in terms of sanitation investments reflects the hegemonic discourse of the time and its ascriptions to colonized populations regarding their hygienic behaviour and education:

> 'The installation of septic tanks in the native quarters would be a serious mistake in our opinion because the education of the Annamite masses regarding hygiene is not sufficient to entrust them with the operation of such devices.'[2] (Fayet 1939, 25)

This plan did not explicitly aim to reinforce urban socio-spatial fragmentation through sanitation infrastructures. This is in contrast with colonial sanitation planning in other cities of the Global South, which has pursued a complete isolation of the quarters of colonial elites from local populations and

the latter's exclusion to networked infrastructures (cf. Kironde 2007). On the contrary, Hanoi's urban engineers aimed to compensate the diversity of living conditions and behaviours through the construction of urban sanitation infrastructures. However, these socio-spatial differences, which colonial planners and engineers adapted sanitation infrastructures to, were not only identified by the planners themselves, but they had also discursively and materially constructed them. These constructions of socio-spatial difference become particularly apparent in the interplay of sanitation planning with broader urban policies and strategies. For instance, the high living costs, when paired with the discrimination of Vietnamese people when it came to earned incomes predicated the exclusion of wide parts of the urban population from the colonial quarter and restricted them to the indigenous quarters (cf., e.g. République Française 1926). This demonstrates how the 'sanitation syndrome' (Swanson 1977), and its racist ascriptions of unhygienic behaviour to colonial subjects, has informed governmental practices in Hanoi. These practices in turn have reinforced socio-spatial inequalities despite the stated intention to counterbalance them by means of sanitation infrastructures.

The analysis of documents informing the 'Hanoi sewerage and drainage environmental improvement project' currently under way makes the differences and continuities between colonial and current planning apparent. First of all, both plans were designed by an external group of experts. In the case of the current plan, it was the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which designed this plan for the city government of Hanoi, the Hanoi People's Committee, and the National Assembly of Vietnam. To date, 1 billion USD have been invested in the construction of large-scale sewerage plants, financed with a loan by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) (cf. SRV and HPC 2009). The current plan gives technical details but does not elaborate on the ethnicity or hygienic behaviour of different

population groups (SRV and HPC 2005). The plan refers to spatial differences exclusively with regards to population densities, presenting these differences as relevant only for technological and economic considerations. On top of this, it proposes to maintain the existing combined sewerage system that covers the central parts of the city and provisions a large part of investments for urban fringe areas, where no centrally planned underground network is in place (SRV and HPC 2009, 6). Septic tanks, which colonial planners have regarded as a technology that was suitable for colonial elites, are no longer part of Hanoi's formal sewerage planning. This is the case although they are today the most common, albeit ineffective means of sanitation in the city (cf. Viet Anh et al. 2005). Instead of proposing changes in the existing urban sanitation system, the JICA plan focuses on interventions at the urban fringe, where it envisages 'central large-scaled wastewater treatment plants' (cf. SRV and HPC 2009).

The JICA project displays reduced confidence as compared to the colonial one to reform the hygienic behaviour of the urban population through the provision of particular sanitation technologies, or to fundamentally change existing sociotechnical sanitation arrangements within densely built-up urban space. This becomes evident in the current plan's focus on technical and economic issues, the emphasis on urban fringe areas and the exclusion of analyses of practices of population groups divided along race and income. A comparison of the plans indicates sanitation planners' changed beliefs regarding the rights of populations, their duties as well as their status. Colonial planners had differentiated between the colonial elite as a group, which actively engages in sanitation provision, and the 'indigènes', who could not be trusted with such tasks. In contrast to this, the current plan presupposes a rather uniform population, whose members are to receive equal services since they are constituted as equally passive. These differences reflect broader changes in the relation

between urban engineers, governments and populations that shapes sanitation infrastructures in Hanoi, as well as a changed rationality of governance. The current plan abandons the colonial idea of a socio-spatial differentiation of the city's population while promoting a greater unification and centralization of urban space via sanitation infrastructures.

Despite the technical language of planning documents and the absence of discriminatory rhetoric, the project has triggered an intense public debate. This debate illustrates the fact that urban sanitation is a politically contested issue. A local newspaper deems the project 'inappropriate, ridiculously expensive and useless' (24h 2010; original Vietnamese). This evaluation summarizes the points of criticism that are held by sanitation engineers, planners and academics. Project costs rose to 800 USD/person. According to an international water expert, costs between 200 and 600 USD/person were already considered high, even for such 'heavy engineering' sanitation projects (Interview: Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Adviser, ADB 2011). A sanitation expert from Hanoi expresses frustration, as the large amount of money spent appears to mainly benefit the Japanese consultancy firm:

> 'The Japanese Bank wants to have this approach because they can give a loan. And they have conditions. We have to buy Japanese equipment; have to hire only Japanese consultants.' (Interview: Professor, Hanoi University of Civil Engineering 2009)

The impression that the project is not only expensive but also useless for Hanoi is rooted in the observation that the artefacts constructed within the project are mostly on a pilot scale, the treatment plants are out of operation and the pumping station's capacity is insufficient (Quoc Dung 2010). The state of repair and maintenance of the plants reflects the financial and personnel capacities of the utility company responsible for drainage and sewerage in Hanoi. The project proposes a tariff increase to cover operation and

maintenance costs in line with national legislation. However, a debate is ongoing between the Ministry of Construction (MOC), which oversees the urban utilities and regulates wastewater tariff setting, and the city government of Hanoi, which owns the utility company and sets tariffs within a range stipulated by the MOC. This debate concerns the future design of wastewater charges (88/2007/ND-CP 2007; SRV and HPC 2009; Interview: Chief Technical Adviser, GIZ 2011). Currently, the only fee for public sanitation in Hanoi is a 10% surcharge on the water tariff (SRV and HPC 2009). Revenues are far too low for the utility company to operate. However, the process of introducing cost-effective tariffs has stalled, as members of the People's Council—Hanoi's municipal council—oppose increases in sanitation costs, fearing the loss of political support and future elections (cf. De Miras, Quertamp, and Nguyen 2010). This superficial implementation of the ideal of the sanitary city, which includes the construction of large-scale artefacts and networks, but excludes financial arrangements to maintain them, reveals contestations between the different levels of government in Vietnam in relation to sanitation planning and policy. In response to these contestations, urban planners, engineers and academics think the project inappropriate for Hanoi. They demand a differentiation of the city's sanitation infrastructures, with a place-specific inclusion of decentralized low-tech means of sanitation—such as septic tanks—into formal sanitation policy and planning (Harada et al. 2010; Interview: General Director, HACTRA 2011).

The ambitious sanitation project, its piecemeal implementation and the ongoing debates surrounding it illustrate the fact that the hegemonic ideal of the sanitary city remains an important and yet contested reference of sanitation planning in Hanoi. A comparison of colonial and present sanitation discourse shows that they address the socio-spatial differentiation of sanitation infrastructures and the conduct of populations in different ways, with the current plan being largely silent on these issues. These differences reflect the uneven relations between the actors involved. The fact that French municipal engineers explicitly shared their ideas about the population's hygiene as well as the population's behaviour towards the French colonial government reveals the way in which they have positioned the government and themselves in relation to Hanoi's population. They have regarded themselves and the colonial government as external observers, jointly assessing the colonial subject. In contrast, the approach by the Japanese planning team underscores their role as consultants external to the Government of Vietnam. And it suggests that the government as the co-author of the study is more answerable to the entire population of Hanoi than the French colonial government had been.

The current plan confines itself to proposing a centralized and uniform infrastructure system. However, the superficial appropriation of the ideal of the sanitary city raises the issues of infrastructural inequality today, despite the silence of formal planning on these issues. Critics warn that the superficial implementation of the plan reinforces socio-spatial discrimination and therefore demand the consideration of sanitation technologies adapted to specific localities (Harada et al. 2010; Interview: General Director, HACTRA 2011; Interview: Urban Planner, Hanoi 2011). In sum, the topologies of Hanoi's sanitation infrastructures reflect contradictions and contestations of the sanitation sector. However much sanitation planning and its inherent contradictions shape these infrastructures, it is important to keep in mind that they are also contingent on broader urbanization dynamics.

Fixed boundaries or moving passages: Hanoi's growth dynamics in the colonial era and present

The dynamics of urbanization and their perception by Hanoi's urban governments are central in order to gain an understanding of

the material reproduction of sanitation infrastructures in the city. While formal policy and planning within the sanitation sector have aimed at socio-spatial unification through the installation of large technological systems, Hanoi's broader urbanization dynamics have been uneven and diverse. Hanoi's flow of wastewater and its place-specific dynamics of drainage and flooding are material manifestations of the particular interplay of both policies and practices in the reproduction of urban space.

The colonial sanitation project was based on the assumption that the city would grow until it had reached a definite end, as the sanitation engineer Fayet (1939, 5) suggests, 'assuming the city reaches its maximum extension'.[3] This delineation of the geographical limits of the urban area defines the point up to which the central network should and could be expanded in order to reach completion. 'We therefore have to complete the existing network'[4] (Fayet 1939, 5). The clear boundary between urban space, where wastewater is produced, and an open natural space beyond Hanoi that serves as the sink, is inherent to the ideal of the sanitary city. This is reflected in the project which states that wastewaters were to flow 'as fast as possible to their final destination'[5] (Fayet 1939, 16; Figure 3). This perception of a bounded city still underlies urban infrastructure planning in Hanoi.

The documents of the current sanitation project are in line with the provisions of the general urban master plan concerning the location of network expansions (SRV and HPC 2009). This plan provides a clear delineation between the space to be urbanized and the open naturalized space beyond (PPJ 2010; Figure 4). The sanitation plan reinforces this distinction by depicting a networked urban space with wastewater treatment plants at the periphery that direct urban wastewaters into open water bodies beyond the networked territory of urban Hanoi (SRV and HPC 2005). Colonial planners were already aware of the existence of unplanned, densely populated 'indigenous'
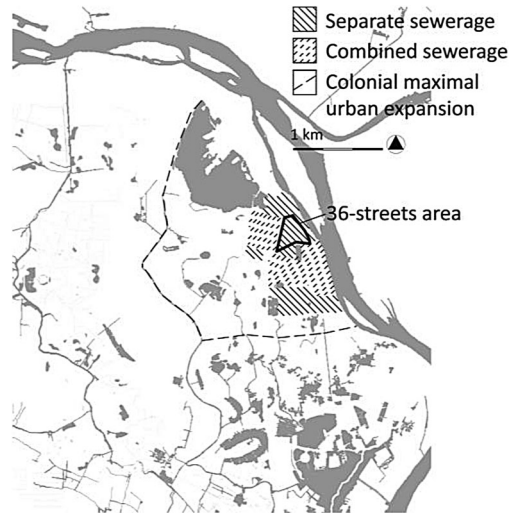

Figure 3 Planning of separate and combined sewerage 1939 (Schramm 2014, 177).

settlements directly beyond the notional borders of the city. This made apparent the failure to articulate a definite urban boundary, as 'villages and suburban areas ... extend the city and mix with it sometimes'[6] (Conseil Municipal 1935). The sanitary situation of these settlements, where sewers discharged wastewater from spaces formally declared as urban, was not in accord with
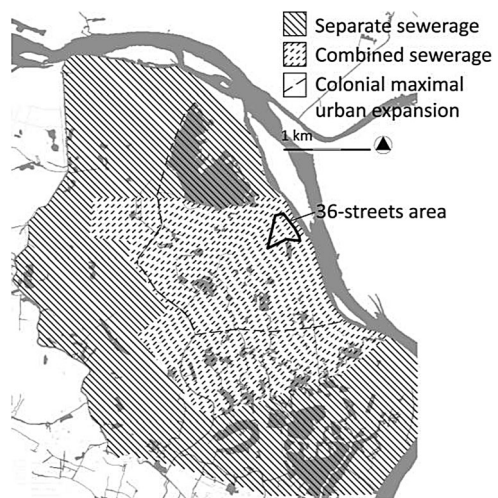

Figure 4 Planning of separate and combined sewerage 2009 (Schramm 2014, 177).

the image of Hanoi as the 'Paris de l'Annan' (Ngo 2009). A public health official from the period described the 'undirected extension' of Hanoi as an unresolved planning issue (Hermant 1936, 27). However, the question of how this issue should be resolved, whether through the construction of a satellite sewerage network or the connection of these areas to the central network was not given an answer to. Instead, urban planners and engineers continued the construction of the central network based on the boundary set as the maximum urban expansion of Hanoi excluding the settlements at the urban fringes beyond this boundary.

Today, Hanoi stretches far beyond the 'maximal expansion' stipulated within colonial plans. Its western urban fringe, the area west of the To Lich River, displays extremely dynamic and contrasting urbanization patterns (cf. Figures 5 and 6). As part of the creation of the urban district Cau Giay at the western bank of the To Lich River, formerly independently governed villages became part of the urban ward Trung Hoa in 1997 (Interview: Vice Chair, Trung Hoa 2009; Labbé 2014). Among them was the village of Ha. The incorporation of areas west of the To Lich River into the city of Hanoi has increased top-down control of urban development by the city administration. From 1997 onwards, several sewerage networks and artefacts were installed across the ward and its villages (Interview: Vice Chair, Trung Hoa 2009). According to formal wastewater planning, the Nhue River, west of Trung Hoa, is to receive the bulk of wastewater from the area and a smaller fraction is to flow into the To Lich River at the eastern border of the ward. To

Figure 5 Urban villages (Ha in the west) in between residential estates (Hickel 2009).

Figure 6 Urban fabric and master planning (Hickel 2009).

direct water streams accordingly, two of the largest pumping stations of Hanoi have been installed within the current wastewater project (SRV and HPC 2005, 2009).

More recently, a clash of urbanization logics within the ward has changed the planned direction of wastewater flows. Instead of flowing into the Nhue River, wastewaters regularly flood the village of Ha. The water surfacing from the sewerage channels is a material indicator for the incompatibility of differently networked infrastructures. This incompatibility of individually functional networked systems is rooted in the particular urbanization dynamics these networks evolve in. These dynamics are contingent on the extension of the formal boundaries of Hanoi to include the area, which has facilitated the centrally planned development of housing estates, so-called new urban areas, and contributed to accelerated urbanization (Han and Vu 2008; Figure 7). Between 1992 and 2009, the agricultural area in the ward has decreased from 130 ha (approx. 50% of the total area) to 8 ha (approx. 3%) (Interview: Vice Chair Trung Hoa 2009). The development of new urban areas differs from the densification of villages with regards to administrative procedures, actors involved and building patterns. Villages urbanize within incremental processes that are mediated between individuals and local administrations (cf. Leaf 2002). They are often 'semi-legal' as individuals who own plots legally sometimes subdivide these without formal permission, which is mostly tolerated by local administrations (Koh 2006; Interview: Programme Manager, UN-Habitat 2009). Specific sociotechnical

Figure 7   Construction of a residential estate in Cau Giay (Author 2010).

sanitation arrangements enable, and are at the same time shaped, by these urbanization dynamics. Urban residents and local administrations construct sewerage lines incrementally as the village grows. These lines combine storm water and household wastewater runoff and follow the particular road patterns, where smaller roads branch off the main roads and ultimately end in culs-de-sac. The village of Ha has an intricate system for the management of the sewerage system. While the public utility manages the sewer lines along main roads, the district collects funds for repair works in the smaller streets. In cases of minor problems, people take over maintenance works:

> 'In the smallest alleys, people … care for themselves. On Saturday mornings, all residents improve the drainage system together.' (Interview: Head of Household Group 2011)

Members of the local administrations regard these constellations as functional. People are willing to take part in activities and to pay regular fees to the utility company and the district for maintenance works. A district official relates this to the 'better social cohesion' that exists in the villages as compared to new urban areas (Interview: Vice Chief, Cau Giay Centre of Land Resource Development 2009). Thus, urbanization processes outside formal regulations with active cooperation between local administrations and communities shape the village of Ha (Figure 8). As Koh (2006, 14) observes, a 'mediation space' exists between local level administrations and households. This gives urban dwellers the possibility to express and act in favour of their interest, participate in urban development and management, and to circumvent formal regulations even in the hierarchical top-down planning regime of Hanoi.

Figure 8   Construction activities in the village of Ha (Author 2009).

In contrast to this, investors develop new urban areas based on city master planning. City planning officials and investment companies form coalitions, which promote the development of real estate and profit from it (Han and Vu 2008; Labbé and Boudreau 2011). On numerous occasions, city planning officials have compromised on planning provisions and the design quality of estates in order to maximize profits (cf. MONRE 2012). In the new urban areas of Trung Hoa, the construction process of sanitation infrastructures, the physical layout of networks and plants and their management starkly differ from those in the urban villages. They reflect city planners' negligence of broader infrastructural issues, the urban system of water flows and particularly their ignorance of the villages that are adjacent to residential estates (Interview: Administrator, Cau Giay Development Centre for Urban Infrastructure 2011). As opposed to the combined sewerage systems in the villages, storm and household wastewaters of new urban areas flow into separate underground drainage networks. In order to ensure drainage of the estates in Hanoi's flat terrain, they are built on elevated ground (Interview: Senior Representative, JICA 2011). These elevations effect a redirection of water flows—in Trung Hoa, surface water no longer flows to the western Nhue River but to the To Lich River in the east (Interview: Professor, Hanoi University of Civil Engineering 2009; Interview: Urban Planner, Hanoi 2010). City-level developments of residential estates thus contradict city-level sanitation planning.

These contradictions become obvious during regular floods in places surrounding the estates (MONRE 2011). The sewerage networks of the new urban area Trung Hoa Nhan Chinh block the drainage channels formerly connecting Ha to the Nhue River since

the construction of the estate in 2005 (Interview: Vice Chair, Trung Hoa 2009). Thus, wastewater stalls in the village and regular floods expose villagers to multiple health risks (Interviews: Residents 2009/2011). As one resident explains, the floods resulting from accelerated urbanization and the lack of coherence between urban development planning and sanitation planning are a major concern for residents:

> 'Here, we are most interested in wastewater. … Before, there were many fields and vegetables. Now only a few are left. How can we avoid flooding?' (Interview: Resident 2011)

The apparent disregard for villages in planned real estate development in Trung Hoa contrasts with the claim of a planning official in Hanoi who stated that the master plan aims to preserve urban villages for their 'historic value' and the fact that they supposedly represent 'the traditional culture and crafts of Vietnam' (Interview: Vice Director, HAUPA 2008). For local administrations, the incompatibility of sanitation infrastructures in new urban areas and villages poses a central challenge.

> 'The connection of old and new parts is a problem. Today, wastewater streams in new urban areas are separated. The old villages are … urbanized already. How are we supposed to separate wastewater streams?' (Interview: Administrator, Cau Giay Development Centre for Urban Infrastructure 2011)

The infrastructural disconnect reflects broader urban governance issues. A void of responsibility exists concerning the connection of villages and new urban areas. District and ward officials are not actively involved in the construction process of new urban areas, but 'must accept planning of the Hanoi People's Committee' (Interview: Vice Chief, Cau Giay Centre of Land Resource Development 2009). According to the ward official this is

problematic and 'the distribution of tasks and responsibilities hinders the cooperation between different actors' (Interview: Vice Chair, Trung Hoa 2009). Currently, investors are responsible for the construction of infrastructure within the new urban areas only, but not for their connection to surrounding networks. According to a district engineer, this should be different, as the 'construction company that ruins the old system should repair it'. He furthermore considers the ward authority responsible for the management of this process (Interview: Vice Chief, Cau Giay Centre of Land Resource Development 2009). In contrast, the ward official does not consider the establishment of network links to be one of the ward's tasks, as it lacks the financial resources (Interview: Vice Chair, Trung Hoa 2009).

In sum, the surface water in the village of Ha indicates that conflicting urbanization processes clash in Trung Hoa ward, and this clash has a direct effect on the living conditions of urban villagers. At the same time, the material processes at work in this case reveal that the topology of the sanitation network is not the intended outcome of particular urban sanitation plans and policies towards the discrimination of specific neighbourhoods. These are contingent on negotiations between actors within and outside local state administrations. Local district and ward authorities tolerate the bypassing of formal rules by villagers, while city planners engage in real estate development that contradicts formal city-level sanitation planning. Thus, activities by administrations on the central and local levels and their interaction with civil society and private companies shape the urban form and the materiality of Hanoi's urban sanitation system beyond pre-existing plans. These dynamics demonstrate the contested nature of sanitation discourse and materiality, as well as the contradictions inherent to the ideal of the sanitary city. The idea of Hanoi as a city with fixed

boundaries, whose development can be centrally controlled, has persisted through both colonial and post-colonial planning, even as they have been steadily contested.

Conclusion

This study of Hanoi's sanitation discourses and materialities in the late colonial period and the present reveals the ways in which the ideal of the 'sanitary city' has shaped sanitation discourse, artefacts and networks, as well as their everyday reproduction. Colonial sanitation planning in particular was motivated by a 'sanitation syndrome' that discriminated between population groups based on an understanding of some sanitary technologies and practices as unhygienic. However, contrary to what some scholars suggest, this did not lead to the socio-spatial segregation of races in the city (cf., e.g. Swanson 1977; McFarlane 2008). Instead, Hanoi's colonial sanitation plans and policies have promoted the compensation for inequalities via the provision of infrastructures. This did not alleviate socio-spatial segregation, which functioned in indirect ways. These policies have contradicted colonial sanitation planning for the standardization and unification of the diverse urban spaces of Hanoi, demonstrating the incoherencies inherent to state action.

While colonial sanitation discourse had differentiated between population groups, located them in different parts of the city and ascribed particular hygienic practices and behaviours to them, current sanitation and drainage planning refers to socio-spatial differentiation in terms of population densities only. It does not directly address, let alone differentiate, between the hygienic behaviour of population groups. Instead, it promotes a centralization and unification of sanitation infrastructures. At the same time, current sanitation planning and policies have remained stable with regards to some basic points of reference that stem from the modern ideal of the 'sanitary city', persistently viewing urbanization dynamics as finite and containable and of urban space and infrastructures as controllable by urban administrations. This is the case even though the assumptions underlying formal urban planning in Hanoi were already challenged by urban realities in colonial times. The place-specific floods, which regularly occur at Hanoi's urban fringe, indicate that urban sanitation planning towards unification and centralization permanently contradicts the messy and unforeseeable ways in which state and non-state actors reproduce urban space and expand infrastructure networks beyond formal planning. The fragmentations and incompatibilities of sanitation networks in Trung Hoa reveal that socio-spatial differentiation is no longer the intended outcome of plans and policies. It also does not depend on the contested nature and piecemeal implementation of sanitation policy and planning according to the sanitary city alone, but it is rather contingent on clashing urbanization logics and their inherent incompatibility with sanitation planning. The redirections of urban water flows towards the village unveil the contestations that are constitutive of the hegemonic ideal of the sanitary city. Since the colonial period, these have continuously contributed to a material reproduction of socio-spatial fragmentations at the urban fringe of Hanoi, even though current plans and policies do not explicitly refer to these dynamics.

The focus on the redirections of (waste) water flows at Hanoi's urban fringe makes apparent that there is a space where ordinary people—individuals as well as local state actors—realize changes to pre-existing planning and policy (cf. Lawhon, Ernstson, and Silver 2014). At the same time, it reveals the limits that these actors face when they aim to enforce their particular interests. While they may circumvent and change top-down regulations and thus shape urbanization within villages, they have little influence on the coalitions between city-level planners and investment companies in their neighbourhood. Their activities contradict city-level sanitation planning towards the ideal of the sanitary city

as much as those of urban villagers in the reconstruction of sewerage networks.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1 'Le plus antihygiénique que l'on puisse concevoir' and 'inconvénients graves'.
2 'L'installation de fosses septiques dans les quartiers indigènes constituerait à notre avis une grave erreur parce que l'éducation au point de vue hygiène de la masse annamite n'est pas suffisante pour lui confier le fonctionnement d'appareils.'
3 'en supposant la Ville arrive à son extension maximum'.
4 'Il faut donc completer le reseau actuel.'
5 'le plus rapidement possible vers leur destination finale'.
6 'Les villages et les quartiers suburbaines … prolongent la ville et se confondent parfois avec elle.'

References

Articles, books and reports

Belina, B., and I. Dzudzek. 2009. "Diskursanalyse als Gesellschaftsanalyse – Ideologiekritik und kritische Diskursanalyse." In *Handbuch Diskurs und Raum*, edited by G. Glasze and A. Mattissek, 129–152. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Bakker, K. 2013. "Constructing 'Public' Water: The World Bank, Urban Water Supply, and the Biopolitics of Development." *Environment and Planning D* 31 (2): 280–300.

Brenner, N., D. J. Madden, and D., Wachsmuth. 2011. "Assemblage Urbanism and the Challenges of Critical Urban Theory." *City* 15 (2): 225–240.

Castree, N. 2002. "False Antitheses? Marxism, Nature and Actor-Networks." *Antipode* 34 (1): 111–146.

Castree, N., and B. Braun, eds. 2001. *Social Nature: Theory, Practice and Politics*. Malden: Blackwell.

Coutard, O., and S. Guy. 2007. "STS and the City. Politics and Practices of Hope." *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 32 (6): 713–734.

Dean, M. 1999. *Governmentality. Power and Rule in Modern Society*. London: SAGE.

De Miras, C., F. Quertamp, and V., Nguyễn. 2010. "Changes in Public Water Management: Transition, Compromise and Innovation." In *The Vietnamese City in Transition,* edited by P. Gubry, F.Castiglioni, J.-M., Cusset, T. T., Nguyễn, and P. T., Huong, 133–165. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Gandy, M. 2004. "Rethinking Urban Metabolism: Water, Space and the Modern City." *City* 8: 363–379.

Gandy, M. 2006. "Planning, Anti-Planning and the Infrastructure Crisis Facing Metropolitan Lagos." *Urban Studies* 43 (2): 371–396.

Graham, S., and S. Marvin. 2001. *Splintering Urbanism. Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition*. London: Routledge.

GSO (General Statistics Office Vietnam). 2009. "Average Population By Province." Accessed April 18, 2011. http://www.gso.gov.vn/default_en.aspx?tabid=467&idmid=3&ItemID=9880.

Han, S. S., and K. T. Vu. 2008. "Land Acquisition in Transitional Hanoi, Vietnam." *Urban Studies* 45 (5&6): 1097–1117.

Harada, H., S. Matsui, N. Dong, Y. Shimizu, and S. Fuji. 2010. "Incremental Sanitation Improvement Strategy: Comparison of Options for Hanoi, Vietnam." *Water Science and Technology* 62 (10): 2225–2234.

Heidenreich, E. 2004. *Fliessräume: die Vernetzung von Natur, Raum und Gesellschaft seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt: Campus.

Heynen, N., M. Kaika, and E. Swyngedouw. 2006. "Urban Political Ecology. Politicizing the Production of Urban Natures." In *In the Nature of Cities*, edited by

N. Heynen, M. Kaika and E. Swyngedouw, 1–2. London: Routledge.

Hickel, C. 2009. "Geoinformation as a key Technology for Urban and Wastewater Planning in Hanoi." FIG Regional Conference Spatial Data Serving People: Land Governance and the Environment – Building the Capacity, Hanoi, Vietnam 19–22.10.2009.

Kaika, M. 2006. "The Political Ecology of Water Scarcity: The 1989–1991 Athenian Drought." In *In the Nature of Cities*, edited by N. Heynen, M. Kaika, and E. Swyngedouw, 157–172. London: Routledge.

Kaika, M. and E. Swyngedouw. 2000. "Fetishizing the Modern City: The Phantasmagoria of Urban Technological Networks." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24 (1): 120–138.

Keil, R. 2003. "Urban Political Ecology: A Progress Report." *Urban Geography* 24: 723–738.

Kironde, J. M. L. 2007. "Race, Class and Housing in Dar es Salaam: The Colonial Impact on Land Use Structure 1891–1961." In *Dar es Salaam Histories from an Emerging African Metropolis*, edited by J. R. Brennan, A. Burton, and Y. Q. Lawi, 97–117. Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Publishers.

Koh, D. W. H. 2006. *Wards of Hanoi*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Kooy, M., and K. Bakker. 2008. "Technologies of Government: Constituting Subjectivities, Spaces, and Infrastructures in Colonial and Contemporary Jakarta." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32 (2): 375–391.

Labbé, D. 2014. *Land Politics and Livelihoods on the Margins of Hanoi 1920 – 2010*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Labbé, D., and J. A. Boudreau. 2011. "Understanding the Causes of Urban Fragmentation in Hanoi: The Case of New Urban Areas." *International Development Planning Review* 33 (3): 273–291.

Latham, A., and D. P. McCormack. 2004. "Moving Cities: Rethinking the Materialities of Urban Geographies." *Progress in Human Geography* 28 (6): 701–724.

Lawhon, M., H. Ernstson, and J. Silver. 2014. "Provincializing Urban Political Ecology: Towards a Situated UPE through African Urbanism." *Antipode* 46 (2): 497–516.

Leaf, M. A. 1999. "Vietnam's Urban Edge: The Administration of Urban Development in Hanoi." *Third World Planning Review* 21 (3): 297–315.

Leaf, M. A. 2002. "Tale of Two Villages." *Cities* 19: 23–31.

Loftus, A. 2012. *Everyday Environmentalism. Creating an Urban Political Ecology*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Loftus, A., and F. Lumsden. 2008. "Reworking Hegemony in the Urban Waterscape." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33 (1): 109–126.

Logan, W. S. 2000. *Hanoi Bibliography of a City*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Li, T. M. 2007. *The Will to Improve. Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics*. Durham/London: Duke University Press.

McFarlane, C. 2008. "Governing the Contaminated City: Infrastructure and Sanitation in Colonial and Post-Colonial Bombay." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32 (2): 415–435.

McFarlane, C., and J. Rutherford. 2008. "Political Infrastructures: Governing and Experiencing the Fabric of the City." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 32 (2): 363–374.

Melosi, M. V. 2008. *The Sanitary City- Environmental Services in Urban America from Colonial Times to the Present*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Monstadt, J. 2009. "Conceptualizing the Political Ecology of Urban Infrastructures: Insights from Technology and Urban Studies." *Environment and Planning A* 41 (8): 1924–1942.

Ngo, T. T. V. 2009. "The Existing Sewerage and Drainage System in Hanoi." Accessed June 22, 2009. https://www.alumni.tu-berlin.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/ABZ/PDF/TUI/63/van_ngo_TUI63.pdf, pp.18–19.

Oosterveer, P., and G. Spaargaren. 2010. "Meeting Social Challenges in Developing Sustainable Environmental Infrastructures in East African Cities." In *Social Perspectives on the Sanitation Challenge*, edited by B. van Vliet, G. Spaargaren, and P. Oosterveer, 11–30. Dordrecht: Springer.

Pincetl, S. 2010. "From the Sanitary City to the Sustainable City: Challenges to Institutionalising Biogenic (Nature's Services) Infrastructure." *Local Environment* 15 (1): 43–58.

Quang, N. and H. D. Kammeier. 2002. "Changes in the Political Economy of Vietnam and their Impacts on the Built Environment of Hanoi." *Cities* 19 (6): 373–388.

Rutherford, J. 2013. "The Vicissitudes of Energy and Climate Policy in Stockholm: Politics, Materiality and Transition." *Urban Studies* 51 (7): 1449–1470.

Schramm, S. 2014. *Stadt im Fluss: Die Abwasserentsorgung Hanois im Lichte sozialer und räumlicher Transformationen*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Swanson, M. W. 1977. "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900–1909." *The Journal of African History* 18 (3): 387–410.

Swyngedouw, E. 2004. *Social Power and the Urbanization of Water*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Swyngedouw, E., and N. C. Heynen. 2003. "Urban Political Ecology, Justice and the Politics of Scale." *Antipode* 35 (5): 898–918.

Viet Anh, A., A. Morel, D. H. Anh, T. T. H. Hoa and P.T. Nga. 2005. *Overview of Water and Sanitation Sector in Vietnam*. Hanoi: CEETIA, SANDEC.

Waibel, M. 2002. *Stadtentwicklung in Hanoi unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Auswirkungen der Đổi Mới Reformen auf den Handel im innerstädtischen*

36-Gassen-Gebiet. Frankfurt: Europäische Hochschulschriften Geographie. 4 (22).

WHO and UNICEF. 2012. "Vietnam Water and Sanitation Sector Assessment Report 2011." August 2012.

World Bank. 2006. *Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy Vietnam – Building on a Solid Foundation.* Washington, DC: World Bank. Accessed December 2, 2010. http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=Viet%20Nam

Wright, G. (1991) *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Zérah, M.-H. 2008. "Splintering Urbanism in Mumbai: Contrasting Trends in a Multilayered Society." *Geoforum* 39 (6): 1922–1932.

Historical and current planning and legal documents

88/2007/ND-CP. May 28, 2007. *Decree on Drainage and Sewerage for Urban Areas and Industrial Zones.* Hanoi: Government of Vietnam.

Conseil Municipal. 1935. Session ordinaire de Février 1935, Extrait du procès-verbal des délibérations prises en séance du 8 Mars 1935. In: Nationalarchiv Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signature 004168.

Conseil Municipal. 1939. Session ordinaire de Novembre 1938, Extrait du procès-verbal des délibérations prises en séance du 18 Janvier 1939. In: National archive Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signature 078692–03.

Fayet, L. (Ingénieur des T.P.E., chef des Travaux Municipaux). 1939. Avant-Projet sur les Egouts de Hanoi. Hanoi: Imprimerie d'extrême Orient. In: National archive Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signature 078692–03.

Hermant, P. 1936. L'inspecteur général de l'Hygiène et de la Santé Publiques en tournée à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine (Direction des Affaires Economiques et Administratives). In: Nationalarchiv Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signatur 078692–01.

Lyard, F. (Ingénieur chef de service). 1905. L'assainissement des terrains de la ville de Hanoi par l'installation du « Tout à légout et à lusine ». Haiphong Résidence Superieure de Tonkin. In: National archive Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signature 006524.

PPJ (Perkins Eastman; POSCO E & C; JINA). 2010. Construction planning of Hanoi Capital City to 2030 and vision to 2050 Conference Report Urban Development Planning Vietnam. [Original Vietnamese: Quy Hoạch Chung Xây Dựng Thủ Đô Hà Nội đến năm 2030 và tầm nhìn đến năm 2050]. Accessed May 20, 2010. http://hanoi.org.vn/planning/data/ppj_20100402.pdf.

République Française. 1926. Décision de l'administrateur des services civils mairie de la ville de Hanoi chevalier de la legion d'honneur. In: National archive Vietnam, Centre I Hanoi, Signature 004383.

SRV/HPC (Socialist Republic of Vietnam/People's Committees of Hanoi). 2005. *Feasibility Study Report and Program implementation for Hanoi Sewerage and Drainage Environmental Improvement Project – Phase II Volume I Main report* [Original Vietnamese: Báo cáo nghiên cứu khả thi (F/S) Và Chương trình thức hiện I/P) Cho Dứ án thoát nước Nhằm cải tạo môi trường Hà nội – giai đoạn II]. Hanoi: NIPPON KOEI; Socialist Republic of Vietnam; People's Committee of Hanoi.

SRV/HPC (Socialist Republic of Vietnam/ People's Committees of Hanoi). 2009. *Feasibility Study for the Construction Project of Central Large-Scaled Wastewater Treatment Plants for Hanoi Environmental Improvement—Final Report Summary.* Hanoi: NIPPON KOEI; VIWASE.

Interviews

Administrator, Cau Giay Development Centre for Maintenance and Administration of Urban Infrastructure, Hanoi. 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. November 17.

Chief Technical Adviser, Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Wastewater and solid waste management for provincial centres Vietnam. 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. October 26.

HACTRA (General Director, Hanoi Construction Trading and Environment Joint Stock Company). 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. November 14.

Head of Household Group 59, village Ha, Trung Hoa ward, Cau Giay district, Hanoi. 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. November 14.

HUCE (Professor, Hanoi University of Civil Engineering). 2009. Interview by Sophie Schramm. April 06.

Programme Manager, UN-Habitat office Hanoi. 2009. Interview by Sophie Schramm. April 08.

Residents, village Ha, Trung Hoa ward, Cau Giay district, Hanoi. 2009/2011. Interviews by Sophie Schramm.

Senior Representative, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Vietnam, Hanoi. 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. November 02.

Urban Planner Hanoi Data. 2009, 2010, 2011. Interviews by Sophie Schramm. April 04, 2009; Mai 31, 2010; October 20, 2011.

Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Adviser, ADB (Asian Development Bank) Vietnam Resident Mission. 2011. Interview by Sophie Schramm. October 28.

Vice Chair Trung Hoa ward, Cau Giay district, Hanoi. 2009. Interview by Sophie Schramm. April 04.

Vice Chief, Cau Giay Centre of Land Resource Development. 2009. Interview by Sophie Schramm. April 16.

Vice Director, Hanoi Authority for Urban Planning and Architecture (HAUPA). 2008. Interview by Sophie Schramm. September 04.
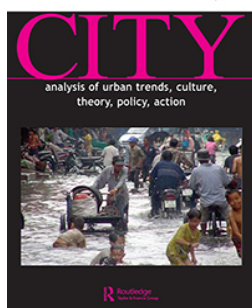
Newspaper articles

24h. 2010. "Any Solution to the Problem of Pollution of To Lich [Original Vietnamese: Lời giải nào cho bài toán ô nhiễm sông Tô Lịch?]." Accessed September 28, 2010. http://us.24h.com.vn/tin-tuc-trong-ngay/loi-giai-nao-cho-bai-toan-o-nhiem-song-to-c46a327224.html, last access 08.02.2011.

MONRE. 2011. "City Areas Likely to Flood Ha Noi Construction Department has Identified 23 Flood Hot Spots in the City." Accessed April 14, 2011. http://www.monre.gov.vn/v35/default.aspx?tabid=675&CateID=56&ID=99454&Cod, 30.05.2011.

MONRE. 2012. "Experts Urge Improved Urban Planning." Accessed March 21, 2012. http://www.monre.gov.vn/v35/default.aspx?tabid=677&CateID=60&page=2, 12.05.2012.

Quoc Dung. 2010. "Re-Evaluation of Hanoi Drainage Project [Original Vietnamese: du an thoat nuoc hanoi phai danh gia lai]." Accessed March 21, 2010. http://www.tienphong.vn/Thoi-Su/189367/Du-an-thoat-nuoc-Ha-Noi-Phai-danh-gia-lai.html, 24.05.10.

Sophie Schramm is based at Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany. Email: s.schramm@iwar.tu-darmstadt.de

Migration and the city

Panos Hatziprokopiou, Yannis Frangopoulos & Nicola Montagna

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Migration and the city
Diversity, migrant economies and urban space
Introduction

Panos Hatziprokopiou, Yannis Frangopoulos and
Nicola Montagna

Introduction

Two contradictory narratives dominate the imagery of today's diverse metropolises. On the one hand, multi-ethnic cities are perceived as loci of inequalities and anomy, whereby diversity is often considered a problem. On the other, they are imagined as bustling cosmopolitan centres, where diversity is seen as an advantage. The former view has long been a subject matter of the social sciences, reflected by studies of segregation or socio-spatial exclusion. The latter discourse is emerging as hegemonic, especially with respect to the world's major cities, where diversity's economic potential is celebrated in the context of neo-liberal urban restructuring. In both visions of the multicultural city, one encounters businesses and stores set up by people of migrant background. They are equally present in deprived neighbourhoods with concentrations of migrants and ethnic minorities, as well as in areas of exoticised consumption featuring 'ethnic' restaurants or street markets. In both, migrants become the subjects of governance and policy intervention, whether for managing difference or as tools of urban regeneration.

Yet, diversity increasingly inhabits ordinary spaces, where ethno-cultural difference is neither perceived as a problematic signifier of urban decay, nor as an emblematic form of successful cosmopolitanism. In these spaces, too, 'ethnic' businesses constitute visible landmarks of urban pluralism at the street level. As such, their presence is sometimes contested; more often, it is simply inscribed in the commercial indifference of the metropolis. They may serve migrant communities, but they are also frequented by people of diverse origins engaged in their daily shopping. They may function as meeting places for same-origin migrants, but they can also become spaces of intercultural encounter, exchange or friction.

The scholarship on migrant entrepreneurship has mostly emphasised its socioeconomic aspects; it has also placed rather excessive focus on the 'ethnic' dimension. Much of the literature derives from the North American and (to a lesser extent) north European experience, often limited to a few 'paradigmatic' cities and/or specific ethnic 'communities'. The usual topics largely relate to questions of socio-economic integration of immigrant and minority groups. The relationship between migrants' entrepreneurship, space and place, alongside the dynamics of urban change within a changing urban context, have been largely overlooked, neglected or ignored. Even more, there has been little engagement with wider debates on migration, diversity, and the city.

The aim of this themed special feature is to locate migrant entrepreneurialism at the intersection between trends of immigrants' settlement and incorporation on the one hand,

and processes of urban development and change on the other. Its rationale extends beyond socio-spatial aspects of migrant entrepreneurship, to the ways in which migrant economies are embedded in specific urban locales, and their role in everyday negotiations of urban symbiosis and the mundane politics of diversity. It brings together six papers reflecting on aspects of migrant economies in cities that have attracted little scholarly attention with respect to the themes in question. Athens, which was our point of departure, is the focus of two papers, followed by two contributions featuring European cities, Milan and Vienna, respectively, and two final papers examining Singapore in South East Asia and Bogotá in Latin America.

This brief introduction provides an overview of the theoretical grounding of the special feature and explains why this collection of papers constitutes a cohesive whole. It begins by situating our theme within broader debates on migration, diversity and the city. It proceeds by selectively highlighting key points, as well as omissions, in the literature on migrant entrepreneurship with respect to issues relating to space and place. The papers are then introduced.

Migration, diversity and the city

Although the implications of migration-related phenomena and processes are broader in both scale and scope—mediated through national frames and spanning transnational fields—their epicentre remains the city and urban space is the primary terrain upon which they take shape and unfold. The relationship between migration and the city may be understood as twofold (Portes 2000). On the one hand, the historical growth and expansion of cities, as well as their role and functions in processes of capitalist development, has conditioned the production and direction of migratory flows. On the other, migration and the migrants themselves (re)shape the city and urban life, and contribute to wider processes of urban change.

Migration re-draws anew the social map of the city (Lentin 2002), unsettling, temporarily at least, established norms, structures and relations of urban life. The specific ways it does so assume concrete forms in local urban settings. At the turn of the millennium, migration has emerged as one of the main forces transforming the socio-spatial articulations of many metropolitan areas, and the resulting diversity not only alters urban landscapes but also reshapes the content and context of social divisions and conflicts (Hall 2004). Glick Schiller and Çağlar (2009, 186–188) relate the dynamics of immigrants' settlement and incorporation to those of neo-liberal urban restructuring and the rescaling and repositioning of cities in a shifting global context. Accordingly, migrants are active agents of urban transformation beyond their rather obvious role as a flexible labour force enhancing the competitiveness of cities.

Social theory has long acknowledged the intersection of space and place with migration and difference in the city. Relevant research and theorisation has been dominated by the study of two sets of interrelated processes: the congregation of specific groups in specific urban areas and their segregation from other groups or majority populations (e.g. Knox and Pinch 2010). The processes of congregation and segregation do not simply produce distinct types of urban space—such as ghettos and ethnic enclaves, which are perhaps most common in the popular imagination—but further relate to wider social processes that can be schematically described by another mainstream binary, that of integration vs. exclusion.

The systematic study of congregation and segregation dates back to the Chicago School of urban sociology, which laid the foundations for studying migrants and minorities in cities, for example, by analysing the 'race-relations cycle', or inquiring about the origins of the ghetto (e.g. Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925; Park 1950; Wirth 1998). Their ecological approach introduced the notion of competition between social

and ethno-racial groups within the space of the city, describing a linear process of spatial assimilation through 'invasion' and 'succession'; the formation of ghettos and enclaves are necessary steps in this process, which will eventually give way to spatial dispersal. Burgess' (1925, 55) concentric zone model of 1920s Chicago remains classic for placing immigrant 'colonies' such as Chinatown or Little Sicily, the Jewish ghetto or the Black Belt, understood as 'natural areas', on the map of the city, which was seen as a 'mosaic of social worlds'.

The legacy of the Chicago School established an understanding of segregation in which spatial (residential) distance between population subgroups was equated with social distance, failing to distinguish between ghettos and enclaves, both of which carried negative connotations (Peach 2005). Contemporary scholarship provides more nuanced understandings of spatial concentrations of specific groups, considering class and power relations as well as whether segregation is voluntary or imposed, socially acceptable or undesirable (Marcuse 2005, 16–18). Whilst the ghetto implies the forced spatial separation of a marginalised group, the enclave refers to the congregation of an ethnically homogeneous yet socially stratified population.

The revised interest in segregation since the 1980s, triggered by urban riots in the USA or the crisis of working-class districts in deindustrialising European cities, emphasised the ways in which social stratification and inequalities are inscribed upon the space of the city, in relation to processes of social and spatial mobility (Maloutas 2004). Since then, segregation has been interpreted in the context of urban economic restructuring and neo-liberalisation—either as a spatial expression of intensifying social polarisation, such as in global cities (Sassen 1991), or as a form of exclusion and marginalisation of the underclass (Massey and Denton 1993; Wilson 1997; Wacquant 2008). Moreover, processes of gentrification whereby middle-class strata repopulate erstwhile downgraded inner-city neighbourhoods, tend to displace

earlier inhabitants—often migrants or ethnic minorities (Smith 1996)—altering previously established patterns of segregation and modes of migrants' settlement. Nevertheless, segregation as such does not necessarily reflect migrants' pathways to incorporation (Musterd 2003).

If early 20th-century Chicago was a source of knowledge that profoundly influenced our understanding of the modern city, late 20th-century Los Angeles (LA) became the epicentre of new conceptualisations. Moving away from Chicago sociologists' emphasis on cohesion and functionality and inspired by Durkheim and Spencer, the so-called LA school blends Marxist and post-structuralist perspectives in highlighting the contradictions, conflicts, open character and constant flux of cities under late capitalism (Dear 2002). The study of power relations comes to the fore at a time of changing forms of public intervention and the withdrawal of the state's regulatory role, as does the articulation of politics and urban social movements with difference and diversity. The dynamics of migrant settlement and the transformations in the social geography of cities are linked to processes of urban restructuring (Waldinger and Bozorgmehr 1996; Davis 2000; Li 2009), the unequal patterns of which upset established relations between the centre and the suburbs (Soja 2000) and give birth to a fragmented postmodern urban landscape characterised by diversity, mixture and hybridism.

This is not to say that local concentrations of specific groups in concrete urban locales no longer exist, but rather that homogeneous and linear patterns of settlement for people of common origins making up compact 'ethnic' areas are less and less common. Clear-cut lines of distinction between static and reified notions of ethnicity, or bounded ethno-territorial categories like the enclave are not necessarily reflected in the shifting socio-spatial reality of an increasing number of cities. Such a reality goes of course beyond the US context, as recent accounts on 'superdiversity' in European cities imply (Vertovec 2007). Moreover, immigrants' contribution to the

production of urban space extends beyond their residential and employment trajectories, and the ways these depend upon and shape urban socio-economic structures or social geographies. It also relates to the modes in which individual or collective practices, whether informal (e.g. Ehrkamp 2005; Kalantides and Vaiou 2012) or organised (e.g. Koopmans 2004; Beja Horta 2006), are inscribed in everyday local contexts, visibly transforming urban space, re-defining place and the ways of living in it, and asserting claims of belonging and participation in urban life. It may be further explored in the habitual encounters of urban coexistence in ordinary spaces, where diversity is lived on the ground (Amin 2002; Wise and Velayutham 2009).

Migrant economies cut across these lines. Yet, they are surprisingly absent from recent collective volumes of migration, diversity and the city (Erdentug and Colombijn 2002; Martiniello and Piquard 2002; Hutchison and Krase 2007). The study of migrant entrepreneurship provides a unique field allowing us to reflect on difference, space and place in the contemporary diverse metropolis.

Migrant economies and urban space

There is a vast literature on ethnic entrepreneurship, spanning disciplines, theories and methodological approaches. Key analytical frameworks include Bonacich's (1973) theory of 'middleman minorities', inspired by the Weberian tradition, which explained how groups of sojourners may thrive on the basis of hard work and community bonds. Her account influenced the 'ethnic economies' approach (Light and Gold 2000), which addressed an ethnic or migrant group's self-employed, employers and co-ethnic employees. These would certainly include 'ethnic economic enclaves'; a relevant hypothesis (e.g. Wilson and Portes 1980) drew on dual labour market theory to assess how co-ethnic social structures and business location may offer alternative pathways of migrants' labour market insertion and social mobility.

On the other hand, Waldinger et al. (1990) developed an 'interactive model' to analyse the entrepreneurial strategies of people of common ethnic background or migration experiences at the intersections of group characteristics and opportunity structures. Critically assessing this model, the 'mixed embeddedness' perspective accounts for both migrants' 'concrete embeddedness in social networks' and 'their more abstract embeddedness in the socio-economic and politico-institutional environment' of the host country (Kloosterman and Rath 2001, 190).

Different perspectives are classified according to their emphasis on individual, cultural or structural factors (Barrett, Jones, and McEvoy 1996; Zhou 2004; Pécoud 2012). Key topics include the determinants of migrants' self-employment, entrepreneurial strategies, business characteristics and activities, economic performance and potential for 'success', financial or other resources including 'ethnic' networks and social capital, the cultural traits of groups seemingly conducive to entrepreneurial activity, etc. These are issues that reflect concerns over migrants' economic integration and social mobility, often in comparison with other groups, mainstream businesses or native populations. However, questions of space and place have remained outside the focus of scholarly interest. We may identify two main approaches that emphasize spatial aspects: the ethnic economic enclave hypothesis associated with the work of A. Portes and the spatial dimensions of opportunity structures in Waldinger's model.

The latter has explored the relationship between the businesses owned by members of an ethnic group with the residential patterns of this group, examining business motives and growth strategies in four stages (Waldinger, McEvoy, and Aldrich 1990). Accordingly to this model, (a) areas with high concentrations of same-group migrants provide opportunities for first-entry 'protected' markets, (b) providing the ground on which more specialised ethnic niche markets may emerge; (c) middlemen markets are

formed as ethnic enterprises move beyond the ethnic community and address a wider public, while (d) entering the mainstream economy leads to economic assimilation. Jones, Barrett, and McEvoy (2000) suggested instead that there is a geographical market hierarchy, in which business growth strategies depend more on the spatial reach and growth potential of activities, rather than the ethnic character of the market. Engelen (2001) further criticised Waldinger's model for its teleological view of economic assimilation as an end-stage and indicator of business success, as well as for its spatiality based solely on the criterion of ethnic concentration in relation to linear succession stages of business strategies. In this vein, researchers of 'mixed embeddedness' proposed an analysis of opportunity structures at three spatial levels: national, urban/regional, local/neighbourhood (Kloosterman and Rath 2001).

Ethnic economic enclaves were identified as a distinct form of migrants' economic adaptation, operating between primary and secondary sectors yet reproducing key features of the mainstream economy (Wilson and Portes 1980). The assertion that migrants in the enclave enjoy higher earnings, as compared to co-ethnics working in the mainstream economy, challenged assimilationist views on migrants' incorporation. This gave way to a fierce debate, with sceptics disputing the argument, questioning ethnic solidarity or even rejecting the usefulness of the concept (e.g. Kwong 1997; Portes and Jensen 1992; Sanders and Nee 1992; Waldinger 1993; Light et al. 1994). A point of confusion concerned the definition of the enclave as either an ethnic group's area of residential clustering or as an area in which its businesses are concentrated. The latter implied the importance of location in the enclave's organisational structures, through which ethnic businesses are linked both vertically and horizontally, an issue substantially ignored by critics. This was taken further by Werbner (2001), who suggested that since ethnic economic enclaves resemble industrial clusters, spatial networking among businesses is more relevant than their clustering. Moreover, different patterns of ethnic business location produce distinct types of neighbourhoods, depending on their degree of concentration and the local business environment (Fong et al. 2008).

To our knowledge, the only attempt at a more integrative spatial perspective has been the volume by Kaplan and Li (2006), exploring how geography shapes but is also shaped by ethnic economies, and suggesting that space may be a resource or a form of capital. They investigate the relationship between ethnic economies and other spatial phenomena, including segregation and ethnic business networks; their impact on inner-city or suburban landscapes; or their role in the revitalisation of deprived inner-city districts, sometimes becoming sites of tourist attraction. This last topic has emerged as an area of research in the context of neo-liberal urban restructuring, the rise of the entrepreneurial city, gentrification and the commodification of place. Not only may migrant entrepreneurship contribute to the revitalisation of deprived neighbourhoods (Lyon, Sepulveda, and Syrett 2007), but it has been also promoted as a response to ethnic riots and a policy tool to curb unemployment through labour market deregulation (Barrett, Jones, and McEvoy 1996; Keith 2005). More recently, the revalorisation of space in ethnically identifiable neighbourhoods (e.g. Chinatowns, Little Italies, etc.) has been observed as a trend, with many such areas emerging as places for tourism, leisure and consumption (Shaw, Bagwell, and Karnowska 2004; Rath 2007). Ethnic businesses in these areas are at the epicentre of such transformations, often becoming vehicles of urban redevelopment (Taylor 2000) for investors and/or local authorities who promote 'ethnic-packaged' gentrification (Hackworth and Rekers 2005) or designate 'ethnic' precincts (Collins and Kunz 2009), capitalising on particular images of 'ethnicity' that are commodified and fixed in space (Lin 2011; Aytar and Rath 2012; Fincher et al. 2014, 28–35). In this way, ethnic entrepreneurship has come to the fore in recent debates on diversity's potential for

the economic performance of cities (e.g. Nathan and Lee 2013).

Spatial issues are thus emphasised in so far they relate to socio-economic dimensions of migrant entrepreneurship. To be fair, non-economic aspects have also been addressed, for example, regarding the role of ethnic businesses in providing points of reference to migrant communities, or spaces of socialisation and encounter. Such issues, though, have remained largely in the background, limited to bounded understandings of ethnicity and place. These latter may be approached from a critical perspective as open and relational categories. With respect to the former, the 'ethnic' character of migrant-origin businesses denotes difference and distance from the mainstream, while ignoring internal differences; not only is it the case that some 'immigrant entrepreneurs who are labelled ethnic are in reality hyphenated and mixed' but also 'natives' may be active in ethnic markets or develop practices usually attributed to migrants (Pieterse 2003, 34, 36; also Pécoud 2012). Hence, we refer to 'migrant' economies, instead of 'ethnic' ones. With respect to the latter, place is understood as a socially constructed and meaningfully articulated space (Lefebvre 1996). Places may be seen

> 'as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself'. (Massey 1994, 154–155)

Migrant economies have rarely been acknowledged as examples of how migrants' pathways of incorporation transform cities and urban localities. Alongside other local, national and transnational processes affecting both migrants' settlement and urban change, migrant economies intersect with, and alter, existing class structures and power relations. They emerge, directly or indirectly, at the epicentre of conflicts over space, of the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, or of wider negotiations of migration, difference

and diversity in the city, affecting everyday modalities of coexistence and the patterns of interaction between different people, groups and actors. Glick Schiller and Çaĝlar (2013) have proposed studying migrants' entrepreneurship as a mode of urban emplacement, combining an account of everyday practice with a structural locational perspective. Recent work by Hall exploring how migrants' street-level entrepreneurship in ordinary spaces (re)produces an everyday urbanity in which they are active citizens (Hall and Datta 2010, 73–74), and seeking to understand the intersections of power, practice and place in the spaces of city, street and shop (Hall 2013), is very much in this direction. These insights have inspired the ideas surrounding this themed special feature. The six papers that follow focus on the socio-spatial dimensions of immigrants' emplacement, the politics of diversity and difference, and urban change in different cities, through the looking glass of migrants' entrepreneurial endeavours.

The themed special feature

Most papers making up this special feature were first presented at a thematic panel entitled 'Diversity, Ethnic Economies and Urban Space', convened during the Conference 'Changing Cities: Spatial, Morphological, Formal, and Socio-economic Dimensions' (Skiathos island, Greece, 18–21 June 2013). Although we were originally concerned with aspects of migrant economies and urban space in Athens, the conference session inspired us to focus on less studied, non-'exemplary' cases of cities in Europe and elsewhere. Despite the differences in their histories, scale, characteristics, urban restructuring processes, or patterns and dynamics of migration and migrants' settlement, the six case studies offer an opportunity to reflect on the issues touched upon in this introduction, beyond the specific circumstances of particular economic, social and political conjunctures.

Athens remains the focus of the first two papers, which are largely complementary even if differing substantially in their approach and interpretative angles. Hatziprokopiou and Frangopoulos explore the spatial contours of migrants' independent economic activity at times of recession, austerity and racist mobilisation. They investigate the multiple embeddedness of migrant economies in three neighbourhoods, and their role in migrants' everyday experiences of the urban. Two of these sites are then revisited by Balampanidis and Polyzos, who situate them in both time and space by studying their historically framed socio-spatial structures and the patterns of migrants' residential and entrepreneurial settlement at present. Both papers share a comparative account of migrants and natives, focus on the street level and take the neighbourhood as a unit of analysis. Similar methodological considerations apply to Kohlbacher and Reeger's paper, which examines migrant economies in Vienna. They combine a neighbourhood-based analysis with a focus on the business activities of entrepreneurs originating from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia. They show how the local context impacts on the branch structure of migrant businesses, producing significant local variations.

While the second contribution on Athens aims to advance an analytical framework of urban interethnic coexistence by highlighting the complex patterns of migrants' settlement, the first one juxtaposes migrants' emplacement through entrepreneurship and the politics of migration, diversity and difference in the crisis-ridden city. The politics of contention over urban space in relation to its appropriation through immigrants' business activities are addressed more directly in Montagna's paper on Milan's Chinatown. Critically examining the April 2007 riots in the area and critically assessing their aftermath, he investigates conflicting interests in shaping urban transformations. While local authorities, businessmen, and residents view Chinatown as a 'problem', claiming back its space albeit for different reasons, Chinese retailers and workers stake their own claims to use it for themselves and for their businesses.

The question of politics also informs the two contributions outside Europe. The role of national and urban policies in shaping migrants' emplacement practices provides the necessary background in Ostertag's paper on Singapore. Building on a case study of rioting among Bangladeshi migrants in Little India, she demonstrates how processes of transient migrants' settlement instigate multiple urban transformations, producing unique localities that she calls 'transitory community hubs'. In these areas, 'ethnic' businesses serving transient migrants play a decisive part; yet these are not businesses owned/run by the migrants themselves, but by Singapore residents, some with a migration background. Finally, Bula's paper on Bogotá examines the modes of urban insertion of internal Afro-Colombian migrants, within a context of unacknowledged discrimination and racism. He approaches migrants' entrepreneurial endeavours as resilience practices of survival in the big city. Yet he locates more potential in collective action as an additional corridor of social incorporation, making Afro-Colombians visible in a predominantly mestizo and white society.

This themed special feature approaces both 'immigrants' and 'entrepreneurship' are approached through rather loose and broad definitions. Despite the different case studies, methodologies and perspectives, all papers are sensitive to the ways through which inequalities and power relations are manifested in urban space. In different ways, all contributions attempt to move beyond conventional conceptual tools of either ethnicity or place. Along these lines, the papers in this themed special feature are essentially about the intersections between migrant emplacement and urban transformations.

Disclosure statement

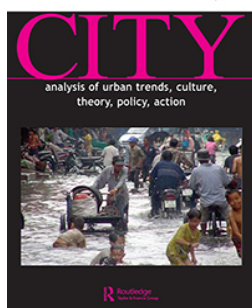No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

Amin, A. 2002. "Ethnicity and the Multicultural City: Living with Diversity." *Environment and Planning A* 34: 959–980.

Aytar, V., and J. Rath, eds. 2012. *Selling Ethnic Neighborhoods: The Rise of Neighborhoods as Places of Leisure and Consumption*. New York: Routledge.

Barrett, A. G., T. P. Jones, and D. McEvoy. 1996. "Ethnic Minority Business: Theoretical Discourse in Britain and North America." *Urban Studies* 33 (4–5): 783–809.

Beja Horta, A. P. 2006. "Places of Resistance: Power, Spatial Discourses and Migrant Grassroots Organizing in the Periphery of Lisbon." *City* 10 (3): 269–285.

Bonacich, E. 1973. "A Theory of Middleman Minorities." *American Sociological Review* 38: 583–594.

Burgess, E. W. 1925. "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project." In *The City*, edited by R. Park, E. W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie, 47–62. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Collins, J., and P. Kunz. 2009. "Ethnicity and Public Space in the City: Ethnic Precincts in Sydney." *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies* 1 (1): 39–70.

Davis, M. 2000. *Magical Urbanism: Latinos Reinvent the US City*. London: Verso.

Dear, M., ed. 2002. *From Chicago to LA: Making Sense of Urban Theory*. London: Sage.

Ehrkamp, P. 2005. "Placing Identities: Transnational Practices and Local Attachments of Turkish Immigrants in Germany." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31 (2): 345–364.

Engelen, E. 2001. "Breaking in and Breaking out: A Weberian Approach to Entrepreneurial Opportunities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27 (2): 203–223.

Erdentug, A., and F. Colombijn. 2002. *Urban Ethnic Encounters: The Spatial Consequences*. London: Routledge, London.

Fincher, R., K. Iveson, H. Leitner, and V. Preston. 2014. "Planning in the Multicultural City: Celebrating Diversity or Reinforcing Difference?" *Progress in Planning* 92: 1–55.

Fong, E., E. E. Anderson, W. Chen, and Ch. Luk. 2008. "The Logic of Ethnic Business Location in Multiethnic Cities." *Urban Affairs Review* 43 (4): 497–519.

Glick Schiller, N., and A. Çağlar. 2009. "Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32 (2): 177–202.

Glick Schiller, N., and A. Çağlar. 2013. "Locating Migrant Pathways of Economic Emplacement: Thinking Beyond the Ethnic Lens." *Ethnicities* 13 (4): 494–514.

Hackworth, J., and J. Rekers. 2005. "Ethnic Packaging and Gentrification: The Case of Four Neighborhoods in Toronto." *Urban Affairs Review* 41 (2): 211–236.

Hall, S. 2004. "Divided City: The Crisis of London." Open Democracy, 28 October 2004. http://www.opendemocracy.net/arts-multiculturalism/article_2191.jsp.

Hall, S. M. 2013. "Super-diverse Street: A 'Trans-Ethnography' Across Migrant Localities." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 38 (1): 22–37.

Hall, Suzanne, and Ayonna Datta. 2010. "The Translocal Street: Shop Signs and Local Multi-Culture Along the Walworth Road, South London." *City, Culture and Society* 1: 69–77.

Hutchison, R., and J. Krase, eds. 2007. *Ethnic Landscapes in an Urban World*. Oxford: Elsevier.

Jones, T., G. Barrett, and D. McEvoy. 2000. "Market Potential as a Decisive Influence on the Performance of Ethnic Minority Business." In *Immigrant Businesses. The Economic, Political and Social Environment*, edited by J. Rath, 37–53. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Kalantides, A., and D. Vaiou. 2012. "'Ethnic' Neighbourhoods: Practices of Belonging and Claims to the City." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 19 (3): 254–266.

Kaplan, D. H., and W. Li, eds. 2006. *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*. Lanham, MD: Rownan and Littlefield Publishers.

Keith, M. 2005. *After the Cosmopolitan? Multicultural Cities and the Future of Racism*. London: Routledge.

Kloosterman, R., and J. Rath. 2001. "Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Advanced Economies: Mixed Embeddedness Further Explored." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27: 189–201.

Knox, P. L., and S. Pinch. 2010. "Ch. 8: Segregation and Congregation." In *Urban Social Geography: An Introduction*, 6th ed., 165–186. Harlow: Pearson.

Koopmans, R. 2004. "Migrant Mobilisation and Political Opportunities: Variation among German Cities and a Comparison with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30 (3): 449–470.

Kwong, P. 1997. "Manufacturing Ethnicity." *Critique of Anthropology* 17 (2): 365–387.

Lefebvre, H. 1996. "Writings on Cities." Translated and edited by E. Kofman and Lebas. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Lentin, R. 2002. "At the Heart of the Hibernian Post-Metropolis: Spatial Narratives of Ethnic Minorities and Diasporic Communities in a Changing City." *City* 6 (2): 229–249.

Li, W. 2009. *Ethnoburb: The New Ethnic Community in North America*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Light, I., and S. Gold. 2000. *Ethnic Economies*. New York: Academic Press.

Light, I., G. Sabagh, M. Bozorgmehr, and C. Der Martirosian. 1994. "Beyond the Ethnic Enclave Economy." *Social Problems* 41 (1): 65–80.

Lin, J. 2011. *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life, by Jan Lin*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Lyon, F., L. Sepulveda, and S. Syrett. 2007. "Enterprising Refugees: Contributions and Challenges in Deprived Urban Areas." *Local Economy* 22 (4): 362–375.

Maloutas, Th. 2004. "Editorial: Urban Segregation and the European Context." *The Greek Review of Social Research* 113: 3–24.

Marcuse, P. 2005. "Enclaves yes, Ghettoes, no: Segregation and the State." In *Desegregating the City: Ghettos, Enclaves, and Inequality*, edited by D. P. Varady, 15–30. New York: State University of New York Press.

Martiniello, M., and B. Piquard, eds. 2002. *Diversity and the City*. Bilbao: University of Deusto.

Massey, D. 1994. *Space, Place and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Massey, D., and N. Denton. 1993. *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Musterd, S. 2003. "Segregation and Integration: A Contested Relationship." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 29 (4): 623–641.

Nathan, M., and N. Lee. 2013. "Cultural Diversity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship: Firm-level Evidence from London." *Economic Geography* 89 (4): 369–394.

Park, R. E. 1950. *Race and Culture*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Park, R. E., E. W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie, eds. 1925. *The City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Peach, C. 2005. "The Ghetto and the Ethnic Enclave." In *Desegregating the City: Ghettos, Enclaves, and Inequality*, edited by D. P. Varady, 31–48. New York: State University of New York Press.

Pécoud, x. 2012. "Immigration, entreprenariat et ethnicité." *Métropoles* (online) 11, http://metropoles.revues.org/4560.

Pieterse, J. N. 2003. "Social Capital and Migration: Beyond Ethnic Economies." *Ethnicities* 3 (1): 29–58.

Portes, A. 2000. "Immigration and the Metropolis: Reflections on Urban History." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 1 (2): 153–175.

Portes, A., and L. Jensen. 1992. "Reply: Disproving the Enclave Hypothesis." *American Sociological Review* 57: 418–420.

Rath, J., ed. 2007. *Tourism, Ethnic Diversity and the City*. London: Routledge.

Sanders, J. M., and V. Nee. 1992. "Comments: Problems in Resolving the Enclave Economy Debate." *American Sociological Review* 57: 415–418.

Sassen, S. 1991. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Shaw, S., S. Bagwell, and J. Karnowska. 2004. "Ethnoscapes as Spectacle: Reimaging Multicultural Districts as new Destinations for Leisure and Tourism Consumption." *Urban Studies* 41 (10): 1983–2000.

Smith, N. 1996. *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. London: Routledge.

Soja, E. 2000. *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Taylor, J. 2000. "European Ethnoscapes and Urban Redevelopment: The Return of Little Italy in 21st Century Manchester." *City* 4 (1): 27–42.

Vertovec, S. 2007. "Super-diversity and its Implications." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 3 (6): 1024–1054.

Wacquant, L. 2008. *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Waldinger, R. 1993. "The Ethnic Enclave Debate Revisited." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 17: 444–452.

Waldinger, R., R. Aldrich, R. Ward, and Associates. 1990. *Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Waldinger, R., and M. Bozorgmehr. 1996. *Ethnic Los Angeles*. New York: Russell Sage.

Waldinger, R., D. McEvoy, and R. Aldrich. 1990. "Spatial Dimensions of Opportunity Structures." In *Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*, edited by R. Waldinger, R. Aldrich, R. Ward, and Associates, 106–130. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Werbner, P. 2001. "Metaphors of Spatiality in the Plural City: A Critique of the Ethnic Enclave Economy Debate." *Sociology* 35 (3): 671–693.

Wilson, W. J. 1997. *When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor*. New York: Vintage Books.

Wilson, K., and A. Portes. 1980. "Immigrant Enclaves: An Analysis of the Labor Market Experiences of Cubans in Miami." *American Journal of Sociology* 86: 295–319.

Wirth, L. 1928/1998. *The Ghetto*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Wise, A., and S. Velayutham. 2009. *Everyday Multiculturalism*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Zhou, M. 2004. "Revisiting Ethnic Entrepreneurship: Convergencies, Controversies and Conceptual Advancements." *International Migration Review* 38 (3): 1040–1074.

Panos Hatziprokopiou is based at the Department of Spatial Planning and Development, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Email: pmchatzi@plandevel.auth.gr

Yannis Frangopoulos is based at the Department of Spatial Planning and Development, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Email: yfrago@plandevel.auth.gr

Nicola Montagna is based at the Department of Criminology and Sociology, School of Law, Middlesex University. Email: nicola6@mdx.ac.uk

Migrant economies and everyday spaces in Athens in times of crisis

Panos Hatziprokopiou & Yannis Frangopoulos

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Migrant economies and everyday spaces in Athens in times of crisis

Panos Hatziprokopiou and Yannis Frangopoulos

Alongside the depressing image of closed shops as visible indicators of the crisis, migrant businesses can be found in many parts of Athens and often play a vital role in local neighbourhood markets. This paper explores the socio-spatial dimensions of Athens' emerging migrant economies. Drawing from a recent research project combining survey and ethnographic methods on three Athenian neighbourhoods, the paper examines migrant entrepreneurship at the local level and highlights the relevance of place, politics and everyday life. We argue that the spread of immigrant entrepreneurial activity in Athens not only forms an existing part of the urban landscape, but has also become an organic part of the everyday experience of life in the city.

Key words: migrant economies, Athens, urban space, Greek crisis, everydayness

Introduction

A stroll in downtown Athens these days reveals the Greek capital's many and contrasting faces. The passer-by may see the big brand stores, government buildings or frequent protests outside Parliament in Constitution Square, and feel Plaka's old Athenian charm and the tourist buzz or ancient monuments of Monastiraki and Thision. (S)he may then walk through the streets around Omonoia Square, where the cement-dominated landscape bears visible signs of urban decay, yet is at the same time bustling with commercial activity and people during the daytime, including a multiplicity of 'ethnic' stores and faces. This part of the city centre epitomises the *locus* of migrant entrepreneurial ventures in Greece as a whole. Alongside Chinese clothing stores, often clustered in

specific areas of major cities, as well as African or Asian street-peddlers, highly mobile and regularly chased by the police, this is the most obvious example of what migrant entrepreneurship looks like in Greece.

The area's centrality makes it unique in many ways. Located right at the city's historic core, this is a central commercial and community hub for migrants of diverse origins and backgrounds, characterised by the 'temporariness and transitional character of the migrant experience' (Noussia and Lyons 2009, 619). It has occasionally attracted positive media attention, for example, by being portrayed as 'Athens' new colourful market' (Onisenko 2008). More often, however, especially since the recent economic crisis, it is associated in public and political discourses with degradation, devaluation, informality and criminality—all linked to immigrants' presence

and activities—and is often described as a 'ghetto' (Rerres 2011). Notwithstanding the criticism migrants' entrepreneurial activities in this area have largely gone unnoticed and have scarcely entered into public discourses.

The silent expansion of migrants' self-employment and entrepreneurship over the past two decades or so has been related in part to the dynamics of immigrant settlement (Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou 2010). Official data reveal both absolute and proportional increases of migrant businesses in Athens even during the recession (Hatziprokopiou and Frangopoulos 2013, 179–180). Alongside the depressing image of closed shops as visible landmarks of the crisis at the street level, stores owned by and/or serving migrants may be encountered in many parts of the city, visibly inscribing 'difference' within specific districts or streets in the urban landscape.

This paper offers an exploratory account of the spatial dimensions of migrant entrepreneurship in Athens and the relevance of place and everyday life. Reprising Glick Schiller and Çağlar's (2009) call for an emphasis on locality, and adhering to Hall and Data's (2010) approach to migrants' street-level entrepreneurship as everyday socio-economic practices in 'ordinary' spaces, we focus on neighbourhoods as open socio-spatial categories (e.g. Massey 2005), instead of looking at specific ethnically defined migrant groups or sectors of activity. More specifically, the paper examines the embeddedness of migrants' self-employment in the everyday local settings of specific urban locales and its relevance for local residents, whether migrants or 'natives'.

The paper begins with a briefing of the context in which we locate migrant entrepreneurship in Athens, discussing elements of continuity and change in the interlinkages between migration, small businesses and urban space in times of crisis, economic or otherwise. We then examine the intersections between business activity, locality and clientele in ventures owned by both natives and migrants in order to understand

petit-entrepreneurship comparatively as a part of a wider set of social relations. We will do so by building on a micro-census of street-level shops and businesses in three central Athenian neighbourhoods with differing characteristics. Next, drawing from ethnographic visits and a set of in-depth interviews with migrant entrepreneurs in one of the three areas, we ground immigrants' economic practices in their everyday experiences and situate them within the broader politics of migration and diversity in times of crisis.[1]

Migration, small businesses and the urban space: it all comes together in Athens

The recession has radically transformed the circumstances and context in which the entrepreneurial activities of migrants have taken shape during the past two decades, as well as the public debates surrounding them Greece's financial crisis since 2009, and the austerity policies imposed under the country's joint supervision by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Union (EU) and the European Central Bank, have impacted on the market environment and institutional framework in ways that affect both immigrants and natives, albeit in differing ways. Yet one may talk of three parallel 'crises' that predated the current one, even though these now seem to intermingle with its overwhelming dynamics.

The first of these crises is Greece's 'immigration crisis', which has influenced the ways in which migrants' settlement have been managed by official State policies since the early 1990s. Even if the mass influx of migrants predominantly from Balkan countries (Albania in particular) found the State totally unprepared, its subsequent responses combining policing and successive regularisations led to serious problems in balancing migrants' settlement and social cohesion, leaving a number of issues at stake. Labour market demand and the sacrifices and adaptability on the part of the migrants

themselves, alongside steps towards the rationalisation of immigration policy and the introduction of integration measures, led to a short-lived period of 'normalisation' during the first half of the 2000s (Hatziprokopiou 2006). However, this was overturned amidst developments in the last few years, to which the State was unprepared or unwilling to effectively respond,[2] leading to confusion between issues concerning established migrants or Greek-born children of those of newcomers, who have, since 2009, concentrated in Athens in overwhelming proportions at a time when unemployment has grown dramatically.

The second is the crisis of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)—the 'backbone' of the Greek productive structure in post-war decades and main employer of migrant labour—and its manifestations in the changing Athenian context. The typical family business in downtown Athens has been under multiple pressures related to a range of socio-economic and spatial changes which have long been in place, resulting in the loss of its earlier position as a privileged interlocutor vis-à-vis the State (Tsigganou 2009). Among these, there has been a reconfiguration of the relationship between the local and the supra-local in respect to competition and commerce in the city, particularly regarding the movement of a great deal of commercial activity from the centre to the suburbs and from small-scale activities to large chains, superstores and malls (Tsigganou 2009; Hadjimichalis 2011; Skordili 2013). Even on the eve of the crisis, Greek SMEs in central Athens appeared to one-sidedly perceive the alleged inaction of the State as deliberately facilitating an organised plan of downgrading the city centre by concentrating immigrants and their economic activities, who are seen both as competitors and a threat contributing to rising criminality and insecurity in the area (Tsigganou 2009).

Thirdly, and in relation to the above, we refer to Athens' 'urban crisis' with respect to processes of urban development, in particular regarding the relationship between social mobility and shifting residential geographies. The suburbanisation of the capital's population over the past three decades, especially among the middle and upper-middle strata, has contributed to the devaluation of housing in parts of central Athens, and to a housing gap that has been subsequently filled by immigrants and their families (Maloutas 2004; Kandylis and Kavoulakos 2011; Kandylis, Maloutas, and Sayas 2012). As a result, the 'traditional' social mix of Athens' residential space in post-war times, characterised by low levels of segregation and high rates of home ownership, has been replaced by a socio-ethnic mix marked by severe inequalities. Far from emerging 'ghettos', however, and despite relative concentrations of specific groups in specific districts, in the areas most affected by such population shifts no single group dominates nor does the migrant presence overall constitutes a residential majority (Kandylis, Maloutas, and Sayas 2012). Still, Athens' new residential socio-economic structures and inequality patterns seem to feed conflict and competition over the space of the city, which in the last few years has involved openly racist mobilisation against immigrants (Kandylis and Kavoulakos 2011).

Among other things, racism and xenophobia reflect both the retreat of the State and the contours of urban change in central Athens. Yet they have been nurtured within the context and conjuncture of the crisis, in which an openly racist discourse has come to dominate the official speech of politicians, government officials or the media. This discourse has located migrants' self-employment exclusively in the spread of 'informal (street) trade' (*paremborio*) and its allegedly negative economic impact. Such discourses may also partly relate to the very fact that the entrepreneurial activities of migrants appear to reproduce economic practices that are widespread among natives (Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou 2010). In general, the establishment of immigrant ethnic communities has unsurprisingly generated a demand for special products or services,

thus forming both a social milieu and multiple market niches for the emergence of migrant economies (Mavrommatis 2008). Of course, not every type of activity, neighbourhood, or migrant community in Athens would strictly fit this pattern.

For example, self-employment among Albanian immigrants often does not display any 'ethnic' characteristics, which reflects the wider residential dispersal and assimilation of the Albanian population across the city (Mavrommatis 2008). On the other hand, the clustering of Chinese-owned stores in the gentrifying area of Metaxourgeio is the product of a business-oriented global migration generating multiple local dynamics; a peculiar ethnic 'enclave' has been formed and centred around Chinese commercial activities in clothing wholesale and retail targeting a broader clientele, while various stores meet the specialised demands of a lively local Chinese community and various stores covering its specialised demand (Polyzos 2014). By contrast, in the neighbourhood of Kypseli which has been greatly affected by suburbanisation and immigrant settlement and characterised by social and ethnic mix, one may encounter female African hairdressers partly catering to Greeks fascinated with 'ethnic' hairstyles (Petronoti 2010). Lastly, part of downtown Athens (around Omonoia Square) forms an extremely diverse multi-ethnic commercial space, where a wide range of ethnic ventures owned by and/or serving migrants of various origins coexist next to long-established Greek-owned stores, and many have a similarly supra-local character attracting customers from across the city (Mavrommatis 2008; Noussia and Lyons 2009; Van Heelsum 2010).

Immigrants' entrepreneurial activities and the importance of place

Our micro-census gathered information about business history, activities, clientele, strategies, problems and prospects among 128 ventures run by migrants and natives, almost equally spread across three neighbourhoods: Kypseli, Ambelokipoi and Metaxourgeio. The selection of these localities was not accidental. Firstly, we intended to avoid districts that have recently appeared in the public discourse as 'problematic', such as downtown Athens (Omonoia Square) and the area around Attica Square and St Panteleimon, not only because we could have encountered problems in accessing immigrant entrepreneurs, but also based on our conceptual focus on the everyday. Secondly, we intended to include central Athenian neighbourhoods with different characteristics: *Ambelokipoi* is a socially mixed area on the north-east fringe of Athens' centre where migrant presence is not dominant; *Kypseli* is a multi-ethnic, densely populated neighbourhood north of downtown Athens; and *Metaxourgeio* is a rather 'downgraded' working-class district to the west of Omonoia Square, with significant migrant presence, undergoing gentrification in recent years.[3]

The sample was purpose-built, as we surveyed specific streets selected on the basis of some visible concentration of immigrant shops and businesses; yet we also randomly surveyed *all* local shops and businesses door-to-door, achieving an average response rate between 50 and 70% among open and operating ventures. With the exception of Chinese businessmen in Metaxourgeio (with language barriers), migrants were generally more willing to participate. In this section, we focus on the socio-spatial dimensions of the study and the relevance of place with respect to issues such as venue location, activities and clientele.

The findings reveal similarities as well as differences among ventures owned by immigrants and native Greeks, as well as variations between neighbourhoods. Key demographics of respondents and characteristics of their businesses are presented in Table 1. Men are overrepresented in both groups, while most owners—especially migrants—have children, which reflects the family character of the businesses, both as means to generate an

income for the family and as collective ventures involving the work of family members. Confirming official statistics for the general population, immigrant respondents are on average younger, reflecting both the general age structures of migrants and natives, and the more established patterns of Greek small businesses in Athens. Natives were either born in Athens (53.8%) or moved to the city decades ago, whilst nearly two-thirds of immigrants had arrived in Greece during the 1990s and another 17.5% in the 2000s. Immigrants are better educated (about one-third are university graduates), yet among those stating their qualifications native Greeks are more often involved in activities related to their education, while migrants seem to build on experience acquired through paid work or running a similar business in the past. Migrant respondents originate from 20 countries, yet nearly half come from Egypt, Albania and Pakistan, and most enjoy some kind of long-term or permanent residence. This reveals the importance of migratory status in taking the step to set up a business (Hatziprokopiou and Frangopoulos 2013).

Most ventures are registered as single-owner enterprises. Some 15% of migrants and 8% of natives had a partner 'informally', that is, someone with whom they share responsibilities, money and work, but who does not appear in any official form. In most cases, this informal partner is a close relative. Most businesses, especially native-owned ones, do not formally employ personnel, and when they do they have just one registered employee; yet, a significant number in both groups employ additional people on an informal or casual basis, usually a family member in the case of native Greeks, or a co-ethnic in the case of migrants. Immigrants' ventures have been in business for about 6 years on average, substantially lower than Greek-owned businesses, which have an average life of 14.6 years. In fact, the vast majority of migrant businesses were begun after 2000 and one out of four after 2010, while nearly half of Greek businesses were set up before 2000 and just 12.7% after 2009. Hence, a substantial share of Greek ventures are 'ageing' together with their ageing owners, while immigrant entrepreneurs are relatively younger with few years in business, reflecting both the more established but declining presence of native-owned small businesses in central Athens, and the recent move of immigrants towards petit-entrepreneurial activity.

Figure 1 displays the main business activities of the two groups. Clearly a more or less equal spread of both Greek and immigrant entrepreneurs are involved in small-scale *local* retail, including convenience stores and kiosks, or services such as cafés and restaurants, hairdressers, etc. In the case of immigrants, the local character of their activities is often accompanied by an 'ethnic' one, since they target the migrant clientele of the area in which they operate—yet not exclusively their own migrant groups. This includes stores selling specialised products, as well as services like Internet and call centres. On the other hand, typical local stores selling furniture and home equipment, or home-refurbishment material and related services (electrics, plumbing, colours, etc.) are far more common among natives. Clothing stores were also more common among Greeks, though in Metaxourgeio we should acknowledge the significant language barriers that prevented us from interviewing Chinese wholesale traders. We did, however, observe a recently formed small cluster of Greek-owned clothing wholesalers benefiting from the concentration of the Chinese clothing trade.

The customer base is primarily local, and this also applies to most Greek-owned businesses. As a result, the vast majority feel they operate in rather saturated local markets in which they have to compete with a range of local stores and businesses offering similar products or services. Figure 2 summarises the owners' views of their customers' preferences. The local client base is clear for both groups, as is

Table 1 A profile of respondents and their businesses, by neighbourhood

|	Kypseli		Metaxourgeio		Ambelokipoi	
	Migrant	Native	Migrant	Native	Migrant	Native
Average age of owner (mean)	40.9	50.1	41.4	43.3	43.7	45.1
Share of women (%)	34.8	30.0	15.0	14.3	25.0	37.5
Share of respondents who have children (%)	69.6	75.0	80.0	47.6	75.0	75.0
Share of respondents with tertiary education (%)	26.1	20.0	35.0	14.3	30.0	12.5
Migrants' average number of years in Greece (mean)	13.8	–	13.0	–	15.9	–
Major immigrant countries of origin (%)	17.4% Albanians, 26.1% Pakistanis (among 12 different countries of origin)		30% Iraqi Kurds, 25% Chinese, 20% Egyptians (among 7 different countries of origin)		25% Filipinos, 15% Egyptians among (11 different countries of origin)	
Average number of years in business (mean)	5.69	18.15	6.82	14.37	4.60	11.79
Average number of employees formally working (mean)	0.3	0.3	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.5
Average number of employees informally working/assisting (mean)	2	2.3	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.7
Area of residence same as area of business location (%)	78.3	60.0	60.0	47.6	65.0	50.0
Thinking of relocating business elsewhere (%)	8.7	25.0	5.0	9.5	15.0	25.0
TOTALS (N)	23	20	20	21	20	24
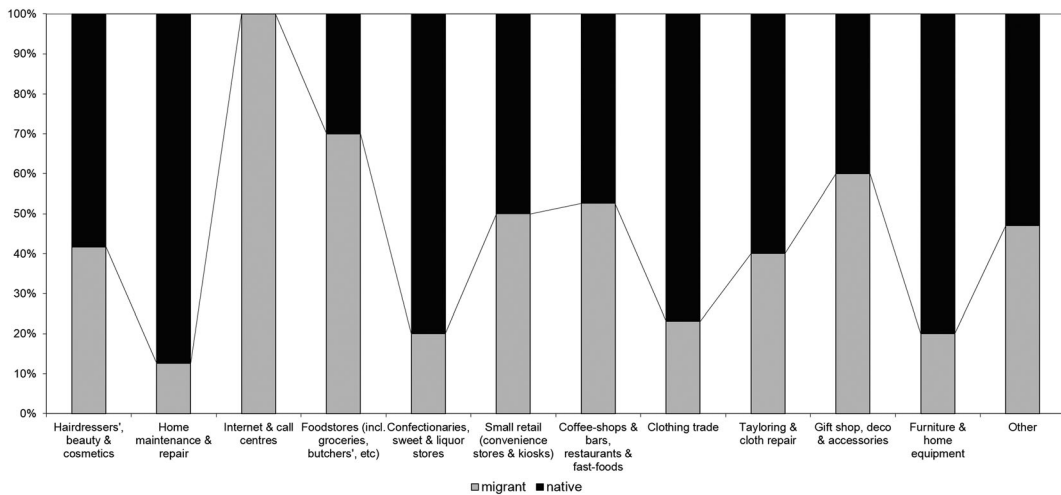
Figure 1 Main activity.

the specialty of their products: in the latter case, migrants referred mostly to specialised products, while Greeks emphasised quality. Since the latter are more established, they have 'loyal' customers over the years, including past local residents who have moved out to the suburbs. On the other hand, immigrants stressed their cheap prices and, even more so, their flexible working hours, as major attractions for

both immigrant and native Greek customers.

Combining the type of activities, products or services, with the customer base and spatial reach of the businesses, we produced the typology illustrated in Figure 3. The local reach of most ventures is highlighted by their concentration on the left side of the matrix, while the 'ethnic' clientele of migrant-owned ventures is clearly indicated
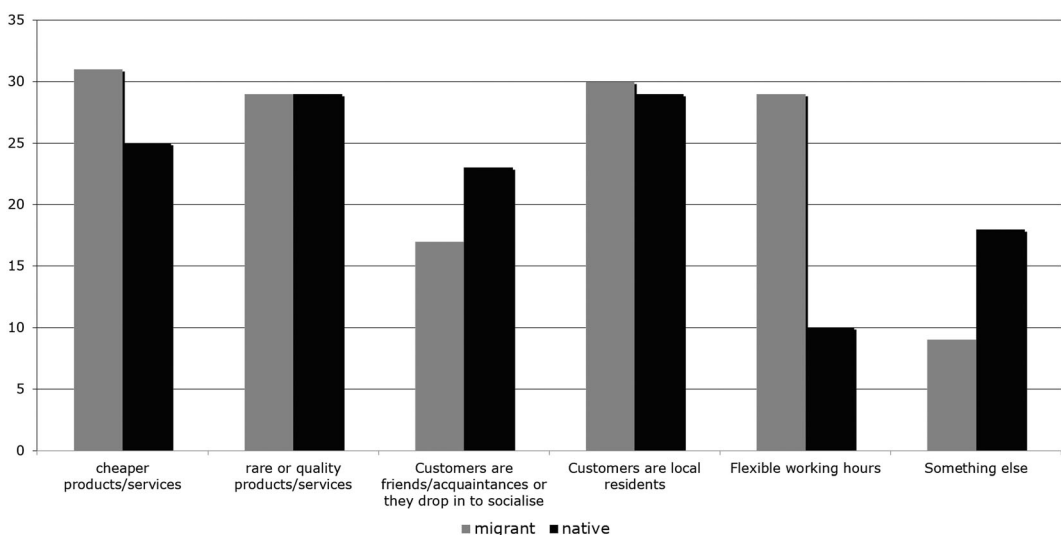

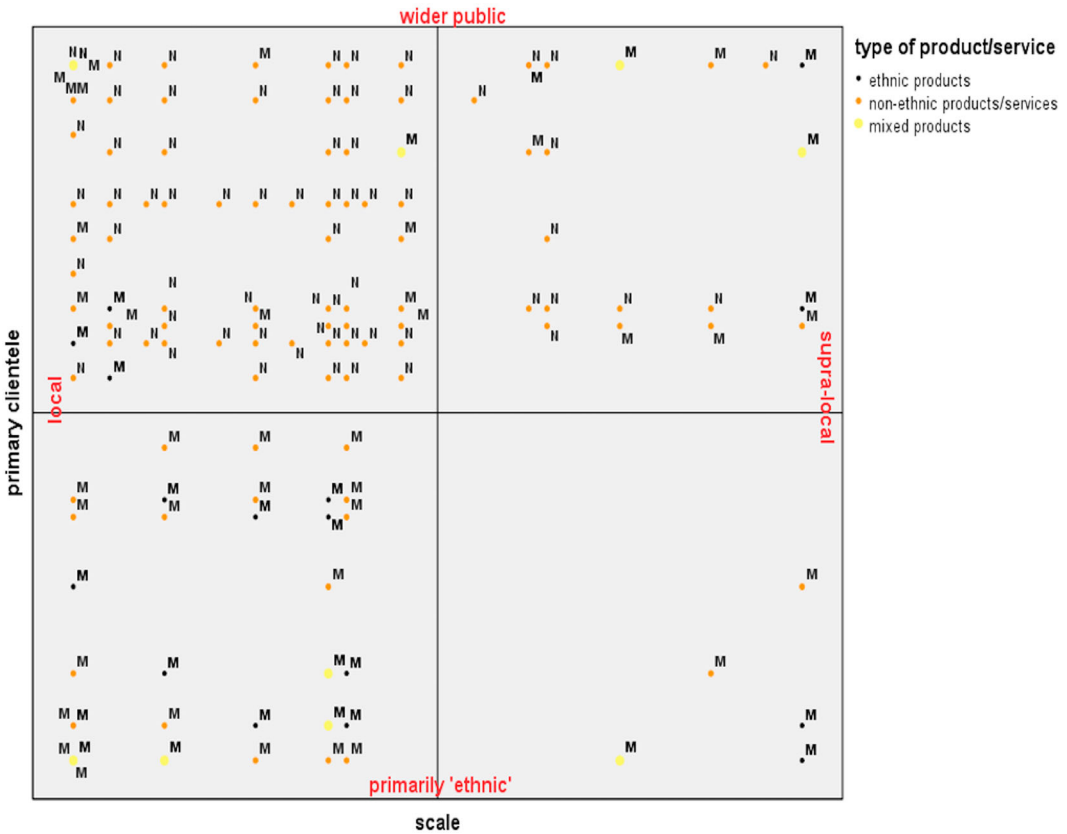**Figure 2** Primary clientele (multiple responses).

Figure 3   Activities, customers and scale.

by their overrepresentation at the bottom. Immigrants' ventures at the bottom left, whose activities are labelled 'non-ethnic', basically include immigrant-serving businesses such as Internet and call centres or money transfer agencies. Immigrants' supra-local activities on the top right corner range from Chinese-owned clothing wholesale storerooms and warehouses in Metaxourgeio targeting a wider commercial clientele and appealing because of low prices, to 'ethnic' restaurants in Metaxourgeio and Kypseli targeting customers among the Athenian middle class and young people; in the latter case from across the city, while in the former also from across the country. Immigrants' supra-local activities at the bottom right corner include Asian

food stores in Ambelokipoi attracting customers from other parts of Athens.

The special importance of locality for migrants is further supported by the interrelation between business location and the owner's area of residence. In all three neighbourhoods, immigrants broadly tend to live in the same neighbourhood where their business is established (nearly 70% do so, compared to just over half among Greeks). Even more, migrant entrepreneurs have less preference for relocating their business to some other part of the city: only 9.5% wished to do so, compared to 20.6% among their Greek business neighbours. Thus clearly despite differences among neighbourhoods related, for example, to population composition, spatial uses, location within

the city or trends of urban change, in all three areas most ventures cater to local demand; this is more pronounced, however, in the case of migrants. As such, they are embedded in multiple ways in local consumer markets and, more broadly, in the socio-spatial environment in which they operate.

Place, politics and everyday life: migrant economies, a view from the neighbourhood

We now zoom into one of the study areas, Ambelokipoi, where we ground the discussion above in the mundane experiences of some of our interviewees with businesses there. Compared to the gentrifying trends alongside fears of crime in Metaxourgeio (Alexandri 2014), or Kypseli's multi-ethnic and densely built and populated urban fabric (Lafazani, Lykogianni, and Vaiou 2010), Ambelokipoi may be seen as both an 'ordinary' place and yet in some respects unique. At the north-eastern part of Athens Municipality, on the main traffic axes (Kifissias and Mesogeion avenues) leading to the posh northern suburbs, it hosts a wide range of activities (Katou 2008): from public hospitals and private healthcare providers to governmental agencies and banks on the main avenues; from large school complexes to cinemas and a nightlife cluster of bars and restaurants around Panormou metro station; and from large chain supermarkets to local stores on side streets, including many that have closed due to the economic crisis, as well as an open food market on Saturdays.

The area is frequented by many people of various ages and backgrounds for the purposes of work, shopping or entertainment, and is home to a socially diverse population, including immigrant residents (albeit in lower proportions than other parts of central Athens). Although our survey results show that immigrant respondents here are longer established than in the other areas, most of their businesses were set up fairly recently. More than half of the venues housing immigrants' businesses (almost exclusively located

on side streets) were previously empty and another 20% used to house a similar activity formerly run by a native owner. To some extent, therefore, the entrepreneurial space occupied by immigrants was previously devalued and left vacant, as their Greek owners shut down, retired or moved elsewhere. The neighbourhood's location and its population composition seem to have conditioned the establishment of migrant businesses in multiple ways.

A first example comes from the experience of Hamid, aged 43, living in Greece since 1993, for whom the location decision combined a clear business strategy, his own sense of social status and his social networks with Greeks. For the last few years, Hamid has led a life between Athens and Alexandria in Egypt, where his wife and three children live. An electrician by training, he decided to start his own business when the company he worked for closed down after the 2004 Olympic Games and the beginning of the downturn in the construction sector. He first set up a food store in *Kaminia*, a working-class district of Piraeus where many Egyptian fishermen live, but after breaking up with his former business partner, he decided to relocate to Ambelokipoi. The new store opened in 2008, this time in partnership with a Greek lady who has been a close family friend for years; it offers a wide range of Egyptian and Arabic products, many of which Hamid buys directly from Egypt during his visits. He explains his choice of area by saying that he targeted 'higher class' Egyptians living in the vicinity, most of whom are settled people with families (e.g. doctors, professionals, etc.), possibly due to the location of various embassies of Arabic countries nearby, or the Libyan embassy's school. He also mentioned 'Egyptiotes', that is, Greeks from Egypt, living in the northern suburbs, as part of his customer base. In his own words:

> 'Our shop is really special, because it has all the products for high cuisine, coming directly from Egypt and Lebanon, which are preferred

by middle class Egyptians and Egyptiotes who live in the area and along the way to Kifisia, and they want to avoid Omonoia where there may be problems, the shops are not that clean ...'

An entirely different story is that of Corazon, from the Philippines, aged 43 and single mother of two, who has lived in Greece since 1990. After assuming various jobs mostly as domestic worker or cleaner, she set up her own store, selling cheap women's clothes and jewellery alongside sewing and clothes repair. The opening of her business in 2006 coincided with her separation from a Greek former husband, which conditioned her decision to move to Ambelokipoi from southern Athens, and rent a flat in the same building where her store is located. In her own words, the concentration of a small though vibrant Filipino migrant community in the area did not simply provide an obvious 'market', but also a social network that supported her after the divorce in multiple ways (keeping the store on her absence, assisting informally, looking after the kids). Thus, the neighbourhood provided opportunities for generating an income, while at the same time offered a space for socialisation and familiarity in the city. Things changed with the deepening of the crisis, however, in the context of which many of her primary customers, Filipina women, were left unemployed or only had access to part-time or casual employment. To respond to her financial difficulties and rising taxes, she introduced money transfer services and extended her working hours, spending nearly the entire day in the store, including weekends. In a sense, the neighbourhood itself has turned into a space of enclosure, centred on the store, a place that dominates her life:

> 'I've started "Money Gram", two years ago ... I now can pay my rent ... Sewing pays for my insurance ... I can't afford to close, what I will do with my kids, where could I work, if I become a cleaner who will be looking after the kids? [Now] they are over here with me, my son may go to the flat upstairs to study while my little daughter stays with me in the

store. ... But I don't have sewing work as I used to, unfortunately ... I can't go to the theatre or the movies, I just take my kids once a month to have lunch at the McDonald's nearby ...'

Filipinos are the primary clientele of various specialised businesses in the vicinity, not necessarily owned by co-ethnics. Nevertheless, hegemonic perceptions of competition neglect, for example, the impact of large chains expanding in the area, and emphasise ethnic dimensions. Some native shopkeepers (even if not directly affected or not residents themselves) tend to reproduce dominant discourses, describing the neighbourhood as a 'Filipino ghetto' and viewing migrants as 'invaders'. According to one Greek photographer we spoke to: '[Greek-owned] shops are shutting down, but Filipinos are starting up, they are gradually pushing us out'. Yet, the Filipino residential cluster forms a market for businesses owned by Greeks or migrants of other backgrounds. Such is the case of Halil, 35, from Sri Lanka, living in Greece since 1999. After changing various jobs, including street-peddling, working for a tourist agency and running a short-lived shop in a different neighbourhood, he opened an Asian food store in the area in 2009, attracted by the local migrant economy: '*There is our own bank* [money transfer agency] *across the street, so there are people coming and going, this is a good market for foreigners.*' Halil's story reveals at least two interesting aspects of the relevance of place and its intersection with entrepreneurial activity and everyday life. One concerns a peculiar manifestation of the global–local interaction: on the one hand, at a time of significantly reduced turnover he managed to mobilise his transnational networks to cope with liquidity problems; on the other, this very strategy has brought him at odds with local Asian food wholesalers:

> 'Relationships with neighbouring business are not good ... Because I buy from abroad on my own, I buy in different prices ... my cousin works in Germany ... for a wholesaler ... and can guarantee for me so that I buy on

credit … I don't buy from local wholesalers … they don't like that … [we have] competitive relations …'

The other relates to rising local competition as an outcome of racist hostility elsewhere, and the possibility of the latter spreading throughout the area. Although Ambelokipoi has not yet been affected by neo-Nazi mobilisation, the opening of new Golden Dawn headquarters locally was a source of concern:

'There are shops owned by Pakistanis and Bengalis here too, but not as many as in Omonoia … but now they gradually move here, because down there the Golden Dawn has its offices and there is trouble … now the Golden Dawn has opened offices nearby in Mesogeion avenue … a big problem …'

This was the period after Golden Dawn's electoral success (in June 2012), when its neo-Nazi 'activism' was at its zenith and resulted in destructive attacks on migrants' shops. At the time, it was still tolerated by the authorities, and to some extent exacerbated by excessive force on the part of the police. The daily police operations euphemistically titled 'Xenios Zeus', targeting migrants indiscriminately in a manner resembling the so-called 'sweepers' operations chasing Albanians in the early 1990s (Dalakoglou 2013), negatively affected many immigrant businesses in downtown Athens, both directly and indirectly. The former manifested itself in direct police checks of migrants' shops, which not only disrupted business activities, but was often experienced traumatically by the owners and their families, who would end up in a police station only to be released after several hours (as most have legal documents, and their businesses are run following the rules). The latter was more common and, according to our immigrant participants, scared their (immigrant) customers who avoided going out in the street for fear of arrest.

This excessive presence of the State, through direct repression and harassment, but also tolerance of racist violence, vividly contradicts with its absence from other domains of intervention, such as market regulation, small businesses support or curbing informal economic practices like tax evasion and informal employment. If the latter affects native and migrant entrepreneurs alike, at a time when both are struggling to cope in a harsh economic environment, the former makes things even more difficult for migrants, who are further plagued by unresolved issues in immigration and integration policy. On 9 May 2014, some 400 migrants, mostly petit-entrepreneurs and shopkeepers, marched in a demonstration in downtown Athens against police harassment of their business. This may be seen as an explosion in a series of anti-immigrant measures taken by successive Greek governments in recent years, at a time when the market downturn amidst the economic crisis, austerity, and an overall negative social and political climate has led to deepening difficulties for growing numbers of migrants making a living in Greece.

Conclusion

The politics of immigration and migrants in Greece are ultimately situated within the deepening economic and social crisis shaking the country. Racism has entered the mainstream of public discourses and dominates policies that tend to scapegoat immigrants, prioritising policing and border issues over integration. Along these lines, the recent 'spatial turn' in politics and discourses of migration and diversity in Athens entails a shift of attention towards the local, in which the problems of specific parts of the city centre are centred on the presence of migrants and become intermingled with the trends of migratory flows on the national scale. Within this context, immigrants' shops and businesses are linked to informality and to the degradation of specific neighbourhoods, where they have ultimately become targets of violent racist attacks. At the same time,

recession and worsening market conditions, combined with a blend of austerity policies and excessive taxation, make life harder not only for those in paid employment, but also for small businesses and the self-employed, whether migrants or natives.

Nowhere in the country is this more pronounced than in central Athens, where migrant economies beyond the widely publicised, debated and studied urban commercial core have grown silently in the past 20 years or so. Against the grim background of market conditions and state policies, this paper has analysed local dimensions of immigrants' entrepreneurial endeavours as they intersect with space, place, politics and everyday life, in an attempt to reveal aspects of the dialectics between migrant economies and processes of urban change. Though this would require further investigation and evidence, we encountered surprising resemblances and similar issues facing shops and businesses owned by migrants and natives alike. The latter's fears and suspicion are to some extent linked to the decline of central Athens' small family neighbourhood-based businesses, and their partial replacement by migrant-owned ventures catering to local demand and thus playing a vivid role in revitalising local neighbourhood markets. Yet, the commonalities in the characteristics of migrant and native-owned business and the similar difficulties they face in conditions of economic crisis and increasing diversity, prompt us to move away from conventional analytical categories emphasising difference, as recently suggested by Kaika (2012).

The paper also looked beyond the obvious economic dimensions as such, highlighting (some of) the ways in which small businesses are found centre stage in everyday practices, relationships and needs, thus assuming broader social relevance. The crisis is not only measured by its merely negative economic impact, such as the market downturn, reduced turnover or liquidity problems affecting immigrant or native-owned businesses. It is also lived in concrete urban social settings and determines people's everyday experiences: their practices of survival, their strategies of adapting, and their patterns of sociability and neighbourly relations. It also, sometimes, haunts them with the rise of organised racism and the spread of local anti-immigrant hostility. Immigrants' entrepreneurial endeavours are tied to the dynamics of migrant settlement, and are often related to individuals or families' pathways to social mobility, or to survival options against worsening labour market opportunities or conditions. Yet the spatial contours of Athenian migrant economies in times of crisis and austerity emerge ever complex and diverse, a fluid patchwork whereby multiple trends and dynamics are in place, some well consolidated while others are constantly being shaped and reshaped. What seems to be certain is that migrant businesses are gradually forming an organic part of the city landscape and the everyday experience of the urban.

Disclosure statement

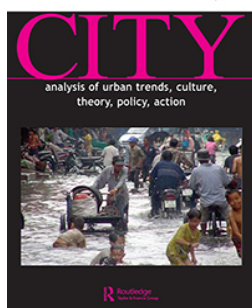No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

Notes

1 The fieldwork research informing this paper derives from the project 'Emerging Ethnic Economies at Times of Crisis: Socio-economic and Spatial Dimensions of Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Athens' which took place between March 2012 and April 2013 and was kindly funded by the Hellenic Observatory at the London School of Economics and Political Science (UK).

2   We should note at least three: the 'maturing' of the first generation of migrants, many of whom have lived in the country for over 20 years but are still excluded from long-term legal status; the come into play of the second generation, yet without straightforward access to citizenship; the turnaround of migratory and asylum routes towards the EU resulting in increasing arrivals mostly from Asia and Africa through Turkey, who end up 'trapped' in Greece.

3   For more information and context on Kypseli and Metaxourgeio, see also the next paper by Balampanidis and Polyzos. Ambelokipoi is the focus of the next section, where our analysis is enriched with contextual details on the neighbourhood.

References

Alexandri, G. 2014. "Reading between the Lines: Gentrification Tendencies and Issues of Urban Fear in the Midst of Athens' Crisis." *Urban Studies* 52 (9): 1631–1646.

Dalakoglou, D. 2013. "The Crisis Before 'The Crisis': Violence and Urban Neoliberalisation in Athens." *Social Justice* 39 (1): 24–42.

Glick Schiller, N., and A. Çağlar. 2009. "Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32 (2): 177–202.

Hadjimichalis, C. 2011. "Athens' International Role, the Planning Deficit for Public Interest and the City Centre." In *The Centre of Athens as a Political Stake*, edited by Th. Maloutas, G. Kandylis, M. Petrou and N. Souliotis, 329–346. Athens: National Centre for Social Research; Harokopio University.

Hall, S., and A. Datta. 2010. "The Translocal Street: Shop Signs and Local Multiculture Along the Walworth Road, South London." *City, Culture and Society* 1 (2): 69–77.

Hatziprokopiou, P. 2006. *Globalisation and Contemporary Immigration to Southern European Cities: Social Exclusion and Incorporation of Immigrants in Thessaloniki*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Hatziprokopiou, P., and Y. Frangopoulos. 2013. "Immigrants' Entrepreneurship in Greece at Times of Crisis: Ambivalent Paths and the Persistence of Institutional Barriers." In *Entrepreneurship in the Balkans: Diversity, Support and Prospects*, edited by V. Ramadani and R.C. Schneider, 171–197. Heidelberg: Springer.

Kaika, M. 2012. "The Economic Crisis Seen from the Everyday." *City* 16 (4): 422–430.

Kandylis. G., and K. I. Kavoulakos. 2011. "Framing Urban Inequalities: Racist Mobilization Against Immigrants in Athens." *The Greek Review of Social Research special issue* 136 (C): 157–126.

Kandylis. G., Th. Maloutas, and J. Sayas. 2012. "Immigration, Inequality and Diversity: Socio-Ethnic Hierarchy and Spatial Organisation in Athens." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 19 (3): 267–286.

Katou, M. 2008. "Labour, Time and Space: Research in the Ambelokipi Neighbourhood." *Geographies: Biannual journal of the sciences of space* 14: 104–114.

Labrianidis, L., and P. Hatziprokopiou. 2010. "Migrant Entrepreneurship in Greece: Diversity of Pathways for Emerging Ethnic Business Communities in Thessaloniki." *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 11: 193–212.

Lafazani O., R. Lykogianni, and D. Vaiou. 2010. "National Case Study (Greece): Thematic Study on Urban Interaction Spaces and Social Movements" (WP7), Report for the project Gender, Migration and Intercultural Interaction in the Mediterranean and South-East Europe (Ge.M.IC.), https://docs.google.com/fileview?id=0B0wOZuggKvK0NmMzYWJiMDAtMTUyNy00YjhiLWEzODItMGZjZTQ1MWQ0MTA0&hl=en.

Maloutas, Th., 2004. "Segregation and Residential Mobility: Spatially Entrapped Social Mobility and Its Impact on Segregation in Athens." *European Urban & Regional Studies* 11 (3): 195–211.

Massey, D. 2005. *For Space*, Oxford: Sage.

Mavrommatis, G. 2008. "Forms of Ethnic Entrepreneurship in Athens." In *Immigration to Greece: Experiences, Policies, Potential*, vol. edited by J. Cavounidis, A. Kondis, Th. Lianos and R. Fakiolas, 228–247. Athens: Migration Policy Institute.

Noussia A., and M. Lyons. 2009. "Inhabiting Spaces of Liminality: Migrants in Omonia, Athens." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (4): 601–624.

Onisenko, C. 2008. "Athens' New Colourful Market." Kathimerini, April 5. http://www.kathimerini.gr/318370/article/epikairothta/ellada/h-nea-polyxrwmh-agora-ths-a8hnas.

Petronoti M. 2010. "Weaving Threads Between the Ethnic and the Global: African Women's Entrepreneurial Ventures in Athens." *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures* 19 (2): 129–148.

Polyzos, I. 2014. "Parcours des migrants et mutations socio-spatiales à Athènes: Le cas des commerçants chinois à Metaxourgeio." PhD diss., University of Poitiers/ MIGRINTER and National Technical University of Athens.

Rerres, K. E. 2011. *Ghettoization of Part of Athens' Historic Centre and the Impact of the Phenomenon on the Economic Life of the City*, Athens: Research Institute for Tourism; Hellenic Chamber of Hotels; Central Athens' Citizens Movement. (in Greek) http://www.grhotels.gr/GR/xee/ITEP/DocLib2/Forms/itemview.aspx?ID=290.

Skordili, S. 2013. "New Strategies of Spatial Expansion of Large Food Chains and Changes in the Landscape of Food Retail in Athens." In *The Centre of Athens as a*

Political Stake, edited by Th. Maloutas, G. Kandylis, M. Petrou, and N. Souliotis, 119–143. Athens: National Centre for Social Research; Harokopio University.

Tsigganou, I. 2009. "Entrepreneurship, Dangers and Competitions at the Historic Centre of Athens." In *Aspects of Migration and Migration Policy in Greece Today*, edited by Ch. Barouxi, N. Sarris and A. Fragiskou, 225–247. Athens: National Centre of Social Research. (in Greek).

Van Heelsum, A. 2010. *Ethnic Entrepreneurship Case Study: Athens, Greece*. Dublin: Cities for Local Integration Policy Network, EUROFOUND. http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2011/2111/en/1/EF112111EN.pdf.

Panos Hatziprokopiou is Assistant Professor at the School of Spatial Planning and Development, Faculty of Engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Email: pmchatzi@plandevel.auth.gr

Yannis Frangopoulos is Assistant Professor at the School of Spatial Planning and Development, Faculty of Engineering, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Email: yfrago@plandevel.auth.gr

Migrants' settlement in two central neighborhoods of Athens

Dimitris Balampanidis & Iris Polyzos

Migrants' settlement in two central neighborhoods of Athens

An analytical framework for urban transformations and interethnic coexistence

Dimitris Balampanidis and Iris Polyzos

Greece has recently become a destination country for migrants from both neighboring and distant sending countries. Over the last 20 years, urban areas in general and Athens in particular have become ethnically and culturally much more diverse. Scholars often describe migrants' residential and entrepreneurial settlement in cities through narrow terms, focusing either on migrants' 'ethnic' characteristics or on merely economic factors. According to this perspective, space is often conceived as a neutral surface, merely providing migrants a location in which to settle or work. In this study, we demonstrate how urban space, as a complex socio-spatial framework, determines migrant settlement and, at the same time, how migrant settlement transforms cities producing both continuities and discontinuities. In other words, we highlight the more complex causalities and patterns of migrant settlement and formulate an analytical framework to explain interethnic coexistences in urban space. We explore our research questions and hypotheses about migrant settlement through field research and the comparative study of two central neighborhoods: Kypseli and Metaxourgeio.

Introduction

For almost a century, Greece hardly received any significant inflow of foreign migrants and only since the early 1990s has it become a destination country for international migrants. Within the last two decades, large immigration waves have increased the country's migrant stock from 1.6% in 1991 (Emke-Poulopoulou 2007, 102) to 8.4% of the total population in 2011 (Triantafyllidou 2014, 7). Among the migrant groups, Albanians are by far the largest, followed by migrants from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, entering Greece through its long northern border. After 2000, the flows have become diversified as migrants from Africa, Asia and the Middle East have begun to enter the country. More recently, asylum seekers have been gaining

access through Turkey and the Aegean Sea, trying to reach northwestern European destinations (Maroukis 2009).

According to the last National Census of Population in 2011, 74% of migrants who arrived in Greece over the previous five years settled in urban areas (ELSTAT 2011a, 6). Moreover, the great majority of migrants are concentrated in the two largest metropolitan areas of Greece, Athens and Thessaloniki: 405,831 and 116,918, respectively. Their share of the total population of the region of Attica (10.6%) is considerably higher than in the region of Central Macedonia (6.2%) and their origins are more diverse (ELSTAT 2011b), confirming the trends of the previous decade (Labrianidis and Hatziprokopiou 2008). These figures indicate that immigration to Greece has been a recent and primarily urban phenomenon. Over the last 20 years, the Greek urban space, primarily in Athens, has become significantly more diverse ethnically and culturally, which has generated heated debates about interethnic spatial and social coexistence (Vaiou 2007; Maloutas et al. 2012).

The aim of this paper is to explore how migrants make their place in the city particularly through residential settlment and entrepreneurial activities. Our key hypothesis is that migrants' residential and commercial pathways are directly reflected in space and contribute to the transformation of the urban fabric. At the same time, space is constituted by long-established socio-spatial relations. In this sense, not only does migrant settlement contribute to urban transformations but it also depends on the specific characteristics of the urban fabric and the social dynamics of neighborhoods. It is a kind of mutual dependency: migrant settlement defines space and space defines migrant settlement.

This begs two interrelated questions. First, how are migrants' settlement patterns and entrepreneurial activities reflected in space, and what kinds of geographies do migrants produce? Can we describe their settlement in terms of 'ethnic zones', 'enclaves', 'clusters' or 'niches'? And, secondly, in what way does space, as a historically defined socio-spatial framework, influence and finally define migrant settlement in Athens?

Based on extensive fieldwork on migrants' presence in two central neighborhoods, we argue that migrant settlement in Athens depends on certain socio-spatial contextual particularities while producing multiple geographies, beyond the well-known patterns observed in other countries of Europe or North America. Additionally, we argue that migrants are not necessarily 'placed' on the margins of space and society, but rather their presence constitutes a factor in urban regeneration, creating the conditions for interethnic mixing and coexistence.

Migrant residential patterns and entrepreneurial activities in urban space: issues emerging from the literature

Research on the residential settlement of migrants has long been dominated by approaches emanating from the Chicago School of Urban Sociology and Factorial Ecology, a method used to study residential location and trajectories. For some researchers working from this perspective, the residential choices of migrants are guided by a fundamental human desire. For example, in his early work Wirth ([1928] 1998) claimed that migrants concentrate in 'natural areas' that are formed by the universal 'natural desire' of different groups to preserve their peculiar cultural forms. This notion was combined with a specific theory of migrants' residential pathways, illustrated by Burgess's 'concentric zone' model: migrants are supposed to settle initially in so-called 'zones in transition' around the central business district and, as they undergo 'assimilation', they become increasingly dispersed throughout the city and ultimately absorbed into the ethnically neutral suburbs. This gradual decentralization and suburbanization of migrants is conceived as a 'natural process' and called

'succession', a term borrowed from studies of plant ecology (Burgess [1925] 1984, 50–58). These approaches have often been criticized, firstly, because they tend to 'convert migration history into natural history' (Wacquant 2004) and, secondly, because of their deterministic view of the integration process. Instead, many researchers have suggested more complex explanatory frameworks based on social factors and highlighted multiple spatial patterns of residential trajectories and spatial integration, beyond the classic unidirectional assimilation models. Thus some have introduced models such as 'segmented assimilation' (Portes and Zhou 1993) or have highlighted varied patterns of social and ethnic residential mix (Leal 2004; Préteceille 2009).

Similarly, research on migrant entrepreneurship and its spatial manifestations has long been dominated by approaches which have been criticized for putting excessive emphasis either on 'ethnic' resources, that is, immigrants' ethnic networks and social capital, or on the host country's economic environment. Portes (1995), for example, has focused on ethnic-based social networks of solidarity and support, neglecting wider socio-economic processes; ethnicity and family emerge as crucial and dominant factors for migrant entrepreneurship since they can provide start-up capital, information, knowledge, low-waged family or co-ethnic labor, a first customer base and a supplier chain. Others have studied immigrants' entrepreneurial activities as an alternative to economic and social discrimination in the local economy (Bonacich 1973), but have neglected the role of migrants' strategies (Engelen 2001). Furthermore, migrant entrepreneurship has often been associated with spatial patterns that imply a de facto concentration in specific neighborhoods and has commonly been considered an activity addressed exclusively to migrant customers. Thus, ethnic economies have usually been described through narrow terms, such 'ethnic enclaves', 'ethnic clusters' and 'ethnic niche markets'. Moreover, approaches based on the so-called 'interactive model' (Waldinger

et al. 1990) or the concept of 'mixed embeddedness' (Kloosterman, Van der Leun, and Rath 1999) have analyzed migrants' entrepreneurship by taking into account their social networks and ethno-cultural characteristics along with the socio-economic and politico-institutional environment of the host country. More recently, scholars have proposed more integrated approaches combining a variety of factors that determine migrant settlement in urban space and describe this process in more complex terms, emphasizing 'translocal' experiences and simultaneities in the city (Smith 2005; Hall 2010), or migrants' practices of 'autonomy' (Ma Mung 2009).

However, even the most integrated approaches of migrant settlement in the city are not always grounded in space; in other words, they often lack spatiality and ignore what Soja, building on Lefebvre, calls the 'socio-spatial' dialectic (Lefebvre 1974; Soja 1989, 76–93). Though they take into account the socio-economic and politico-institutional environment of the host country, they fail to conceive the specificity of space. Often, cities appear in the migration literature as neutral containers, merely providing space for settlement and work (Germain 2000). Massey (2005, 130) suggests 'escaping from an imagination of space as a surface' and, instead, conceiving it as a complex set of established relations, as 'simultaneity of stories-so-far'. In this sense, the specific characteristics of the urban fabric and the social dynamics of neighborhoods have a major role to play in migrants' settlement, their geographical distribution, their choices and trajectories. In other words, there seems to be a direct and dynamic interrelationship between migrant settlement and urban space as a specifically established social framework that is continuously restructured and rescaled. In this spirit, Glick Shiller and Çağlar (2009) invite scholars to 'theorise locality' in a comparative way, in order to understand the differing outcomes of cities' (re)structuring and the varying pathways of migrants.

These recent more integrated, dialectical and spatialized approaches described above,

have strongly influenced research on migrants' residential and entrepreneurial settlement, underlying their causalities and complex patterns, as well as the terms of inter-ethnic coexistence in Greece and especially in Athens. In this paper, we adopt this perspective rather than vague and misleading notions that are based on deterministic explanations and narrow terms, ignoring contextual particularities and thus obscuring the complexity of migrants' presence in urban space. We refer here to notions and ideas, represented mainly in Greek public discourse rather than in academic debates, which 'place' migrants a priori on the margins of space and society, in 'ghettos', 'enclaves', 'niches', etc. and demonize them as collectively responsible for urban, social and economic decay (Koutrolikou and Siatitsa 2011; Balampanidis and Polyzos 2012; Balampanidis 2015). These discourses have been applied to certain central neighborhoods of Athens over the past several years, since the emergence of the economic crisis.

Methodological considerations

In order to explore the questions raised above, we focus our study on two different central neighborhoods in Athens: Kypseli and Metaxourgeio. The former is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods and currently one of the most multiethnic, with more than 30 different nationalities recorded in the 2001 census (ELSTAT 2001). The latter is less densely populated, but also contains a considerable migrant population and is currently undergoing considerable socio-spatial changes. The comparative study of the two neighborhoods allows a better understanding of their specific socio-spatial features and the different ways in which they impact upon migrant settlement, while providing an opportunity to move beyond generalizations and deterministic explanations (Green 2002, 23–35).

Our methodological approach combines two different methods. First, we study the historically established socio-spatial structures of the two neighborhoods, as well as some key socio-demographic transformations, from the end of the 19th century to the present, through secondary sources, for instance, a literature review and historical studies. Secondly, we illustrate and describe the socio-spatial patterns shaped by migrants' residential and entrepreneurial settlement through field research, for instance, *in situ* observation and recording. We systematically visited the neighborhoods of Kypseli and Metaxourgeio in July 2012 and March 2013, respectively, during both morning and afternoon hours, seeking to record visible signs of migrants' residential settlement and commercial activities.

With respect to migrant housing, we collected data marked on the doorbells at the entrances of the apartment buildings. Drawing from a representative sample of apartment buildings, we recorded the total number of apartments and the number of vacant ones, the residents' surnames (Greek and foreign), as well as the floors where migrants live (if marked on the doorbell). In the case of their entrepreneurial activities, we recorded all migrants' stores and services, both open and closed, their country of origin, the specific types of business and the composition of their clientele. And last, in both neighborhoods, we recorded all migrants' and Greeks' open and closed stores and services along selected streets.

Recording data through visible signs carries some serious methodological limitations. As regards data marked on the doorbells, they are often not updated or they may be incomplete because of residents' strategies of invisibility. As for data marked on the store signs, they also may be inaccurate with respect to migrants' country of origin. For this reason, apart from the Chinese, we categorized nationalities in the following larger groups: Eastern European Asian, Middle Eastern and African In order to overcome these serious limitations, data were often confirmed through informal discussions with some residents and entrepreneurs.

Kypseli: diffused migrants' presence in a mixed socio-spatial fabric

Socio-spatial background

Kypseli is located northwest of the city center, in the 6th district of the Municipality of Athens, and is one of the most densely populated areas in the city. At the beginning of the 20th century, Kypseli attracted mostly the upper- and middle-class strata due to its privileged position adjacent to the central axis Patision Avenue, directly connected to the city center. The area was sparsely built with a few detached houses, surrounded by yards and planted grounds. In the 1930s, its population progressively increased, as migrants from Greek rural areas and refugees from Asia Minor settled on its outskirts.

A few decades later, from 1950 and 1970, a process of intense urbanization, which expanded all over the city, transformed Kypseli's urban fabric and social structure. Detached houses and yards gave way to high-density housing, consisting of apartment blocks of five or more floors. It is important to underline that these newly constructed buildings offered multiple types of apartments, that is, of different size, quality and price, rising from the basements to the upper floors, as well as from the back to the front side (Vaiou 2007). This variety of apartment types and prices attracted different social groups in the same building, thus allowing a high social mix, both horizontally and vertically, across the entire neighborhood (Maloutas and Karadimitriou 2001). During this same period, Kypseli became a vibrant mixed-use area hosting administrative functions, social services, and educational, cultural, sports and commercial activities. At the same time, the continuing process of urbanization and the lack of urban planning generated several problems that remain unsolved to this day, such as high density, the near absence of green spaces and an overwhelming concentration of vehicles.

Since the 1980s and the progressive saturation of the neighborhood's spatial resources, some of the local population moved outside of the city center, in search of improved living conditions. In fact moving out was mainly a privilege for middle- and upper-class households, while lower income and elderly people remained in the area (Maloutas, Emmanouil, and Pantelidou-Malouta 2006). By the end of the 1990s, when massive immigrant flows had arrived in Athens, Kypseli had become a neighborhood with a large stock of vacant, affordable apartments in proximity to the city center, creating desirable conditions for settlement by newly arrived migrants.

Migrants' residential and commercial settlement

Currently, based on a representative sample of 600 buildings in Kypseli,[1] almost 15% of the apartments are occupied by migrants, while 15% remain vacant. Migrants thus occupy a significant part of the available apartments, which would probably be vacant in their absence. At the same time, by renting and buying apartments in the neighborhood, they have stimulated the local economy, namely, the housing market and all associated professions, such as real estate, legal services, and notary services. Additionally, through their own labour and resources some migrants contribute to maintaining and upgrading of their apartments, which would have deteriorated if not rented or bought by someone else. Thus migrant settlement has contributed to an upgrading of the apartment stock while maintaining a human presence in the neighborhood, preventing its abandonment.

The horizontal geographical distribution of migrants in Kypseli is relatively uniform, except for a certain absence along the well-known central green axis of Fokionos Negri, probably because of high rents, and a slightly higher concentration in the
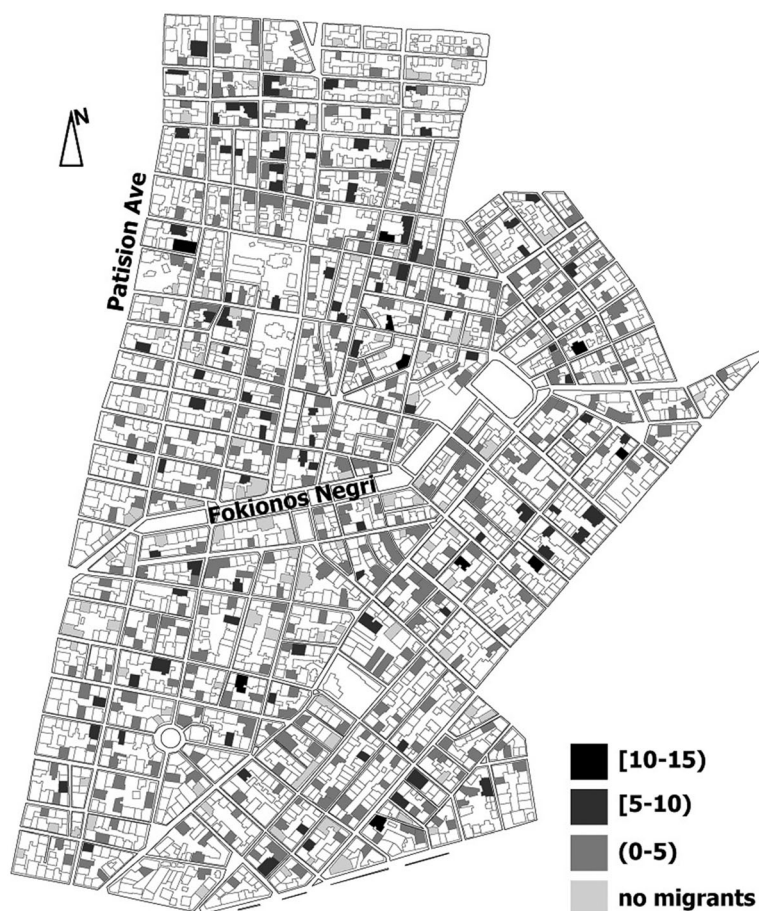
Figure 1 Horizontal geographical distribution of migrants in Kypseli.

northwestern part, historically inhabited by low-income households. Migrant settlement has followed a settlement pattern, similar to that of Greek residents, producing a generally balanced ethnic mix (Figures 1 and 2).

With respect to migrants' vertical distribution within the floors of apartment buildings, almost half of them live on the basement level or ground floor and a significant percentage (almost the other half) live between the first and fourth floors. As Vaiou (2007) argues as the migratory project has become more permanent, the need for improved living conditions has increased. This explains migrants' gradual access to upper floors and spacious apartments, not only as renters but also as owners (Balampanidis 2012).

Regarding migrants' entrepreneurial activities in Kypseli, 133 open and 48 closed stores and services were recorded. They are dispersed throughout the neighborhood and along commercial streets, with the exception of a significant concentration in the northwestern part of Kypseli, due to the proximity of centrally located Amerikis Square and highly commercial Patision Avenue (Figure 3). Generally, migrants' stores and services follow similar patterns of establishment as Greek businesses.

Migrants in Kypseli invest in six general types of activities: mini markets, call centers, general commerce, hairdressing salons, services and catering (Table 1).[2] 'General commerce' refers to clothing, accessories or
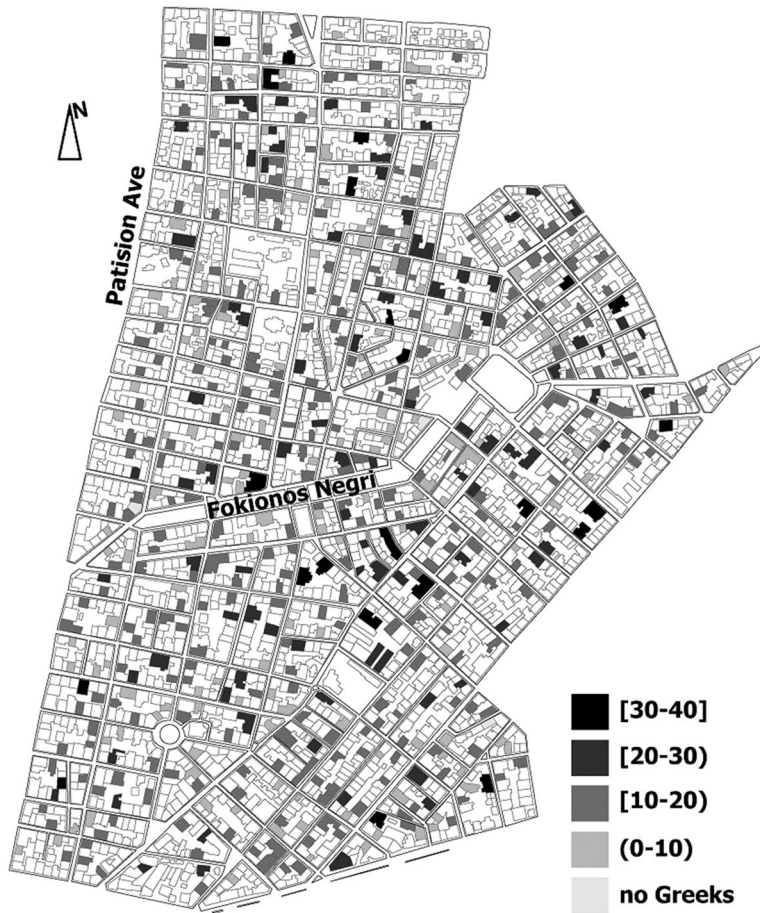
Figure 2   Horizontal geographical distribution of Greeks in Kypseli.

electronic devices stores, while 'services' concern migrants' specific needs, such as money transfer, translation or travel agencies. The migrants' countries of origin could be categorized as follows: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, China and Middle East (Table 2).

It is important to underline that some recently arrived migrant groups specialize in specific activities: for example, African entrepreneurs specialize almost exclusively in hairdressing and cosmetics stores and Chinese invest mainly in general commerce. In contrast, Albanians, who have been migrating to Greece since the early 1990s and constitute the largest migrant group, invest in a wider variety of stores and services, such as bakeries, travel agencies and restaurants. The

customer base of migrant businesses is almost equally shared between an exclusively migrant clientele (56%) and a mixed clientele (44%). In fact, only the call centers and the hairdressing salons concern exclusively migrant clients. The rest of their economic activities, mainly mini markets and general commerce, respond to the needs of both migrants and Greek clients, offering remarkable advantages such as long opening hours and moderate prices.

In order to determine the importance of migrants' entrepreneurial activities within the commercial structure of Kypseli, we also recorded the totality of stores and services along three important commercial streets (Drosopoulou, Agias Zonis and

Figure 3 Migrants' stores and services in Kypseli.

Table 1 Migrants' types of entrepreneurial activities in Kypseli

Type of activity	Number of stores	Percentage
Mini markets	48	25%
Call centers	46	24%
General commerce	30	16%
Hairdressing salons	27	14%
Services	22	11.5%
Catering	19	10%

Table 2 Countries of origin of migrant entrepreneurs in Kypseli

Country of origin	Number of stores	Percentage
Africa (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Maghreb, etc.)	88	46%
Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, etc.)	37	19%
Eastern Bloc (Albania, Poland, Bulgaria, Georgia, etc.)	26	14%
China	16	8%
Near East (Egypt, Syria, etc.)	13	7%
Non-discernable	11	6%

Kyprou Street) (Figure 4). Migrant stores and services constitute 10% of the total commercial activities, reflecting their share in the total
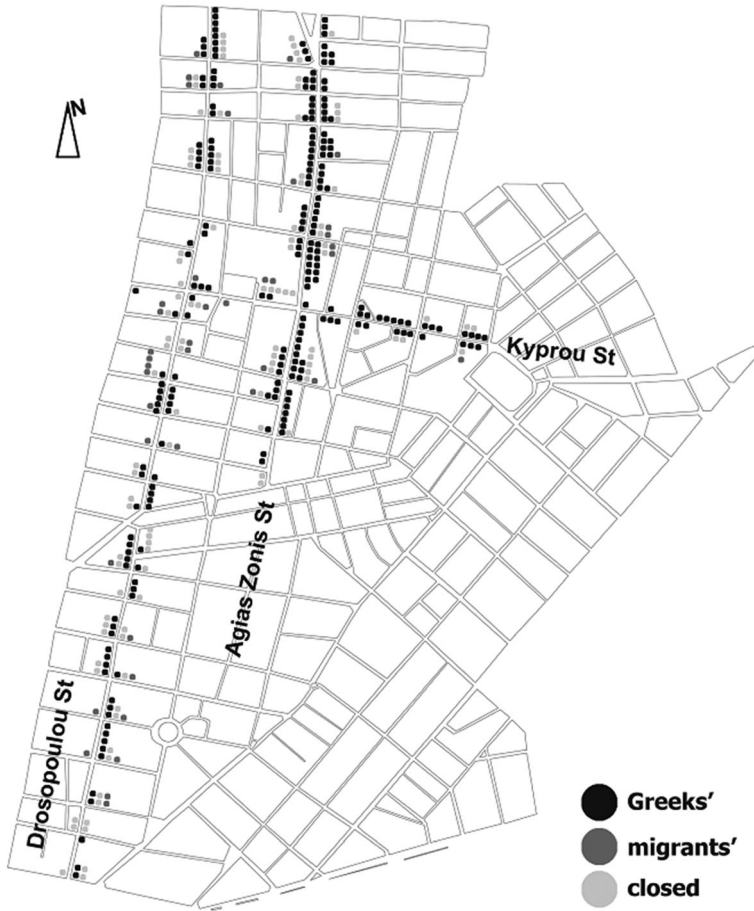
Figure 4   Greeks', migrants' and closed stores and services in Kypseli.

population. It is important to underline that 28% of the recorded stores are vacant, which reflects the consequences of the current economic crisis (ESEE 2013). Nevertheless, in total, migrants' entrepreneurial activities have reduced vacancy rates while meeting the needs of a customer base living in the neighborhood. Their presence can thus be understood as a contributor to urban and economic revitalization, as well as a contributor to social cohesion at the neighborhood level.

In conclusion, migrants' dispersion in Kypseli and the neighbourhood's low residential segregation rate are directly linked to the historically mixed social and spatial fabric of the neighborhood. Similarly, migrants' economic activities are dispersed throughout Kypseli's main commercial streets and mixed with Greeks' businesses, thus interacting with the existing economic environment.

Metaxourgeio in transition: complex geographies of migrant settlement

Socio-spatial background

Metaxourgeio is located in the 3rd district of the Municipality of Athens, in close proximity to the centrally located Omonoia

Square and Peiraios Street. It is less populated than Kypseli, and has lower building density and building heights.

The history of Metaxourgeio dates from the establishment of Athens as the capital of the newborn Greek state. In 1852, the creation of a silk factory in an abandoned building on Millerou Street gave the area an industrial character. At the beginning of the 20th century, Metaxourgeio attracted mostly working-class households, craftsmen and small businessmen, due to the expansion of small and medium-scale industrial units across the neighborhood. According to Agriantoni's (1995, 166–167) historical study of the area, 680 out of 1900 addresses recorded on a 1930 map contained productive activity on the ground level, such as workshops or carriage garages, and the rest concerned housing, including mainly individual houses of one or two floors inhabited by more than one family.

Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, socio-demographic trends in Metaxourgeio generally followed those of Kypseli, but with some important differences. Firstly, apartment buildings did not replace the existing housing to the same extent and at the same rate and, secondly, the neighborhood's population increased less than in the rest of the city. In the late 1970s, as small and medium-scale industrial units progressively decreased, following the general tendencies of deindustrialization, the importance of Metaxourgeio as an area of both production and employment declined.

In the 1990s, the non-renewal of the building stock and the existence of incompatible land uses in proximity to housing, led to intense depreciation of land prices. A significant percentage of apartments, productive units and warehouses remained vacant and, consequently, rent prices decreased considerably. Not until after 2000 and the arrival of migrants did Metaxourgeio's population increase, creating demand for both housing and commercial spaces. One characteristic of Metaxourgeio is the emergence of vibrant Chinese commercial activity, attracted by the stock of abandoned warehouses and their low rental prices (Polyzos 2014).

Today, this neighborhood is at the epicenter of conflicting socio-spatial dynamics, as a process of urban regeneration or even semigentrification is taking place. On the one hand, the municipality of Athens has already renovated cultural spaces such as museums and public squares; on the other hand, considerable private capital is being invested while new housing complexes, galleries and fashionable bars attract middle- and upper-class residents and clients.

Migrants' housing and commercial settlement

In Metaxourgeio, based on a representative sample of 181 buildings, 16.5% of the apartments are occupied by migrants and another 21.5% of them are vacant.[3] The percentage of immigrants is similar to Kypseli's, but the percentage of vacant apartments is higher. Their horizontal geographical distribution also confirms a general dispersion, with the exception of a slightly higher concentration in the northeastern part, next to the centrally-located Omonoia Square. Comparing migrants' and Greeks' horizontal geographical distribution, there seems to be a generally balanced ethnic mix and no specific concentrations that could be interpreted through an 'ethnic lens' (Fox and Jones 2013) (Figures 5 and 6).

As for the migrants' vertical distribution within the floors of the apartment buildings, the vast majority live in apartments from the first to the third floors and few of them live from the basement to the ground floor or from the fourth floor to higher floors. This is because, buildings in Metaxourgeio generally do not exceed three floors, and there are still many individual houses of one or two floors with no basements. Thus, compared to Kypseli, it seems that a larger percentage of migrants live in upper floors in Metaxourgeio.

Regarding migrants' entrepreneurial activities, 260 stores and services are open and 28 are closed. Their distribution is not that diffused in comparison to Kypseli, with two specific concentrations emerging: firstly, a

Figure 5 Horizontal geographical distribution of migrants in Metaxourgeio.

Figure 6 Horizontal geographical distribution of Greeks in Metaxourgeio.

concentration of Chinese wholesalers along Peiraios Street and, secondly, a multiethnic concentration of migrant activities close to Omonoia Square (Figure 7).

In Metaxourgeio, migrants invest mainly in wholesale commerce, general commerce, services, mini markets, catering, call centers and hairdressing salons (Table 3).[4] As for the

Figure 7 Migrants' stores and services in Metaxourgeio.

migrants' countries of origin, the largest groups recorded in Metaxourgeio are the Chinese, with a percentage of 50%, followed by migrants from Eastern Europe and Asia. African migrants are underrepresented with a percentage of 2.5% (Table 4).

As is the case among migrants in Kypseli, in Metaxourgeio recently arrived migrant groups tend to specialize in specific activities: Chinese migrants invest primarily in wholesale commerce (clothing, accessories and shoes) and Pakistani migrants invest mainly in electronic devices commerce (mobile phones, telephone cards and DVDs). In contrast, migrants from the former Eastern Bloc invest in a large variety of activities. As

regards their customer base, the majority of migrants' stores and services address both migrants and Greeks (67%), while only 32% of them serve an exclusively migratory clientele.

Focusing on four specific commercial streets in Metaxourgeio, out of a total of 195 stores and services, 46% are occupied by Greeks, 44% by migrants and 10% are vacant. The percentage of vacant stores is lower than in Kypseli because of the neighbourhood's strategic location in the most

Table 3 Migrants' types of entrepreneurial activities in Metaxourgeio

Type of activity	Number of stores	Percentage
Wholesale stores	132	46%
General commerce	41	14%
Services	39	13.5%
Mini markets	26	9%
Catering	22	8%
Call centers	16	5.5%
Hairdressing salons	12	4%

Table 4 Countries of origin of migrant entrepreneurs in Metaxourgeio

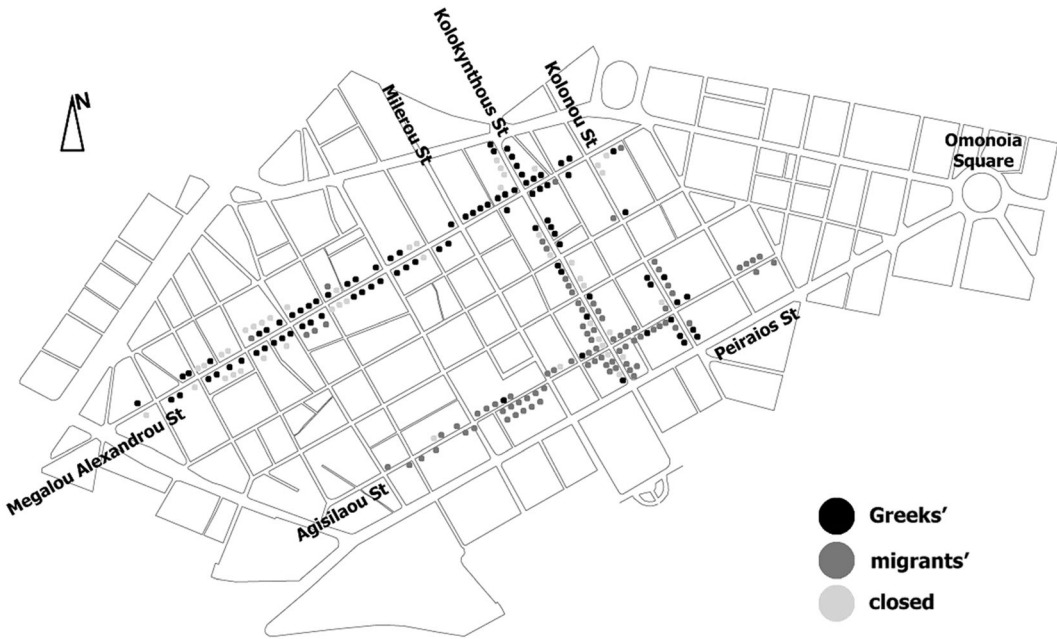| Country of origin	Number of stores	Percentage
China	144	50%
Eastern Bloc (Georgia, Russia, Albania, Romania, etc.)	58	20%
Asia (Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, etc.)	38	13%
Near East (Egypt, Syria, etc.)	32	11.5%
Africa (Nigeria, Ethiopia, Maghreb, etc.)	7	2.5%
Non-discernable	9	3%

Figure 8   Greeks', migrants' and closed stores and services in Metaxourgeio.

commercial part of the city center. Moreover, though the number of migrant and native Greek stores is almost equal, they differ in terms of their geographical distribution (Figure 8). Migrant and native Greek businesses are clustered, but along specific commercial streets they tend to separate: for example, while migrant entrepreneurs are highly concentrated along Agisilaou Street, Greeks concentrate along Megalou Alexandrou Street. Therefore, migrants' stores and services occupy a significantly higher percentage (up to 4 times greater) in comparison to Kypseli, and, at the street level, they are more visible and concentrated. This suggests that in Metaxourgeio migrant entrepreneurship has introduced new and more complex geographies that intersect with the socioeconomic dynamics of the area.

Conclusions

Inspired by a dialectical approach to space, this study of migrants' residential and entrepreneurial settlement in two central neighborhoods of Athens confirmed our initial assumption: there is a dynamic interrelationship and a mutual dependency between the specific socio-spatial context of the city and migrants' settlement within the urban fabric. As a matter of fact, in the case of Athens, the specific urban features of the two neighborhoods, along with the historic transformations of their socio-spatial structure, proved to be absolutely decisive in the way migrants settled the city: they settled in the large, empty and inexpensive stock of apartments, and a similarly low-priced stock of commercial spaces and warehouses which merged from the process of suburbanization (mostly in Kypseli) and that of deindustrialization (mostly in Metaxourgeio). Moreover, the proximity of both neighborhoods to the city center, public transport hubs and important commercial avenues has been an important factor in migrants' settlement, while the pre-existing social heterogeneity has prevented migrants' spatial exclusion and produced various patterns of multiethnic

coexistence. At the same time, the multiple geographies of migrants' settlement have transformed long-established urban structures and produced new patterns of social relations in space. Migrants' general dispersion throughout both neighborhoods, along with some areas of higher ethnic concentrations, has introduced more complex geographies and has produced a multiethnic spatial and social urban fabric. Through their investments in housing and entrepreneurial activities, they have stimulated the local economy, contributed to the maintenance and upgrading of residential and commercial spaces, and preserved a vibrant human presence, curbing the trends of abandonment, impoverishment and decay. Thus, they contributed to a kind of urban and economic revitalization, sometimes moderating trends of urban regeneration as envisioned by the municipal authorities and private investors, especially in the case of Metaxourgeio. It is important to underline that the purpose of emphasising the dialectics of space is not to reduce space to the only or the dominant factor determining and determined by migrants' settlement in urban space but, instead, to highlight the 'spatiality' of social phenomena, which is often ignored.

This comparative study highlights important differences between two neighborhoods in the same city and thus underlines the 'specificity of space' and the importance of contextual particularities. This approach avoids deterministic explanations, narrow terms and generalizations. The specific geographies of migrant settlement in Kypseli and Metaxourgeio have not confirmed well-known socio-spatial patterns established in other cities of Europe or North America. In the case of Athens, more complex geographies have emerged, with significant differences even between two neighborhoods of the same city. Thus, it has proven impossible to describe migrants' access to housing through patterns of residential segregation, such as 'ghettos', 'ethnic belts' or 'zones'. Similarly, it has proven impossible to describe migrants' entrepreneurship in terms of ethnic 'enclaves', 'clusters' or 'niches'. In order to describe migrant settlement in Athens, rather than insist on narrow definitions, which do not necessarily apply everywhere, we need to draw more complex descriptive frameworks through the use of analytical terms that better capture the complexity of social phenomena and local particularities. This confirms what many other scholars have already suggested (Soja 2000, 7–10; Glick Shiller and Çağlar 2009; Maloutas 2012): that only through the study of contextual particularities can we understand migrants' multiple geographies and analyze interethnic coexistence in urban space.

Last but not least, the present study has also confirmed the recent more complex, integrated and dialectical approaches to space and urban transformations in particular. This Athenian case study has demonstrated how migrant settlement in urban space may produce ruptures while interacting with historically established socio-spatial dynamics. In this sense, urban transformation implies reproductions and changes, similarities and differentiations, and continuities and discontinuities simultaneously. In other words, urban transformation works both ways and always remains an open process. This openness is the most interesting and challenging aspect of space and allows for the possibility of understanding socio-spatial phenomena beyond narrow terms. In this sense, it provides the possibility of contesting the stigmatization of migrants as a priori devastated, marginal and criminal, as well as contesting the stigmatization of their neighborhoods as dangerous and unreachable ghettos. Finally, in spite of xenophobia and stereotypical representations, it helps us recognize the importance of interethnic coexistences, and migrants' contribution to urban, social and economic cohesion in our increasingly ethnically diverse cities.

Disclosure statement

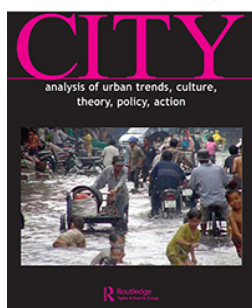No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes

1 This representative sample of 600 buildings (out of a total of 2543) contains 2800 apartments. The sample constitutes almost 23.5% of the total number of the neighborhood's apartment buildings.
2 The categorization of activities follows their frequency.
3 This representative sample of 181 buildings (out of a total of 1235) contains 2800 apartments. The sample constitutes almost 15% of the total number of the neighborhood's apartment buildings.
4 The categorization of activities follows their frequency.

References

Agriantoni, C. 1995. "The neighborhood of Metaxourgeio." In *Metaxourgeio in Athens*, edited by C. Agriantoni, and M. C. Hatzioannou, 157–171. Athens: EIE (National Hellenic Research Foundation), in Greek.

Balampanidis, D. 2012. "Greece: From an Emigration to Immigration Country. Access to Housing and Residential Segregation in Cities of Germany and in Athens." *Geographies* 19: 121–126, in Greek.

Balampanidis, D. 2015. "Geographies of Immigrants' Settlement in the Municipality of Athens. Access to Housing and Interethnic Relationships in the City's Neighborhoods." In *Urban conflicts*, edited by UrbanConflicts, 342–356. Thessaloniki: UrbanConflicts, in Greek.

Balampanidis, D., and I. Polyzos. 2012. "Housing Pathways and Commercial Activities of Migrants in Athens: Redefining the Spaces of Crisis." Paper presented at the Seminars of the Aegean, Syros, September 4–9.

Bonacich, E. 1973. "A Theory of Middleman Minorities." *American Sociological Review* 38 (5): 583–594.

Burgess, E. W. (1925) 1984. "The Growth of the City: An Introduction to a Research Project." In *The City*, edited by R. Park, E. W. Burgess, and R. D. McKenzie, 47–62. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). 2001. *Population and Housing Census 2001*. url: http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE.

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). 2011a. *Population and Housing Census 2011: Migration*. url: http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A1602/PressReleases/A1602_SAM03_DT_DC_00_2011_01_F_EN.pdf.

ELSTAT (Hellenic Statistical Authority). 2011b. *Table 10. Population Census 2011. Permanent Population per Nationality, Gender and Age Group*. url: http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-cencus2011tables, in Greek.

Emke-Poulopoulou, I. 2007. "Migration Flows from and to Greece." Chap. 4. In *The Challenge of Migration*. Athens: Papazisis, in Greek.

Engelen, E. 2001. "Breaking in and Breaking Out: A Weberian Approach to Entrepreneurial Opportunities." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 27 (2): 203–223.

ESEE (National Confederation of Hellenic Commerce). 2013. *Field Research on Representative Sample of Middle-scale Commercial Businesses*. Athens: ESEE. url: http://www.esee.gr/Portals/0/EasyDNNNews Documents/180/PeriodikiErevna-MME.pdf, in Greek.

Fox, E. J., and D. Jones. 2013. "Migration, Everyday Life and the Ethnicity Bias." *Ethnicities* 13 (4): 385–400.

Germain, A. 2000. "Immigrants and Cities: Does Neighborhood Matter?" Paper presented at the Transatlantic Learning Community Meeting, Montréal, May 23.

Glick Shiller, N., and A. Çağlar. 2009. "Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (2): 177–202.

Green, N. 2002. *Repenser les Migrations*. Paris: PUF.

Hall, S. 2010. "Picturing Difference: Juxtaposition, Collage and Layering of a Multiethnic Street." *Anthropology Matters* 12 (1): 1–17.

Kloosterman, R., J. Van der Leun, and J. Rath. 1999. "Mixed Embeddedness: (In)formal Economic Activities and Immigrant Business in the Netherlands." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 23 (2): 253–267.

Koutrolikou, P., and D. Siatitsa. 2011. "The Construction of a 'Public' Discourse for Athens Centre: Media, Migrants and Inner-city Regeneration." Paper presented at the International RC21 Conference, Amsterdam, July 7–9.

Labrianidis, L., and P. Hatziprokopiou. 2008. "Migration and Social Change in Thessaloniki: Immigrants' Integration and the New Multicultural Reality in the City." In *Thessaloniki on the Verge: The City as a Process of Change*, edited by G. Kafkalas, L. Labrianidis, and N. Papamichos, 217–264. Athens: Kritiki, in Greek.

Leal, J. 2004. "Segregation and Social Change in Madrid Metropolitan Region." *The Greek Review of Social Research* 113: 81–104.

Lefebvre, H. 1974. *La production de l'espace*. Paris: Anthropos.

Maloutas, T. 2012. "Introduction: Residential Segregation in Context." In *Residential Segregation in*

Comparative Perspective. Making Sense of Contextual Diversity, edited by T. Maloutas, and K. Fujita, 1–36. Fernham, UK: Ashgate.

Maloutas, T., and N. Karadimitriou. 2001. "Vertical Social Differentiation in Athens. Alternative or Complement to Urban Segregation?" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25 (4): 699–716.

Maloutas, T., D. Emmanouil, and M. Pantelidou-Malouta 2006. *Athens, Social Structure, Practices and Perceptions. New Conditions and Mutation Trends (1980–2000)*. Athens: EKKE (National Center for Social Research), in Greek.

Maloutas, T., V. Arapoglou, G. Kandylis, and J. Sayas. 2012. "Social Polarization and De-segregation in Athens." In *Residential Segregation in Comparative Perspective. Making Sense of Contextual Diversity*, edited by T. Maloutas, and K. Fujita, 257–283. Fernham, UK: Ashgate.

Ma Mung, E. 2009. "Le point de vue de l'autonomie dans l'étude des migrations internationales : « penser de l'intérieur » les phénomènes de mobilité." In *Les mondes de la mobilité. Exploration d'un paradigme*, edited by F. Dureau and M. A. Hilly, 25–38. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

Maroukis, T. 2009. "Undocumented Migration. Counting the Uncountable. Data and Trends Across Europe." Country report prepared for the research project CLANDESTINO, Greece. url: http://irregularmigration.net//typo3_upload/groups/31/4.Background_Information/4.4.Country_Reports/Greece_CountryReport_Clandestino_Nov09_2.pdf.

Massey, D. 2005. *For Space*. London: Sage.

Polyzos, I. 2014. "Parcours des migrants et mutations socio-spatiales à Athènes: le cas des commerçants chinois à Metaxourgeio." PhD diss., University of Poitiers/ MIGRINTER and NTUA (National Technical University of Athens).

Portes, A., and M. Zhou. 1993. "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530: 74–96.

Portes, A. 1995. *The Economic Sociology of Immigration. Essays on Networks, Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Préteceille, E. 2009. "La ségrégation ethno-raciale a-t-elle augmenté dans la métropole parisienne?" *Revue française de sociologie* 50 (3): 489–519.

Smith, M. P. 2005. "Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 31 (2): 235–244.

Soja, E. 1989. *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. New York: Verso.

Soja, E. 2000. *Postmetropolis. Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Triantafyllidou, A. 2014. "Migration in Greece. Recent Developments in 2014." Report prepared for the OECD Network of International Migration Experts, Athens: ELIAMEP. url: http://www.eliamep.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Migration-in-Greece-Recent-Developments-2014_2.pdf.

Vaiou, D. ed. 2007. *Intersecting Patterns of Everyday Life and Socio-spatial Transformations in the City. Migrant and Local Women in the Neighborhoods of Athens*. Athens: L-Press/ NTUA (National Technical University of Athens), in Greek.

Wacquant, L. 2004. "Ghetto." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 1–7. London: Pergamon Press.

Waldinger, R., H. Aldrich, R. Ward and Associates. 1990. *Ethnic Entrepreneurs. Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Wirth, L. (1928) 1998. *The Ghetto*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Dimitris Balampanidis, Architect-Urbanist, is a PhD candidate in Urban Social Geography, Department of Geography, Harokopio University of Athens (HUA). Email: d.balabanidis@yahoo.com

Iris Polyzos, PhD in Urban Sociology, is Researcher (membre scientific) at the French School at Athens (EFA). Email: iris.polyzos@efa.gr

City

analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action

The contestation of space in Milan's Chinatown

Nicola Montagna

The contestation of space in Milan's Chinatown[1]

Nicola Montagna

This paper looks at the transformation of Milan's Chinatown in the years following the April 2007 revolts and how these changes have been affected by conflicting interests. More specifically, I look at the political economy of urban space and the role of Chinatown in the dynamics of urban restructuring in Milan. Milan's Chinatown today is neither a Chinese residential area, nor a tourist district; rather, it is an ethnic economic and commercial enclave in a gentrified area near the city centre, where businesses owned by Italians and foreign nationals coexist. Since the revolts, Chinatown has become an increasingly contested space characterised by the presence of conflicting agendas. On the one hand, Italian businesses, the autochthonous population and local authorities regard Chinatown as a 'problem' and have attempted to reclaim the area. On the other hand, Chinese retailers and workers claim the right to use this urban space and carry out their businesses.

1. Introduction

On 7 April 2007, long-lasting and growing tensions between Chinese entrepreneurs and Italian authorities, residents and shopkeepers resulted in a violent clash in Milan's Chinatown. The battle between Chinese migrants and police started with an everyday dispute over a parking fine, when two traffic wardens stopped a Chinese trader unloading shoes into her shop, located on via Paolo Sarpi, the busiest street in Chinatown, fined her and threatened to revoke her car's registration certificate. The dispute escalated and soon erupted into a revolt after the businesswoman was joined by Chinese workers, local shopkeepers, businessmen and residents. The unrest continued until protesters were finally dispersed at nightfall. About 10 police officers and a similar number of migrants were injured, while many migrants were charged with offences. This was part of a long history of strained relations between Italian residents and entrepreneurs and Chinese businesses specialising in clothing, leather and the shoe trade. It brought to the fore struggles over the uses of urban space, which did not end with the revolt but continue to this day. The events on 7 April have the implications for the processes of Chinese settlement and incorporation in Milan.

This paper will explore the processes of contention, negotiation and incorporation of Chinatown within Milanese urban space. The processes through which various groups claim their own economic and social space within different urban contexts have become central at a time when neo-liberal restructuring has accelerated, while tensions and conflicts between migrants and 'natives'

have emerged across Europe. More specifically, I will investigate the relationship between Chinese businesses and Italian residents and issues of contestation/negotiation over space and migrants' incorporation into the urban space through different layers of interpretation. In Sections 2 and 3, I will examine the history of migration and migration policy by locating both the specific events and wider issues of Chinese migration and its growing incorporation in the Milanese and the Italian *migratory context*. Policy and politics are still mediated by the nation-state and this is why the state remains an obvious explanatory framework for dynamics of contestation. This, however, cannot alone account for protest and contention unless a second dimension, the wider *political context*, is taken into account. This will be the subject of Section 4 of this article. By this I mean not only immigration policies and different integration models, but the political process at large—as reflected in the respective forms of protest in each case. Drawing on the literature on social movements (e.g. Snow and Benford 1988; Tarrow 1998), I will discuss the events that led to the 7 April revolt and argue that, while political opportunities encourage contention and provide incentives for mobilisation, the framing processes provide signifiers and meanings for the various forms of collective action, including revolts.

In Section 5, I will consider the relationship between immigrant incorporation and the trends of neo-liberal urban restructuring (Brenner and Theodore 2005, 101). The latter relate partly to the repositioning of cities within a system of global urban competition, as reflected, for instance, in city-branding strategies to attract investment and consumption centred around new-economy industries, such as knowledge, finance, fashion, entertainment and culture (Glick Schiller and Çağlar 2009, 186–188). It also relates to the regeneration and gentrification of certain metropolitan areas. In both these respects Milan's Chinatown plays a crucial role. The area is located in an economically

strategic position. Via Paolo Sarpi used to be one of the main shopping streets (along with the fashion mall Foro Bonaparte and others), and it is very close to the centre as well as recently regenerated areas (such as the railway station Porta Garibaldi), with property prices sky rocketing in the last decade or so. Moreover, the area is not far from where Expo 2015 will take place, and many of the millions of tourists expected in Milan will likely visit Chinatown. The contention between Chinese businesses and Italian residents is related to *urban dynamics* and driven by competing interests over space, which is valued in so far as it generates profit (Molotch 1976). The analysis thus looks at Milan's Chinatown as a socially produced space in which different conflicting actors, including local institutions, resident association and business organisations, contribute to its production and meaning.[2]

2. The Chinese in Italy and Milan

The first Chinese migrants to Italy were from the southern province of Zhejiang and arrived in the 1930s primarily through France. Milan was the main destination, and migrants settled in *via Canonica*, at that time a slightly peripheral and affordable area close to important sites such as *Castello Sforzesco, Parco Sempione*, and the train station *Garibaldi*, where large numbers of internal migrants from other parts of northern and central Italy concentrated. From the outset, Chinese migrants' settlement was regarded as relatively unproblematic and characterized by entrepreneurial activities. They began as travelling vendors, selling trinkets imported from France and then silk neckties, often as the first step towards a more stable entrepreneurial career and upward socio-economic mobility. According to Farina et. al., 'some emerged and coordinated other travelling vendors, some managed to accumulate a little capital in order to rent a place and turn it into a shopfloor' (Farina et al. 1997, 37). Nevertheless, Italy's Chinese population

declined dramatically after the Second World War dwindling to about 700 people by the 1970s (Farina et al. 1997).

Since the early 1980s, however, a new flow of migrants has entered Italy and by the early 1990s the country had become a major Southern European destination for Chinese migrants (Christiansen 2003; Pieke 2004). According to the 2011 census, the official Chinese population grew to about 209,000, representing the fourth largest immigrant group in Italy (Blangiardo 2012). The main regions of settlement are Lombardy and Tuscany, especially the provinces of Milan, Prato and Florence. Like earlier Chinese migrants, entrepreneurship is the driving force of contemporary migration, facilitated by legislative changes that aid small business start-ups.[3] The 'silent' Chinese migration (Campani, Carchedi, and Tassinari 1994) proved to be economically successful, with an average monthly income in 2010 of between €1005 (males) and €904 (females), lower than Italian incomes but higher than other foreign nationals, while their remittances to China were the highest of all foreign nationals in 2012 (Fondazione Leone Moressa 2013).

Milan remains the main destination for Chinese migrants. The city's Chinese community has grown dramatically from 500 people in 1986 to 5700 ten years later, and reached 22,429 in December 2012, becoming Milan's third largest migrant group (Comune di Milano 2012). Entrepreneurship in the garment and clothing sector is the key economic activity for Chinese in Milan. The number of Chinese firms grew from 1505 in 2001 to 2822 in 2006, while the share of self-employed among the local Chinese population in 2006 was 24.5% (Marcaletti 2008). When the first ethnic Chinese 1980s settled in the streets surrounding *via Sarpi*, in the center of what we now call Chinatown, gentrification in the area had not yet started and property prices were low (Novak 2001). Since the late 1990s, the resident Chinese population started declining, moving outside downtown Milan (Cologna 2008).

In the early 2000s, the number of Chinese residents dropped to less than 1000 and in 2006, only 5.8% of the Chinese population lived there. There is no recent data about via Paolo Sarpi and the streets surrounding it. The most recent statistics refer to a wider area, Zone 8, which is the borough where via Paolo Sarpi is located in the north-west of the city and has a population of about 200,000. Statistics show that the concentration of Chinese in the whole borough is high with 5525 individuals or 25% of the entire Chinese population in Milan (Comune di Milano 2012).

In the meantime, Chinatown's role as a business district has been rapidly increasing. In 2007, 18% of Chinese enterprises were located in the area, while the number of commercial and service activities grew to 482, a 300% increase over six years. The main businesses are cloth and garment wholesalers (58.7%)—which provide markets outside Chinatown and Milan—retailers (23%) and other services (18.3%) including catering (Cologna 2008).

Today Milan's Chinatown is neither a predominantly Chinese residential area, nor a tourist district; rather, it is an ethnic economic and commercial enclave in a gentrified area near the city centre, where ground level businesses are owned by Italians and foreign nationals coexist. The upper floors, however, are mostly inhabited by Italian nationals.

3. Italian migration policy: between economic incorporation and social marginalisation

Italian migration policies were developed over a short period of time in order to deal with increasingly complex migratory trends and remain dominated by political and security concerns. Immigration has become one of the most politically contentious issues and dominant views in public discourse consider it a matter of 'law and order' (Hatziprokopiou and Montagna 2012; Montagna 2013).

To date there have been three significant pieces of legislation. These laws have primarily been focused on restricting entry and combating irregular immigration in order to comply with European Union directives on immigration management and the Schengen Acquis, while addressing security concerns from the public and the need for flexible and cheap labour. The current framework (the 2002 Bossi–Fini Law) regards migrants as 'guest workers', treats migration as temporary and presents it

> 'as an acceptable phenomenon only in so far as it is exploitable and useful in developing the local economy. It articulates the concept of the ideal migrant as a single individual whose ties to Italy are temporary and can easily be severed.' (Parati 2005, 155)

However, in this period of economic crisis the functionalist narrative of migrants as a resource for the economy has given way to the populist discourse of 'Italians first'. Since the election of the Berlusconi government in 2009, 'security concerns' have led to a number of decrees concerning security with the fight against irregular migration at their core (Magnani 2012).

The Italian approach to migration is marked by the ambivalence between economic incorporation and social marginalisation. On the one hand, migrants form a visible and integral part of the labour market and Italian economy. On the other hand, they are provided with little social support, enjoy little recognition of their rights and cultural identities by national and local policies, and face an openly hostile public discourse (at both institutional and social level) which directly links the presence of immigrants to criminality.

The Milanese authorities' approach to Chinatown reflects the broader policy framework. Although Milan's Chinatown is incorporated in the local economy and its wholesalers supply retailers across the country, it is regarded as a 'problem' for the autochthonous population. The April 2007 events were seen as a 'revolt', although some local residents dispute this and argue that the use of the term is a journalistic dramatization. Yet, they did not happen into a void. Since the late 1990s, there have been growing tensions between local Italians (through grass-roots committees, petitions, Internet blogs, etc.) and the Chinese, who face increasing pressure from the authorities. Tensions in the district had mounted on the eve of the revolt, as pointed out in press reports. Accordingly, local authorities have accused the Chinese community of bypassing the rules that Italian residents and commercial activities have to follow, and this justified a clampdown on their businesses. In the words of the Mayor of Milan, Lilly Moratti:

> 'Unfortunately, for many years in Chinatown they haven't respected the rules that are in place in the rest of the city. We intend to follow a path of respecting the rules.' (*La Repubblica*, 12 April 2007)

This view, incorporating the perception that Chinese shops sell counterfeit goods and by doing so break the rules of competition, was reiterated some years after the revolt by the Deputy Mayor Riccardo De Corato in order to justify the removal of Chinese businesses from the area:

> 'There are many who arrive, from who knows where (?) ... unless they arrive in the containers with the goods, and they bring over all kind of counterfeit stuff from China ... not one original piece. Everything they sell is fake.' (quoted in Manzo 2012, 430)

Even so, local authorities started negotiations with the local Chinese business association over the Council's plan to move Chinatown to a peripheral area outside Milan, a compromise which was promoted by the local authorities and seen by local Italian residents as a possible solution to their problems and the possibility of 'getting rid of' Chinese businesses. In the years following the revolt several suggestions were made, including the relocation of retailers and wholesalers to the

former industrial site of the Alfa Romeo car factory, in the Arese area, outside Milan. However, the negotiations, which involved the region's president, the deputy mayor, the government of the province, the Chinese business association and the Chinese consul, did not last long, and did not produce any effect:

> 'If the municipality and the mayor's office presented a practical and realistic plan, then someone might take it into account and leave. So far this plan has not been presented yet and you could not expect them to leave the area after they bought these premises at a very high price and cannot sell them again with the current crisis. It is unrealistic.' (Interview with member of Diamoci la mano, a Chinese–Italian association based in Milan, May 2013)

Chinatown remains in downtown Milan but with some major changes. Increasing traffic controls and the pedestrianisation of via Paolo Sarpi in 2010 have made the street inconvenient for wholesalers, forcing many of them to move elsewhere, while those who have remained in the surrounding streets, particularly in via Bramante, continue to face residents' discontent. In the meantime, via Paolo Sarpi, the current core of Chinatown, has turned into a popular street where shops are largely run by Chinese nationals with customers from different ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, according to a representative from a local language school, the revolt has had some positive side effects:

> 'it has forced everyone to consider the problem and led to the pedestrianisation. Now the road, Via Paolo Sarpi, has become the square of the district and the pedestrianisation has made this space available, turned into a square, a meeting point. Now there are several bars and wineries attended by Italians and Chinese.' (Interview with a teacher in a local Chinese school based in Milan, May 2013)

However, the pedestrianisation of the street has not been welcomed by everybody. While the Vivisarpi association argues that

'the pedestrianisation of via Paolo Sarpi is an important step but it is not enough unless the wholesalers leave the surrounding streets' (interview with a representative of the Associazione Vivisarpi, June 2013), the Chinese business association is concerned with the economic outcomes of the move: 'We were not against the pedestrianisation but we would have liked it to happen after the delocalisation of the wholesaling' (interview with a Chinese businessman, June 2013).

4. Political processes, framing and the 7 April 2007 revolt

The aftermath of the revolts, as discussed above, reveal that a functionalist interpretation suggesting that the incorporation of ethnic minorities, including the Chinese, in urban contexts is a matter of time, does not provide an adequate analytical tool to interpret the problematic ethnic relations and why these erupted in violent confrontation (Hatziprokopiou and Montagna 2012). Beyond the framework of immigration and integration policies, it is essential to consider the historical political context and in particular the relationship between state institutions and civil society, that is, the elements characterising the *political process* at large (Ruggiero and Montagna 2008, 139–140). As Tocqueville has argued in his work on the American system more than a century ago, centralised states weaken civil society and incite violence when collective action erupts (Tarrow 1998). By contrast, weak states encourage the development of civil society and therefore facilitate peaceful forms of participation. Although Tocqueville's analysis of the relationship between state and civil society was subjected to criticism and many of his conclusions were rejected, the idea that strong and weak states influence social movements' strategies remains central to the literature on collective action in general and violence in particular (della Porta and Diani 2006). Broadly speaking, the political process approach focuses on

how the degree of openness or closure of a political system might facilitate or discourage the rise of protest movements and affect the direction and characteristics of collective action itself. Therefore, forms of action are chosen on the basis of the institutional context and the goals pursued, but also against the background of established contentious traditions and available resources. Moreover, collective action depends on a number of other factors that fall into the domain of subjectivity and more specifically that of 'framing work'. The concept of framing refers to the process through which actors define the situation, and is used to conceptualise the work of signification and interpretation by activists, who frame and give meaning to events and conditions that they consider relevant to their mobilisation. Actors are guided by interpretative schemes that simplify the 'outside world', define social reality, shape grievances and turn them into broader claims that justify and dignify discontent while prompting collective action (Snow and Benford 1988). The process of 'framing' not only shapes social reality, but also defines the enemy, builds boundaries between 'us' and 'them' and provides solutions. My point is that the framing activity is not restricted to fully fledged social movements, but can also be applied to spontaneous revolts such as the April 7 revolt.

These two variables, the political environment and the framing process, were at work in Milan when protest turned into a revolt involving 'traditionally quiet' residents, workers and businessmen reacting to official hostility and pressure. Within such a constraining context, revolting was to some extent the only 'opportunity' offered to the 'silent' Chinese community in Milan to protest against a situation that was becoming economically unsustainable. On the one hand, there is a closed politics of non-recognition, nationally and locally, while the clampdown and multiplication of administrative controls on Chinese economic activities halted any form of mutual recognition. Symbolic of this was an image of a policeman trampling on the Chinese red flag during the

revolts, reported in many media accounts. Long before these events, local Italian residents, either with the help of right-wing parties and the Northern League or on their own initiative, organised a number of protests, in some cases with institutional representatives taking part. For instance, a 600-people assembly that took place in 1999 featured the future Mayor Moratti, together with Mr De Corato and the Municipal Police chief, Mr Bezzon. In the aftermath of the revolt, hostility towards Chinese economic activities did not end, although the local administration changed its tactics. Instead of openly using repressive forces it developed a range of measures, including the pedestrianisation of via Paolo Sarpi, that, with the pretext of improving conditions in the neighbourhood, were actually aimed at pressuring the Chinese to move elsewhere. While the measures have changed, the goal has remained the same, as blatantly stated by the deputy mayor:

> 'Now, Paolo Sarpi Street is a pedestrian area (and they [the traders] didn't understand this small footway . . . It's not that they didn't understand, because if you and I understood it means that they also understood . . . because we are not that . . .). What is the declared purpose of the pedestrian area? It is to make the Chinese wholesale activities go away. Why did we do it? Not because we wanted to increase the air quality on Paolo Sarpi Street but because we want to get rid of these Chinese. If they don't understand this, what are we supposed to do?' (quoted in Manzo 2012, 434)

On the other hand, the Chinese community developed a frame that defined a social reality of grievances and discrimination, according to which they were selectively targeted and unjustifiably discriminated against by local authorities:

> 'The revolt was spontaneous, none of us organised it. But we could feel that enough was enough and that that kind of pressure was unbearable. After all, we are here to work. We

are not killing anyone, we just work and pay taxes. They fined me every day and many others like me. We could not understand why Italians can work and we can't.' (Interview with a local Chinese businessman, May 2013)

By selectively targeting their economic activities, the Chinese feel that local authorities intervene in market competition in favour of Italian-owned shops and businesses:

> 'Wholesaling in this area has always existed but has never been considered seriously and has always been dealt with in a punitive manner, even militarily. That day the local municipality sent its policemen who begun to fine each Chinese carriage that moved to the street … the Chinese at some point they could no longer work.' (Interview with Jianyi, member of the Chino-Italian association Diamoci la mano, May 2013)

The revolt was therefore the outcome of the pressure on Chinese businesses by local institutions and political actors—related to the fact that sanctions were regularly imposed on all activities surrounding Chinese trade—and the framing of this pressure as highly discriminatory and threatening their ability to work.

5. Competing interests and ethnic relations in the urban context

In his writings of the 1970s, Molotch (1976) theorises the city as a 'growth machine' where 'any given parcel of land represents an interest'. Groups and communities coalesce around land-based interests, whereby each of them 'has in mind a certain future for that parcel which is linked somehow with his or her own well-being'. Therefore, any territory is not only marked by legal, political or topographical borders, but is 'a mosaic of competing land interests capable of strategic coalition and action' (Molotch 1976, 311). The dynamics of urban restructuring in Milan and certain

micro-structural elements concerning the location, role and functions of Chinatown resembles Molotch's analysis in many respects.

Chinatowns across the globe—some of the major ones at least—have not accidentally become positive symbols of urban diversity. In their material success as ethnic enclaves, their location at the heart of major cities' centres is crucial. Their development therefore has been intertwined with urban restructuring and regeneration in central neighbourhoods. The discourse surrounding the Chinese as a successful and model minority recognises an ethnic group's right to the city in exchange for revenue and capital investment (Chan 2005). The tolerance of difference in urban space is thus understood in terms of fulfilling certain criteria and making a contribution. It is not only Chinatown's space that is being branded, but also the success of an ethnic community that is considered 'unproblematic', because it generates profit. Milan's Chinatown is also a symbol of diversity, but diversity here assumes negative connotations. According to Italian residents and developers, the Chinese and their businesses devalue a part of urban space that is potentially extremely profitable. The local community (including Italian residents and entrepreneurs) has raised a number of cultural and economic issues, which often overlap and interweave. From a cultural point of view, local residents refer to the usual stereotypes to describe the Chinese community in Milan:

> 'It is an underground world that involves the Chinese community and we do not know … I have not seen it directly, but I know that it exists because some people talked to me about it.' (Cologna 2001, 24)
> 'It is not clear what they do and where they get the money from to open their businesses … they pay in cash all the time.' (Interview with an Italian resident, May 2013)

We may call this the 'Fu Manchu' syndrome, with reference to the fictional character

invented by Sax Rohmer. During the first half of the 20th century, the 'myth' of Chinatown referred to a secluded quarter where illicit activities took place—a representation epitomising the mystery, danger and insidiousness of Chinese people in the Western imaginary (Wong 1995; Ealham 2005). In early 20th-century Britain, Chinese migrants were associated with crime and decadence and were often targets of hostile feelings and race revolts (Benton and Gomez 2008). Although such negative portrayals have now given way to positive stereotypes of the 'model minority', some similarities can be found in present-day Italian perspectives. In Milan, local Italian residents see the Chinese as invaders, closed and unwilling to integrate with Italian society, while the area's 'Italian identity' has disappeared with the arrival of the Chinese residents and shops (*International Herald Tribune*, 29 April 2007):

> 'It's not just about the carts. The Chinese have taken over the neighbourhood, they have stolen spaces from Italians, but they haven't developed relationships with the residents.'
> 'This used to be a Milanese neighbourhood with stores to buy thread, bread, electrical things, the kind of stores neighbourhoods have.'

Behind historically constructed representations, however, lie very material issues. The changing character of the area also has economic implications, involving direct competition between two agents, the established and the newcomers—as expressed by local Italian residents and shopkeepers interviewed by Cologna (2001, 23):

> 'Italian clients do not come because Chinese clients annoy them. They are very intrusive. If three of them come in the Italian client gets annoyed.'
> 'The Chinese have been devaluing the area, not just because they are Chinese, but because loads of them are coming over.'

With Expo 2015—that will take place not far from the area—approaching, competing

views have been exacerbated by the idea launched by some local businesses, both Italian and Chinese, to build two gates similar to those of many other Chinatowns across the globe. Some residents have reacted:

> 'The Mayor wants two Chinese arches at the ends of via Paolo Sarpi. Is this the way to return the Sarpi area to its residents? We say no to the "gettoisation" of the area.' (http://www.vivisarpi.it/wb/ [accessed 6 December 2014])

Until the current centre-left municipal government won the local election in 2011, such views were shared by local authorities, who actively engaged in the conflict maintaining that the area has lost its value in at least two respects. Firstly, Italian clients are no longer shopping in the area, which means that Milan's Chinatown is perceived as an ethnic ghetto where an ethnic migrant community has set up its activities. Secondly, the area is no longer economically attractive and properties have lost their value. Both authorities and residents thus presented Chinatown as a place where competing land interests are mutually exclusive and prevail only if one group can coalesce at the expense of the other. While in other places Chinatown has become a 'global brand', in Milan it has been seen as an intrusive obstacle to the prosperity of the area, rather than an economic asset.

6. Conclusion

Recently, some economic potential has begun to be acknowledged. Via Paolo Sarpi has been freed of wholesalers, although they still remain in some surrounding streets, and been pedestrianised, renovated and decorated with trees and flowers in 2011. It has become a shopping street with a variety of shops, the majority of them Chinese, and trendy wine bars. In February 2013, a number of Chinese and Italian organisations organised the Chinese New Year, with the support of

the council, for the first time since the revolt in 2007. Expo 2015 is also being regarded as an opportunity for further economic investments by both local Chinese businesses and the local authorities. The temporary construction of two arches at the ends of via Paolo Sarpi would attract Asian tourists, encourage the links with China and recognize the area as 'Chinatown' in much the same way as in Liverpool, London or San Francisco. Local residents aim to challenge this idea, arguing that Chinese businesses are incompatible with the history and tradition of the area, and, of course, their own interests:

> 'A whole neighbourhood turned into a logistics platform for wholesale, certainly not worthy of China as it prepares to land at Expo. From the perspective of Expo we keep wondering how it is that this neighbourhood, so central to the city, so well characterised with its history and its specific urbanism, can present itself to visitors in such a degraded manner, crossed at any time of day with vans, bicycles, carts full of boxes, parcels, cartons which are deposited everywhere, baskets overflowing with waste almost constantly in the neighbourhood whether there was any form of waste collection or not. [We ask the mayor] to reject unequivocally this absurd and superficial plan which would be experienced by the inhabitants, of which less than 15% are Chinese citizens as confirmed by the findings of the last census, to expropriate their district but rather to make every effort for the neighbourhood to become a cross-point of different cultures that mingle without overpowering, and to safeguard the distinctiveness of all.' (*Cronaca Milano*, 19 September 2014, http://www.cronacamilano.it [accessed 6 December 2014])

The contention over urban space is far from being resolved and the political and economic elements that have fuelled it over the last 20 years or so are still at work. While the centre-left government has changed its approach to the Chinese community, local residents are still hostile and right-wing parties are ready to exploit this hostility.

The area is still, and will increasingly be, a 'mosaic' of conflicting and coalescing interests aiming to produce and shape the urban space. On the one hand, the local residents, the vast majority of whom are of Italian origins, feel deprived of 'their' district and having their properties devalued. On the other hand are Chinese businesses that aim to flourish and exploit the profitability of an area that is close to both the centre of the city and Expo 2015. Who will win is hard to say. Certainly, events in recent years have been more favourable to the Chinese community than in the past.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1   This paper was inspired and re-elaborates some ideas already presented in Hatziprokopiou and Montagna (2012). However, while Hatziprokopiou and Montagna (2012) was a comparison between the campaign to save London's Chinatown and the revolt in Milan in April 2007 and the Milan case stopped with the revolt in April 2007, the current paper broadens the perspective on Milan and aims to explain the contentious relationships between ethnic Chinese businesses and Italian residents. The time lapse of the events described in this paper is much wider and data refers to the period from the late 1990s to 2014.
2   This study is based on material from the printed press and online resources—e.g. *Cronaca Milano, International Herald Tribune, La Repubblica,* www.vivisarpi.it—as well as from papers by Cologna (2008) and Manzo (2012)—, which have been integrated with various interviews with members of local associations and ethnographic observation involving a number of visits to Milan's Chinatown.
3   By 1992, legislation had been introduced so that only immigrants who had arrived before 1990 were eligible for self-employment. Only with the 1998 'Turco-Napolitano' law was the granting of residence permits for the purpose of independent work liberalised.

References

Benton, G., and E. T. Gomez. 2008. *Chinese in Britain, 1800-Present: Economy, Transnationalism and Identity.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Blangiardo, G. C. 2012. "Il linguaggio dei numeri." In *Diciassettesimo Rapporto sulle Migrazioni 2011*, edited by Fondazione Ismu, 35–50. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Brenner, Neil, and Nik Theodore. 2005. "Neoliberalism and the Urban Condition." *City* 9 (1): 101–107.

Campani, G., F. Carchedi, and Alberto Tassinari. 1994. *L'immigrazione silenziosa. Le communita cinesi in Italia.* Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli.

Chan, W. F. 2005. "A Gift of a Pagoda, the Presence of a Prominent Citizen, and the Possibilities of Hospitality." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23: 11–28.

Christiansen, F. 2003. *Chinatown, Europe: Identity of the European Chinese Towards the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century.* London: Routledge Curzon.

Cologna D., ed. 2001. *Coabitazione, convivenza e conflitto tra residenti cinesi e in quartieri di Milano.* Milano: Sinergia.

Cologna, D. 2008. "Il 'caso Sarpi' e la diversificazione crescente della imprenditoria italiana." In *Un dragone nel Po. La Cina in. Piemonte tra percezione e realtà*, edited by R. Cima, M. Dancelli, T. Parisi, and G. Rinaldi, 114–130. Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso.

Comune di Milano Settore Statistica. 2012. "Focus on Stranieri 2012." Milan. Accessed April 12, 2015. http://allegati.comune.milano.it/Statistica/ Popolazione/Focus%20on%20stranieri%202012/ Focus%20on%20stranieri%202012.pdf.

della Porta, D., and M. Diani. 2006. *Social Movements: An Introduction.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ealham, C. 2005. "An Imagined Geography: Ideology, Urban Space, and Protest in the Creation of Barcelona's 'Chinatown', c. 1835–1936." *International Review of Social History* 50 (3): 373–397.

Farina, P., D. Cologna, A. Lanzani, and L. Breviglieri. 1997. *Cina a Milano. Famiglie, ambienti e lavori della popolazione cinese a Milano.* Milan: Collana AIM - Editoriale Abitare Segesta.

Fondazione Leone Moressa. 2013. "Studi e ricerche sull'economia dell'immigrazione L' Identikit dell' immigrato cinese." Venice. Accessed March 7, 2015. http://www.fondazioneleonemoressa.org/newsite/ wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Cinesi.pdf.

Glick Schiller, N., and A. Çağlar. 2009. "Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35 (2): 177–202.

Hatziprokopiou, P., and N. Montagna. 2012. "Contested Chinatown: Chinese Migrants Incorporation and the Urban Space in London and Milan." *Ethnicities* 12 (6): 706–729.

Magnani, N. 2012. "Immigration Control in Italian Political Elite Debates: Changing Policy Frames in Italy, 1980s–2000s." *Ethnicities* 12 (5): 643–664.

Manzo, L. 2012. "Emergent Spaces, Contemporary Urban Conflicts: Experiences of Social Mix in Changing Neighborhoods - The Case Study of Milan's Chinatown." In *Living on the Boundaries: Urban Marginality in National and International Contexts*, edited by C.C. Yeakey, 415–449. Bradford: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Marcaletti, F. 2008. "L'etnicizzazione del mercato del lavoro lombardo: un'analisi quantitative. Rapporto 2007." In *L'etnicizzazione del mercato del lavoro Lombardo*, edited by M. Colasanto and F. Marcaletti, 35–92. Milan: Osservatorio Regionale per l'integrazione e la multietnicità, Fondazione ISMU.

Molotch, H. 1976. "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place." *The American Journal of Sociology* 82 (2): 309–331.

Montagna, N. 2013. "Labour, Citizenship and Subjectivity: Migrants' Struggles within the Italian Crisis." *Social Justice. A Journal of Crime, Conflict, and World Order* 39 (1): 37–53.

Novak, C. 2001. "Il quartiere cinese di Canonica-Sarpi in bilico tra radicamento e conflitto." In *Coabitazione, convivenza e conflitto tra residenti cinesi e in quartieri di Milano*, edited by D. Cologna, 9–13. Milan: Sinergia.

Parati, G. 2005. *Migration Italy: The Art of Talking Back in a Destination Culture.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Pieke, F. N. 2004. "Chinese Globalization and Migration to Europe." *Centre for Comparative Immigration Studies Working Paper Series*, WP 94: 1–16. San Diego: University of California.

Ruggiero, V., and N. Montagna, eds. 2008. *Social Movements: A Reader.* London: Routledge.

Snow, D. A., and R. D. Benford. 1988. "Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization." In *International Social Movement Research 1*, edited by B. Klandermans, H. Kriesi, and S. Tarrow, 197–218. Greenwich, Conn.: JAI.

Tarrow, S. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wong, S. 1995. "Chinatowns: Conflicting Images, Contested Terrain." *MELUS* 20 (1): 3–15.

Nicola Montagna is based at the Department of Criminology and Sociology, School of Law, Middlesex University. Email: nicola6@mdx.ac.uk
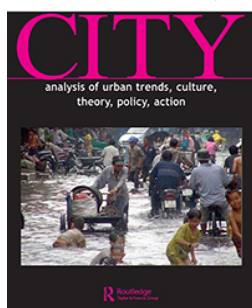
Business activities of immigrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia in Vienna

Josef Kohlbacher & Ursula Reeger

Published online: 15 Feb 2016.

Submit your article to this journal ↗

View related articles ↗

View Crossmark data ↗

Business activities of immigrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia in Vienna
Group-specific branch concentrations versus locally determined variations

Josef Kohlbacher and Ursula Reeger

Migrants who came to Vienna as guest workers from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey during the 1960s still form the majority of the local immigrant population. Business activities of Turks and former Yugoslavs cover a multitude of diverse sectors; what was once a niche economy has now become an important part of Viennese business life. This paper combines official statistics for Vienna as a whole, survey material and expert interviews, to analyse business ventures run by migrant entrepreneurs on two commercial streets in Vienna. Our research shows significant local variation in the migrant economies of the two groups in the study areas, highlighting the importance of the local context as an additional determinant shaping the diversity of business activities of certain immigrant groups.

1. Introduction

In the past two decades, national and municipal governments, business associations and a wide array of third sector institutions have attached increasing value to migrant business, drawing links between diversity and the economic performance of cities (Sahin, Nijkamp, and Baycan-Levent 2007). As a result of this, urban municipalities have undertaken a broad range of measures aimed at promoting migrant entrepreneurship (European Commission 2008). These interventions have involved for example, information services, finding suitable business locations, improving skills needed for business, finding personnel, management

skills or obtaining access to finance (see Rath and Swagerman 2012, 49ff.). The City of Amsterdam will be presented as an example of a city that has adopted a wide range of efficient measures (Van Heelsum 2010).

This spatial and community-oriented analysis aims to contribute to research on the nature of the local and social embeddedness of migrants' entrepreneurial activities, and looks at the interaction between 'business traditions' within the different migrant groups and locally determined opportunity structures in certain urban areas. It is based on an analysis of statistical data at the urban level and a primary survey amongst migrant entrepreneurs from Turkey or the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia = BCS

migrants) migration background on two Viennese commercial streets. By using official data it is possible to gain a more general understanding of the economy of former 'guest workers', and looking at the city on a street level provides a realistic 'microscopic observation' of local spaces, mirroring how entrepreneurs experience and shape urban space.

To date, there has been no analysis at the micro-level of neighbourhoods and streets in Austrian cities. Thus, the intention of our analysis is to move at least one modest step closer to the outstanding research of Suzanne Hall (2012; see also Hall and Datta 2010) on localities in London; due to limited resources, however, it is only possible to provide insight into the businesses of two migrant communities on two selected streets in the Austrian capital. Owing to a lack of official statistics at the local level, our analysis is complemented by fieldwork research, including 12 expert interviews and a survey of 30 entrepreneurs based on semi-structured interviews. We hope to identify new and promising avenues for future spatially oriented entrepreneurship research and to allow for a better understanding of local and supra-local entrepreneurial processes in the city.

2.   Migrant entrepreneurship in the local urban context: the geographical perspective

Analysis at the neighbourhood level must address two sets of factors: (1) location factors embedded in the broader context of the entire urban economy and (2) the neighbourhood itself, with its infrastructure of institutions and local migrant networks. A relationship exists between urban socio-economic processes and local factors shaping the local migrant economies in disadvantaged urban neighbourhoods (Meegan and Mitchel 2001).

From a geographical point of view, migrant entrepreneurs have much to contribute to particular streets or neighbourhoods in cities (Ma Mung and Lacroix 2003; Rath 2005). If streets are deserted by indigenous businesses and replaced—in an invasion and succession sequence—by foreign entrepreneurs, local economic recovery is possible (Pang and Rath 2007). As owners of local businesses, migrants have a clear stake in the prosperity, accessibility and safety of their neighbourhoods. These shops often function as places where members of local social networks gather. They are therefore an important component of the social fabric sustaining civic society at the grass-roots level.

The academic investigation of the economy of immigrants in Austria started in the 1990s. Some studies provide a general overview (Haberfellner 2003, 2011; L&R Sozialforschung 2007; Schmid et al. 2006), while other surveys were conducted with particular migrant communities (for some examples, see Cakir 2004; Demircan 2003; Wang 2008). However, there are still many aspects of urban self-employment amongst migrants where relatively little is known. There are some analyses in which the local context is at least partly considered (Hatz 1997; Haberfellner and Betz 1999; Gollner 2001; Kohlbacher and Reeger 2013; L&R Sozialforschung 2007), but studies based on research at the street level are largely missing. This despite the fact that streets are important arenas of interaction and both social and economic exchange, and as such represent crucial spatial units reflecting broader dimensions of immigrant economies.

3.   The path of former 'guest workers' to entrepreneurship: political frameworks and development processes

In Vienna, the term 'ethnic entrepreneur' is not widely used in official documents or the media. Ethnic entrepreneurs are usually referred to as 'entrepreneurs with a migration background' or 'migrant entrepreneurs', meaning self-employed people who have

migrated to Austria or a businessperson who has at least one immigrant parent. This definition does not consider the actual citizenship of the individual. The Austrian media will sometimes use the term 'entrepreneurs with migration roots'.

Since the turn of the millennium, and because of the crisis of the labour market concerning job loss in production and in other traditional branches, the Municipality and Vienna's Economic Chamber—as well as other institutions, for example, Public Employment Service Austria (AMS) and Vienna Employment Promotion Fund (waff)—have started to promote self-employment as a (more or less) attractive income alternative for the immigrant population (Kohlbacher and Reeger 2013). In the case of general economic development, two strategic plans (largely formulated by Municipal Department 27) can be considered relevant benchmarks: the Vienna 2000 Strategy Plan and the Vienna 2004 Strategy Plan. In these documents, Vienna's municipality fully recognises the increased importance of the local migrant economy and its promotion.

At the time of our survey, no data source provided valid information about the exact number of business owners with a migration background. Based on the 2010 Labour Force Survey (Medien Servicestelle 2012), 68,400 people with a migration background were recorded as self-employed in Austria, representing 9.2% of all economically active migrants (the proportion amongst Austrians without a migration background was 12.1% in the same year). A total of 12.9% of all self-employed persons in Austria moved from other European Union (EU) countries, the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, 6.4% were from Turkey and 3.9% from the former Yugoslavia. Female entrepreneurs tend to be underrepresented in many migrant groups, particularly third country nationals. This is especially true for the Turkish community. According to MINGO Migrant Enterprises (Raeke, n.d.), businesses owned by migrants represented roughly 30% of the urban economy in Vienna. Of

53,173 single-person enterprises, about 16,000 were run by people with a migration background and about 40% of all start-ups were started by migrants.

During the 1960s, the so-called 'guest workers'—mainly from the former Yugoslavia and Turkey—helped to fill a gap in workforce demand in the quickly growing Austrian economy. In 1964, an agreement on labour recruitment with Turkey was signed, followed by one with the former Yugoslavia in 1966. Subsequently, recruitment offices in these countries were established. Some sectors of the Viennese labour market were completely dependent on migrant workers with specific niches being more or less 'reserved' for migrants of specific ethno-national affiliations. In 1973, 227,000 guest workers lived and worked in Austria, the majority of whom came from the former Yugoslavia (Payer 2004). By 2001, 45.7% of all foreign residents in the Austrian capital were Yugoslavs and 15.7% came from Turkey (Kohlbacher and Reeger 2013). In 2011, both groups together numbered almost 250,000 people in Vienna and still form the most important immigrant communities in the city.

In the early phase of the 'guest worker' migration, self-employment was a rare phenomenon. Recent decades have seen the second and third generation increasingly leave their 'traditional' labour market niches and become active in a broader variety of sectors in the Viennese economy. In 2011, the rate of economic inactivity amongst Turks was slightly higher than that of the BCS community. Among both groups the proportion of economically active persons was much higher than amongst EU-12 and EU-14 immigrants and also far surpassed that of the Austrians.

Traditionally, the level of self-employment in Vienna has been lower than in cities in the UK, France or the Netherlands, but since the 1990s there has been a steady increase (Haberfellner and Betz 1999). In the last three decades, many commercial streets have been revitalised by ethnic enterprises. The

path leading to self-employment is not always entirely voluntary (resulting from 'push factors'), often representing a survival strategy during times of economic crisis and high unemployment rates. This is reflected by the high correlation between the rates of the self-employed and the rates of the unemployed, viewed by branch. The 'classical ethnic shops' and restaurants are actually only one side of the coin, but their visibility means that the public perception of the migrant economy is still strongly influenced by this picture (L&R Sozialforschung 2006).

The available statistics show that there are clear differences in self-employment based on country of origin. The proportion of self-employed persons born in one of the EU-12 countries is more than triple that of those born in the former Yugoslavia (4.1%). One must bear in mind, that in 2011 the Austrian labour market was still more or less closed to EU-12 migrants (subject to transitional rules) and one of the few possibilities to work in Austria was self-employment. In fact, many EU-12 migrants started small, one-person businesses and, after the transitional rules ended, tried to get salaried employment at Austrian firms. At a rate of 6.9%, significantly more Turkish-born individuals are active as entrepreneurs than those from the former Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, these two groups still lag behind the EU-14 and the EU-12 in this respect.

As far as the distribution of self-employed persons according to economic activity is concerned, sectoral concentration amongst those from the former Yugoslavia is markedly weaker than amongst those from Turkey. The highest proportion of BCS entrepreneurs can be found in technical activities, closely followed by trade and construction (tied for second place). Other well-represented categories are 'other services', transportation and accommodation. Very low numbers of BCS entrepreneurs can be found in the remaining categories of economic activity. Among Turkish migrants a higher concentration is quite pronounced. More than one-third of the entrepreneurs of Turkish origin are active in trade and transportation. Of the remaining categories, Turkish migrants can be found in significant numbers only in accommodation and food services (Table 1).

The long-term persistence of an 'immigrant worker' background is a strong contributory factor to generally weak participation in self-employment. Migrants' traditional labour market position on the lower rungs of the employment ladder and especially as (unskilled) labour has had the effect that, for a long time, self-employment was not even considered an attractive alternative for gainful employment, as an expert from Vienna Economic Chamber explained:

> 'The traditional "guest worker system" located certain groups in certain labour market positions. Starting from these inferior positions it is extremely difficult to develop an individual life model of entrepreneurship.'

The explanations for the continuing concentration (especially of Turkish entrepreneurs) in certain economic sectors in the expert interviews as well as in the available literature are varied (see also Cakir 2004; Demircan 2003). On the one hand this concentration of Turkish entrepreneurs in certain sectors leads to more business start-ups and greater numbers of self-employed persons in certain branches compared to BCS migrants. However, within these sectors the competitive pressure in the communities increases even further, as does the risk of bankruptcy. The absence of a strong spearhead branch effect in the BCS group also produces ambivalent consequences. On the one hand, imitation effects are reduced, weakening the overall propensity to establish businesses compared to Turkish immigrants, but on the other hand, the competitive pressure in the contested branches is also dampened.

Education levels constitute a clear distinction between the two 'old' migrant worker groups and 'new' immigration from East Central and Eastern Europe, the latter possessing generally higher qualifications and greater entrepreneurial success, both in Vienna and beyond.

Table 1 Migrants born in the former Yugoslavia and Turkey in Vienna: activity status and self-employment by economic sector, 2011

	Former Yugoslavia		Turkey	
	N	%	N	%
Total	**3904**	**100.0**	**2646**	**100.0**
Agriculture and forestry	22	0.6	11	0.4
Mining	4	0.1	0	0.0
Manufacturing	95	2.4	94	3.6
Energy supply	1	0.0	0	0.0
Water and waste management	24	0.6	6	0.2
Construction	484	12.4	160	6.0
Trade	504	12.9	591	22.3
Transportation	367	9.4	403	15.2
Accommodation and food service	377	9.7	377	14.3
Information, communication	101	2.6	48	1.8
Finance, insurance	63	1.6	32	1.2
Real estate	329	8.4	209	7.9
Professional, scientific and technical activities	514	13.2	167	6.3
Other economic services	343	8.8	82	3.1
Public administration	0	0.0	0	0.0
Education	36	0.9	11	0.4
Healthcare and social services	75	1.9	24	0.9
Arts, entertainment, leisure	138	3.5	23	0.9
Other services	402	10.3	402	15.2
Services to private households	22	0.6	5	0.2
Other	3	0.1	1	0.0
Total residential population by activity status				
Economically active	94,845	61.9	39,188	59.1
Economically inactive	58,336	38.1	27,155	40.9

Source: Register-based Census 2011. The numbers include assisting family members, however, only a small number: former Yugoslavia 85 persons, Turkey 106 persons.

Closely connected to education levels, one finds skills gaps in areas such as German and foreign language skills, management skills, entrepreneurial know-how, knowledge relating to fiscal tax frameworks, the use of modern sources of information as well as the willingness to utilise institutionalised assistance. An expert who is also a successful entrepreneur said:

> 'Deficits in formal and informal qualifications can frequently be found in both the Turkish and BCS communities. There is a general lack of management competence and what has worked in the country of origin will not necessarily work here.'

Our survey revealed three categories of entrepreneurs in both migrant communities that have experienced particular problems (e.g. in developing a business plan, nowadays a prerequisite for successful start-ups): those with a low level of education; those with a limited knowledge of German; and those entrepreneurs who are forced down this path due to unemployment.

4. The migrant economy of Turks and former Yugoslavs in Vienna's urban context

The following analysis is group-oriented and aims to address the nature of the local as well as community embeddedness of entrepreneurial activities of Turks and BCS migrants. Our basic hypothesis was that there is some interaction between persistent

'business traditions' in the migrant groups and locally determined opportunity structures in certain urban areas.

4.1. The two research neighbourhoods

A spatial focus is now provided through comparative structural analyses of the migrant economy, involving ground floor shops (due to accessibility considerations) in two different urban shopping settings, selected based on socio-demographic criteria, for example, the proportion and structure of the population with a migration background at the district and registration district level (Figures 1 and 2).

The Taborstraße is situated in Vienna's 2nd district (Leopoldstadt), close to the city centre. Starting at Schwedenplatz, it runs north towards Am Tabor. The total population of Leopoldstadt was 96,866 (1 January 2013), of whom 39,833 (41.1%) had a migration background; 13,601 (31.1%) came from the EU; and 26,232 (65.9%) from non-EU countries (see Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien 2013). After some quiet decades, the area became a very attractive location for a young and well-educated '*Bobo*' (a neologism derived from 'Bourgeois Bohemian') population about 15 years ago.

A rather different picture emerges from an analysis of the Klosterneuburger Straße, situated in the 20th district (Brigittenau), a traditionally working-class area with a rather poorly equipped housing stock and a high proportion of immigrant population. It starts at Gaußplatz and runs parallel to the Danube Canal towards Wexstraße. In 2013, the total population of the 20th district was 83,977. A total of 37,426 (44.6%) had a migration background, of whom 9968 (26.6%) were from the EU and 27,458 (73.4%) from non-EU countries (see Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien 2013). The proportion of non-EU migrants, mostly from BCS countries and Turkey, is markedly higher in this area than in the 2nd district. In direct correlation with the population structure, a considerable number of low-price sector small enterprises are situated there.

A first approach to the local business structure consisted of a systematic survey of shop vacancies in both areas. The results clearly show the differences in the economic power of both areas: amongst 194 shop units in Taborstraße only 11 (5.7%) were found vacant, whereas in the 20th district the proportion was 18.8% (25 of 133 shops). At the time of our survey, no structured measures of economic revitalisation or image promotion had been taken in Klosterneuburger Straße.

4.2. Traditional niche economy versus innovative sectoral differentiation: how location parameters affect the entrepreneurship of Turkish and BCS migrants

A closer look at the shop structures in both local contexts helps reveal the considerable local variations of the migrant economy in general, and among the enterprises of Turkish and BCS migrants in particular. In Klosterneuburger Straße in 2012 about 54% of the shops were owned by migrants, whereas in the 'better-off' Taborstraße the proportion was 36%. Entrepreneurs from the former Yugoslavia or Turkey constituted a minority in both areas, which is not surprising considering the overall low rates of self-employment in both immigrant groups. Yet, the proportion of businesspeople belonging to the two groups is roughly 4 times higher (10.2%) in Klosterneuburger Straße than in Leopoldstadt. In both shopping streets there are more Turkish shops than BCS businesses; in Klosterneuburger Straße in particular there are 4% more than in Taborstraße. This clearly indicates that the ethnic structure of the residential population (the high proportion of the non-EU migrant population in the 20th district) also determines the ethnic composition of local entrepreneurs. This is due to three different factors: (1) the local residency of the businesspeople
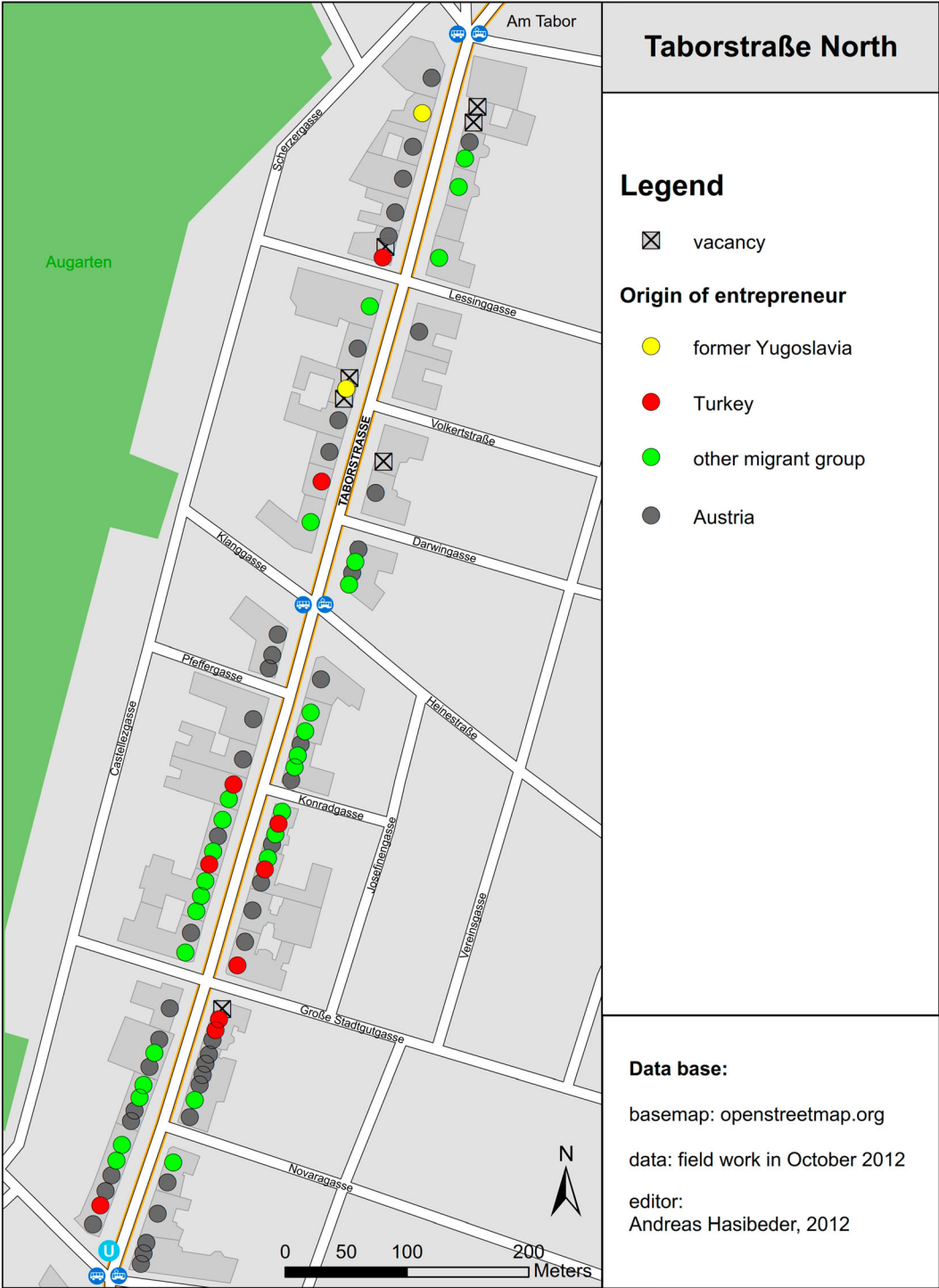
Figure 1   Shops in the northern part of Taborstraße by origin of entrepreneurs, 2012.
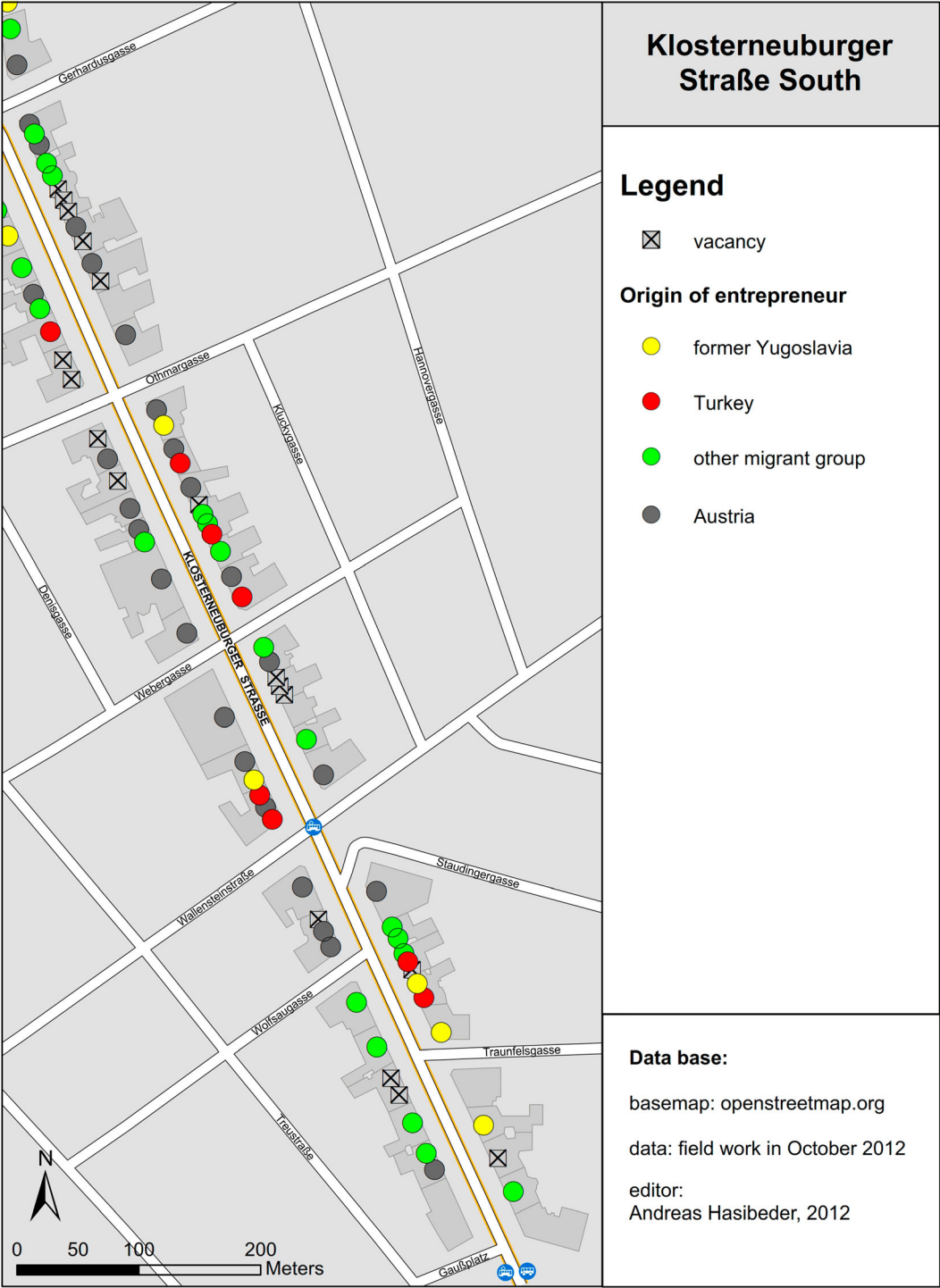
Figure 2 Shops in the southern part of Klosterneuburger Straße by origin of entrepreneurs, 2012.

themselves; (2) certain branches that dominate locally; and (3) the typical local client structure. Our interviews showed that the majority of the shops serve a local clientele, with few entrepreneurs mentioning customers coming from a wider catchment area. Although most entrepreneurs in our poll denied gearing their products and services to a specific 'ethnic' consumer demand, as one Turkish entrepreneur verbalised it:

> 'For having a drink I would also go to an Austrian bar, but for having a meal I would doubtless decide to go to a Turkish restaurant, because food should be in accordance with the religion. In general, Turks choose their own countrymen, if they buy food or go to a restaurant.'

Obviously, the concentration tendency and the overrepresentation of certain branches is particularly pronounced in the 20th district shopping street; in 2012, about one-third of the enterprises were in the catering trade, 16% in 'personal care and grooming', and 13% in food retail and communication (mostly cheap 'all-round' mobile phone shops) each. Branches that are more in demand such as 'finance' or 'leisure' are extremely under-represented. In contrast, the clothing sector (22%) dominates in the 2nd district area, whereas catering makes up only 17% of the local economy. In this traditional shopping area, branches such as 'personal care and grooming', leisure and food retail are relatively strongly represented, most at a higher price and quality level than in the 20th district neighbourhood. This result points to the clear persistence of a locally specific sectoral structure. Clothing businesses, personal care enterprises and shops for hobby and leisure articles in a medium and upper price segment were traditionally located in the shopping area closest to the centre. This was true of this part of the 2nd district even before the migrant economy was established (Payer 2004). In contrast, the 20th district area mirrors the socio-economically marginalised position of the majority of the residential population and a branch structure that has traditionally not been very specialised, but rather oriented towards the simple everyday needs of the locals.

The comparative analysis of the branch structures of the native and migrant entrepreneurs in Table 2 clearly indicates that Taborstraße is dominated by the clothing sector (about 40%), distantly followed by the catering trade (22.7%). Austrian enterprises are well represented in personal care/grooming (about 20%), while 14.5% are active in catering as well as leisure, followed closely by clothing, accessories and food retail. Obviously, the sector concentration tendencies in the migrant economy are much more pronounced, while Austrian entrepreneurs are present in a wider variety of sectors.

When the origin of the migrant entrepreneurs is taken into consideration, the differences in the sectoral distribution become even clearer. The relatively small group of BCS entrepreneurs in Taborstraße is spread over a considerable range of sectors. The sectoral concentration of Turkish businesses is remarkable: about 44% are active in clothing and about one-quarter in catering (see Table 2). These results strongly mirror the analyses based on census statistics. Even on the small spatial scale of this 2nd district neighbourhood, the structural features of Turkish and former Yugoslav entrepreneurship are evident. In Taborstraße, BCS businesspeople are—from the entrepreneurial point of view—much more mobile. They react more quickly to current trends and the requirement structures of local consumers. Thus, in Taborstraße they are active in a broader spectrum of branches, although their absolute numbers are considerably smaller than in the Turkish case (see Figure 3). In the 2nd district area the majority of the Turkish entrepreneurs have not left their traditional niches.

The results of our shop survey were also confirmed by qualitative interviews. Strong family and intra-community relations among Turks perpetuate a traditional sector orientation. There is less willingness to move into more innovative sectors, start-ups

Table 2 Sector distribution total and by origin of entrepreneur, comparison between Taborstraße and Klosterneuburger Straße, 2012

	Taborstraße		For-mer Yu.	TR	Other CoO	Mig. total	AT	Klosterneu-burger Straße		For-mer Yu.	TR	Other CoO	Mig. total	AT
	N	%						N	%					
Food retail	20	10.9	20.0	12.5	4.4	7.6	12.8	14	13.0	0.0	21.4	3.0	6.9	20.0
Catering trade/gastronomy	32	17.5	40.0	25.0	20.0	22.7	14.5	33	30.6	72.7	14.3	36.4	37.9	22.0
Information, communication	9	4.9	0.0	6.2	13.3	10.6	1.7	14	13.0	9.1	21.4	30.3	24.1	0.0
Personal care, grooming	27	14.8	0.0	6.2	6.7	6.1	19.7	17	15.7	0.0	14.3	12.1	10.3	22.0
Furniture and interior design	16	8.7	20.0	0.0	6.7	6.1	10.0	9	8.3	0.0	14.3	3.0	5.2	12.0
Finance and insurance	9	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	4	3.7	0.0	0.0	0	0	8
Clothing, accessories	41	22.4	20.0	43.8	40.0	39.4	12.8	10	9.3	0.0	14.3	12.1	10.3	8.0
Leisure, artists' materials	22	12.0	0.0	6.2	8.9	7.6	14.5	3	2.8	0.0	0.0	3.0	1.7	4.0
Other	7	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	4	3.7	18.2	0.0	0.0	3.4	4.0
Total	183	100.0	5	16	45	66	117	108	100.0	11	14	33	58	50
			100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0			100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: Yu. = Yugoslavia; TR = Turkey; CoO = country of origin; AT = Austria; Mig. = migrants.
Source: Institute for Urban and Regional Research survey 2012.

Figure 3   A typical migrant shop on Taborstraße (Source: Institute for Urban and Regional Research 2012).

are often financed by family capital, and family members are often employed in those enterprises. This leaves little scope for individual decisions and innovative career models, as was reflected in an interview with a Turkish entrepreneur:

> 'Often the intra-familiar pressure is enormous, decisions and competencies within the family will not be called into question.'

Together with qualification deficits, language barriers, and a reluctance to contact formal institutions (e.g. the Vienna Economic Chamber), formally apply for financial subsidies or contact advice centres, this complex constellation of circumstances creates an environment that hinders movement out of a specific niche into more vibrant and future-oriented sectors in the 'centre' of the urban economy. An expert from the Chamber of Commerce expressed the problem in the following way:

> 'Many Turks believe that the Chamber of Commerce is a kind of tax authority. These people are really afraid of consultation or advice.'

The strong involvement of the family should not be overlooked—and the wider migrant community also has positive consequences—and is undoubtedly one of the strengths of Turkish businesses. According to a successful Turkish entrepreneur and expert:

> 'The considerable intra-group solidarity is a great advantage for Turks as their compatriots shop exclusively in their country-specific shops. . . . The Turks usually have a bigger social environment which supports them in any case.'

On the other hand, amongst former Yugoslav businesses in the 2nd district there is much more flexibility to move into other branches outside the established 'canon' of so-called 'ethnic' entrepreneurship. Although BCS businesspersons mentioned capital constraints in our interviews, this group is less reluctant to take up bank loans or to seek professional advice if necessary. Furthermore, these entrepreneurs are more likely to employ staff according to formal qualifications and not because of family affiliation, often making their start-ups more successful. An entrepreneur with a Croatian migration

background described this ambivalence as follows:

> 'We too have a slight tendency to recruit staff from within the former Yugoslavian community, but only as one of many other possibilities and we are in no way limited to it. It is typical for Turks that they do not want to work for a Serbian or in an Austrian small enterprise. And if a Turk does it, this is only a temporary solution.'

Concerning the differences in personnel recruitment between the migrant communities, one expert stated:

> 'Recruiting personnel within one's own community is clearly a characteristic of the Turkish community. In the Eastern European or BCS community, personnel acquisition is oriented towards qualification criteria. Family ties are not essential or, sometimes they may be, but generally-speaking family relationships are of little or no significance.'

Table 2 also shows the sector structure in the 20th district research area. Comparing both locations it becomes clear that in the working-class neighbourhood of Klosterneuburger Straße the sector concentration is generally more pronounced than in the centrally located Taborstraße. This structural feature applies to both migrant and Austrian businesses, and is a strong argument for local effects determining the local business patterns. These configurations are probably beyond the control of the local business community and may be found in the socio-economic composition of the residential population, their purchasing power and consumer needs. A further valuable result is that the sector concentration of the migrant economy is considerably stronger than that of Austrian entrepreneurs in the same area. About 38% of the shops owned by entrepreneurs with a migration background are active in the catering trade, and about 25% in communication (mostly mobile phone shops). With some 10% each in the clothing and cleaning branches, the other businesses are strongly underrepresented. Native Austrian shopkeepers are active in catering, personal care and food retailing. Interior design, finance and clothing are also noticeably represented. Figure 4 shows the business infrastructure in 2012, categorised by national origin of the entrepreneurs. It can be seen that Austrian shops constitute a minority in this 20th district area, though Turks and BCS businesspeople are outnumbered by migrants of 'other' descent, including Eastern Europeans, Chinese, Indians and other Asians.

Of the two migrant groups at the centre of this analysis, the strong concentration of BCS migrants in catering (73%) is a remarkable phenomenon on Klosterneuburger Straße. The reason for this was explained in an expert interview, though this effect may also be strengthened by specific local characteristics:

> 'Actually there is a kind of "Balkan boom" in catering, and many restaurants have been started. There is no comparable boom for example in food retail. Obviously the BCS community is more willing to do their weekly shopping in Austrian supermarkets, which means less of an emphasis on typical products from their home countries. Because of this there is less motivation for former Yugoslavs to start enterprises in certain branches as food retailing.'

The Turkish community is above all active in food retail and communication. It is worth noting that the concentration effect of Turkish businesses on Klosterneuburger Straße is considerably weaker than in the BCS community and is also less pronounced than among Turkish businesses in Taborstraße. In the 20th district, more or less equal shares of Turkish entrepreneurs can be found in catering, cleaning, furniture and other interior equipment and clothing, branches which cater to the daily needs of a local population with weaker purchasing power, which certainly points to the flexibility of Turkish entrepreneurs in adapting to a local demand. This adaption is a visible indicator of the effects of a locally specific opportunity structure quite different from

Figure 4   A typical migrant shop on Klosterneuburger Straße (Source: Institute for Urban and Regional Research 2012).

that of the 2nd district research area. The cheap goods on offer at the Turkish shops are predominantly aimed at a clientele characterised by limited purchasing power, but mostly with a migration background. Location decisions by Turkish entrepreneurs are not only dependent on the potential clientele, but also determined by other restrictions, as one expert said:

> 'We often observe that the decision for a location is not based on a strict market analysis, but is dependent on financial or material limitations. This applies particularly to the Turkish small enterprises and not for Turkish supermarkets and industrial bakeries, which make their location decisions according to strictly strategic considerations.'

5.   Conclusion

This analysis aimed to illustrate interdependencies between local opportunity structures for businesspeople, spatial developments, individual entrepreneurial activities and collective approaches to entrepreneurship amongst migrants from Turkey and the former Yugoslavia in two diverse shopping streets. By analysing the adaptive practices of the businesspeople, the shapes of the migrant economy in areas with diverging population and socio-economic structures were explored. Whereas Turkish business still tends to be a classical niche economy in the 2nd district, it clearly shows a higher adaptive potential to local opportunity structures in the 20th district. In the case of the BCS community, the picture is exactly the opposite.

The results reveal the adaptive potential of migrant businesses and point to locally specific inter-relationships of the following variables: (1) there is an obvious community-specific affiliation to certain branches dependent on network effects, existing qualification profiles, innovation orientation, language skills and strategic locational decisions; (2) the results of our investigation point to interdependencies between sectoral structures and sales opportunities in the local context. These interdependencies are also determined by locally bound opportunity structures. Relevant variables are the local residents' socio-economic status,

consumer needs, purchasing power and the proportions of specific migrant and native population.

Based on our results, we conclude that migrant entrepreneurs respond strategically to micro-scale economic forces, municipal regulatory frameworks and intra-group networks. Specific traditions and practices related to self-employment in the two migrant communities also play a role. Whilst conducting local research we reframed the local context as a strong factor of influence, transforming the 'typical' niche economy of certain migrant communities. Individual entrepreneurial decisions and local opportunity structures are closely interlinked. On the one hand, this analysis emphasised the need for disaggregated surveys of migrant business that reflect contextual differentiations on a small spatial scale and overcome the pure 'ethnic' perspective. On the other hand, the outcome might help to promote a stronger demand-oriented planning framework for a sustainable urban migrant economy. This could help the entrepreneurs to assess more accurately the local sales opportunities and avoid insolvencies. The modern city is a space for processes of convergence and divergence of migrant business, adapting to urban terrains and local opportunity structures. The street level is perhaps the most specific of the city's public spaces, allowing for a view of the local practices of immigrant-owned businesses and constituting the spatial starting point for improving the economic situation in distressed urban areas by creating and implementing locally tailored solutions.

Disclosure statement

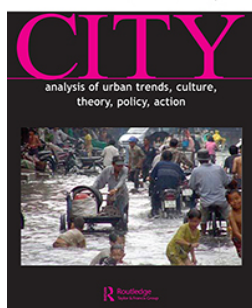No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

Cakir, Erkan. 2004. "Ethnische Ökonomie ('Ethnic Business') am Beispiel des türkischen Kleingewerbes in Wien." Master's thesis, University of Economics and Business Vienna.

Demircan, Halime. 2003. "Türkische MigrantInnen – Vom Arbeiter zum Unternehmer." Master's thesis, University of Economics and Business Vienna.

European Commission, ed. 2008. *Entrepreneurial Diversity in a Unified Europe. Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship/migrant Entrepreneurship. Final Report.* Brussels: DG Enterprise and Industry.

Gollner, Christoph. 2001. "Lokale ethnische Ökonomien als Beitrag zur Stadtteilentwicklung." Master's thesis, University of Technics Vienna.

Haberfellner, Regina. 2003. "Austria: Still a Highly Regulated Economy." In *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Venturing Abroad in the Age of Globalization*, edited by Robert Kloosterman and Jan Rath, 213–232. Oxford, New York: Berg.

Haberfellner, Regina. 2011. "Entrepreneurship von MigrantInnen." *AMS info* 191/192.

Haberfellner, Regina, and Fritz Betz. 1999. *Geöffnet! Migrantinnen und Migranten als Unternehmer. Eine Chance für die lokale Wirtschaftsentwicklung [Open! Migrants as Entrepreneurs. A Chance for the Development of the Local Economy].* Muhlheim/Rhein: Guthmann Peterson.

Hall, Suzanne. 2012. *City, Street and Citizen. The Measure of the Ordinary.* London: Routledge.

Hall, Suzanne, and Ayona Datta. 2010. "The Translocal Street: Shop Signs and Local Multiculture along the Walworth Road, South London." *City, Culture and Society* 1 (2): 69–77.

Hatz, Gerhard. 1997. "Die Markte als Chance für Ausländer – Ausländer als Chance fur die Markte." In *Zuwanderung und Stadtentwicklung*, edited by Hartmuth Häussermann and Ingrid Oswald, 170–191. Sonderheft Leviathan 17. Wiesbaden: Springer.

Kohlbacher, Josef, and Ursula Reeger. 2013. "Von der Nische ins Zentrum? Unternehmer mit türkischem oder exjugoslawischem Migrationshintergrund in der Wiener Wirtschaft." *ISR-Forschungsbericht 39.* Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences.

L&R Sozialforschung, ed. 2007. *Ethnische Ökonomien – Bestand und Chancen für Wien.* Final Report on behalf of MA 17, MA 18, MA 27 and Vienna Economic Chamber. Vienna.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel, and Thomas Lacroix. 2003. "France: The Narrow Path." In *Immigrantentrepreneurs: Venturing abroad in the Age of Globalization*, edited by Robert Kloosterman and Jan Rath, 173–193. Oxford: Berg.

Medien Servicestelle Neue ÖsterreicherInnen, ed. 2012. *MigrantInnen als UnternehmerInnen.* doi:http://medienservicestelle.at/migration_bewegt/2012/04/24/migrantinnenalsunternehmerinnen/.

Meegan, Richard, and Alison Mitchell. 2001. "It's Not Community Round Here, It's Neighbourhood: Neighbourhood Change and Cohesion in Urban

Regeneration Policies." *Urban Studies* 38 (12): 2167–2194.

Pang, Ching Lin, and Jan Rath. 2007. "The Force of Regulation in the Land of the Free. The Persistence of Chinatown, Washington DC as a Symbolic Ethnic Enclave." In *The Sociology of Entrepreneurship*, edited by Martin Ruef and Michael Lounsbury, Vol. 25, 191–216. New York: Elsevier.

Payer, Peter. 2004. "'Gehen Sie an die Arbeit', Zur Geschichte der 'Gastarbeiter' in Wien 1964–1989." *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 1: 119–121.

Raeke, Nilgül. no year. "Mingo Migrant Enterprises." Ein Projekt der Wirtschaftsagentur Wien. Ein Fonds der Stadt Wien. doi: https://www.bka.gv.at/DocView. axd?CobId=43934.

Rath, Jan. 2005. "Feeding the Festive City. Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Tourist Industry." In *International Migration and Security: Opportunities and Challenges*, edited by Elspeth Guild and Joanne van Selm, 238–253. London: Routledge.

Rath, Jan, and Anna Swagerman (with the contribution of Hubert Krieger, Anna Ludwinek, and Lisa Pickering). 2012. Promoting Entrepreneurship in European Cities. Dublin: CLIP doi:http://www.eurofound. europa.eu/publications/report/2011/eu-member-states/social-policies-business/promoting-ethnic-entrepreneurship-in-european-cities.

Sahin, Mediha, Peter Nijkamp and Tuzin Baycan-Levent. 2007. "Migrant Entrepreneurship from the Perspective Of Cultural Diversity." In *Handbook of Research on Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship: A Coevolutionary View on Resource Management*, edited by Leo

Paul Dana, 99–116. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Schmid, Kurt, Irene Mandl, Andrea Dorr, Bärbel Staudenmayer, and Regina Haberfellner. 2006. *Entrepreneurship von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund*. Study commissioned by AMS Austria. Vienna: AMS.

Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien ed. 2013. doi:https://www.wien.gv.at/statistik/pdf/ menschen.pdf.

Van Heelsum, Anja. 2010. *Ethnic entrepreneurship. Case study: Amsterdam, The Netherlands*. Dublin: CLIP doi:http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/ files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1121en6. pdf.

Wang, Kuo Chiang. 2008. "Chinesische Einwandererunternehmer der zweiten Generation in Wien; Identitäten und wirtschaftliche Tätigkeit." ("Secondgeneration Chinese immigrant entrepreneurship in Vienna"), Master's thesis, University of Vienna.

Josef Kohlbacher is senior researcher at the Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences. Email: josef. kohlbacher@oeaw.ac.at

Ursula Reeger is senior researcher at the Institute for Urban and Regional Research, Austrian Academy of Sciences. Email: ursula. reeger@oeaw.ac.at

Transitory community hubs

Edda Ostertag

Transitory community hubs
How temporary migration transforms a neighbourhood in Singapore

Edda Ostertag

This paper showcases how temporary migration leads to urban transformation processes in inner-city Singaporean neighbourhoods, creating unique localities which I call 'transitory community hubs'. Building on a case study of Little India, it demonstrates how the settlement and incorporation process of transient migrants, specifically foreign workers, has economic, environmental and social impacts on the neighbourhood. Urban transformation processes are driven by both global and local influences; their instigators are globally operating transient migrants, yet they are shaped by national and local conditions (e.g. migration policies), or the vernacular urban context. Ethnic-focused businesses play an important role in this process and render it visible for outsiders. However, the transient migrants themselves are not permitted to open their own businesses; rather, they feed the ethnic-focused economy as customers or employees, while the businesses serving them are run predominantly by permanent residents of Singapore, some with a migration background. Building on field research conducted between 2011 and 2014, which involved semi-structured interviews, participant observation, time-based research and visual analysis, the paper demonstrates how migrants, on the demand side, and ethnic-focused businesses, on the supply side, both become agents of urban transformation, yet in ways that differ from conventional accounts of the 'ethnic economy'. The paper also shows how 'transitory community hubs' are characterised by particular time rhythms making their presence only temporarily visible.

1. Introduction: 'temporary migration' and the migration continuum

After a fatal traffic accident in December 2013, in which a foreign worker was run over by a bus in Singapore's Little India neighbourhood, 300–400 foreign workers attacked the bus and the ambulance. What came to be known as the 'Little India Riots' lasted for approximately two to three hours, and forced the government to intervene, including measures to deter foreign workers from coming to the area. The neighbourhood in which the riots took place is centrally located, adjacent to Singapore's central business district, and can be considered the epicentre of South Asian migrant gatherings. The riots should be understood within a context of multiple restrictions on labour and citizen rights which extend to foreign workers' daily experience of the urban. Focusing on Little

India as a case study, the aim of this paper is to showcase how temporary migration leads to urban transformation processes and creates unique localities, which I will refer to as 'transitory community hubs'. Transitory community hubs can be politically charged, informally structured, and through which transient migrants act as agents of urban transformation processes despite the government's numerous restrictions.

Scholars have formulated new concepts explaining the relation between migration and cities, highlighting the need to acknowledge migrants' influence on cities at the larger urban scale. Sassen ([1991]), for example, has described the need to understand migrants as part of the global flow of goods, services and people, and therefore as a key component of the global city. Glick Schiller and Çağlar ([2011], 12) demonstrated how migrants can be understood as actors within urban scaling processes, explaining how migrants become active agents of neoliberal transformation processes in cities. Others (Winnick [1990]; Cameron [1997]; Rahbaran and Herz [2014]; Zukin, Kasinitz, and Xiangming [2016]), focusing their research predominantly on migrants' settlement patterns, have built a new body of knowledge in which migrants are framed as actors within urban regeneration processes. No longer are descriptions of ghettos and declining inner-city neighbourhoods en vogue; rather than holding migrants responsible for inner-city neighbourhood decline, recent European and American studies have started to explore and theorise how migrants' settlements can spur urban regeneration processes.

Some have studied the impact of new migration on existing neighbourhoods, describing in detail how migrants bring new life to streets by running small stores with long opening hours (Winnick [1990]; Zukin, Kasinitz, and Xiangming [2016]), or how they revitalise derelict urban areas by moving into empty apartments, refilling kindergartens and schools, or boosting local property values (Cameron [1997]). Others have uncovered the role of migrants in creating distinct

and diverse transnational spaces (Hou [2010], [2013a]; Smith [2007]; Tonkiss [2013]). Of specific interest here is how migrants' everyday activities can create new forms of transnational space. Hou ([2013b], 7) frames this as a transcultural place-making process addressing 'not only the intercultural exchange but also the cultural trans-formation that takes place in urban places and through urban place-making'. He defines specific aspects, like in-between-ness, flux or the transitional character of space, as common components of transcultural spaces, whereby place-appropriation, the temporal transformation of space, or the creation of hybrid spaces can all be understood as typical migration place-making processes. Lastly, some scholars emphasise the social relevance of encounters between migrants and native populations, focusing specifically on the value of public spaces as encounter zones where people of different backgrounds can express their cultural identity freely and have a chance to engage with people of other backgrounds (e.g. Watson [2006]; Peters [2010]).

Although the potential of migrants as active agents in urban transformation processes has been acknowledged in scholarly research, many governmental policies (especially in many Asian countries) have been specifically designed to prevent such processes from taking place. In Singapore or Hong Kong, for instance, governments are trying to prohibit migrants from adopting such a role, for example, by only allowing them to stay temporarily or by restricting their rights, for example, to choose housing or employment freely. Castles and Miller ([1998]) describe temporary migration, prohibition of family reunion and prevention of permanent settlement as key features of the migration policies of Asia-Pacific nations. According to Castles ([2002], 1155), transient migration conforms to an alternative mode of incorporation, which he calls 'differential exclusion', whereby 'migrants are integrated temporarily into certain sub-systems such as the labour market and limited welfare entitlements, but excluded from others such as

political participation and national culture'. Yet, while Castles' definition accurately describes the status of individual transient migrants in Singapore, it does not account for the actual social interactions and physical place-making processes observed in Singapore's transitory community hubs today.

The paper builds on extensive field research conducted between 2011 and 2014, which involved semi-structured interviews, participant observation, time-based research and visual analysis. I will demonstrate that, even though the Singaporean government is trying to inhibit transient migrants from taking an active role in urban transformation processes, their pathways to settlement and incorporation can be traced in the cityscape. I will further illustrate that some of the above concepts regarding the relationship between migrants and the cityscape revealed in analyses of 'permanent' migration settlement patterns can also be identified in temporary migration. The paper proceeds with an overview of migration to Singapore, key policy features and the role of 'transitory community hubs' (hereafter, TCHs), before focusing on Little India to explore the various ways in which transient migrants instigate urban transformations.

2. Transient community hubs and the Singaporean migratory context

Historically, Singapore has always grown through migration. As early as the 19th century migrants predominantly coming from nearby countries (Malaysia, China and India) began entering Singapore (Huff 1995). While these first migrants are celebrated as shapers of the traditions and customs of Singapore's multicultural society, much of its recent migration history has gone unacknowledged. Since the late 1970s, Singapore has become one of the major recipients of transient migrant labourers within South East Asia (Castles and Miller 1998). The size of the transient labour force has grown alongside neo-liberal

restructuring processes and policies designed to render labour more 'flexible' (Yeoh 2013). Singapore learnt from the experiences of, for example, West Germany's guestworker schemes and implemented a policy according to which labour migration is stringently controlled (Soon-Beng and Chew 1995).

Today Singapore has 1.49 million foreigners on temporary visas, amounting to 35% of its workforce (Prime Minister Office 2013). In this paper I will specifically focus on the 880,000 'unskilled' foreign workers, filling so-called '3D' (dangerous, dirty, demeaning) jobs (Yue 2011). Foreign workers are predominately seen as economic assets and are understood as an important element of the city's competitiveness; their numbers quadrupled between 1990 and 2010, alongside the growth of the Singaporean economy (Yeoh 2013, 104).

Bilateral agreements with neighbouring 'approved source countries' such as China, Bangladesh and Indonesia, have assured the steady inflow of cheap labour. While the government does not release figures on foreign workers' origins, field observations and interviews with NGOs (non-governmental organisations) reveal that there are currently large groups of mainland Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian and Thai workers. The prevalence of specific ethnicities is reflected in the set-up of the various TCHs across the island. As numbers and nationalities have been changing over time alongside shifting migration policies, TCHs have also changed and continue to transform. For instance, since 2000 the origins of construction workers shifted from Thailand to cheaper source countries such as Bangladesh, India and Myanmar (Kitiarsa 2006), evident today in the large Indian and Bangladeshi TCH and the declining Thai TCH.

While the economic benefits of immigration seem relatively clear, city-planning departments have just recently—in the aftermath of the riots—started to ponder how to plan for increasing numbers of transient foreign workers. In fact, the government has tried to inhibit foreign workers from

becoming active agents of place-making processes by imposing numerous restrictions. For example, foreign workers can only remain temporarily, mostly on two-year contracts; they only have limited employment rights, cannot choose their employer and can be sent home any time without justification. As Singapore is an island with strict migration policies and enforcement traditions it is nearly impossible for migrants to remain in the country 'illegally', which makes foreign workers truly transient. Moreover, the prohibition of bringing family members deters foreign workers from exerting any claims or influence on the education or other public services (which some describe as key spaces of interaction between migrants and residents, e.g. Wood and Landry 2008).

Furthermore, since foreign workers are regarded as 'wage-workers' they are not legally permitted to open their own businesses or work for anybody other than those allowed by their work permit. Thus, their involvement in Singapore's ethnic-focused economy is restricted to remaining customers and, to a limited degree, illegal employees. Ethnic businesses such as travel agencies, garment shops, specialised grocery shops or fast food restaurants are predominantly owned and often also run by Singaporean citizens, some with a migration background. These businesses thus depend on but are not run by recent migrants, and can only partially be classified as ethnic enterprises as defined in the literature (Portes and Jensen 1989; Light and Gold 2000). Thus, most of the socio-economic implications typically linked to migrant entrepreneurship, such as social ascent or wealth accumulation, are largely not applicable.

Restrictions on foreign workers' rights extend to the domain of daily life, since they are not allowed to choose a place to live or express their interests or concerns in public. While the government does not supply housing to foreign workers, it has released a set of relevant guidelines. As of 14 August 2014, the Ministry of Manpower website states that foreign workers should be accommodated in specific housing types, for example, purpose-built dormitories, converted industrial premises, quarters on construction sites, farms or within a 'habourcraft', for example, vessel or ship. The choice of housing is the responsibility of the employer, who has to ensure that the housing is 'acceptable'. Thus, foreign workers have limited direct influence on the housing market (which is often described as a key way immigrants' settlement affects inner-city neighbourhoods; Cameron 1997; Ray and Moore 1991).

The same Ministry also states that 'it is the employer's responsibility to take care of the worker's social and recreational needs'. Dormitory managers advertise their dorms as 'self sufficient living enclaves', yet the commercial and recreational facilities are limited to an ATM machine, a food court,[1] a convenience shop, a beer garden and some recreational sports facilities. Foreign workers housed in any of the other housing options mentioned most likely have no recreational facilities at their disposal. Additionally, exceptionally long working hours (up to 15 hours a day) and only one rest day a week (Sunday), further limit their ability to take part actively in Singapore's city life.

While leaving most practical arrangements concerning the livelihood of foreign workers to the private sector, the government actively requires employers to segregate foreign workers from Singapore's other residents. For example, the hotel accommodation facility guidelines circular requires 'The location for proposed workers' dormitory to be located away from residential areas and areas where the use is likely to cause amenity problems', generally stipulating that foreign workers are not allowed anywhere within in the Central Area (Urban Development Authority 2013).

Hence, limited discretionary free time, access to amenities and social interaction make the foreign worker's off-day a day of great importance. Thousands of foreign workers are busy on Sundays meeting up with friends, running errands, and contacting

their families and friends at home. Currently there are five large TCHs representing the largest 'unskilled workers' groups: mainland Chinese, Bangladeshi, Indian, Filipino, Indonesian and Thai migrants. These TCHs can be mapped across central Singapore. All TCHs are well connected to the public transport network and are reachable by multiple transport services. The number of migrants frequenting these hubs varies, but can reach 12,000–30,000 in Little India alone, as estimated by a local newspaper (Chang 2013). All larger TCHs offer space to gather and house businesses catering specifically to the needs of the transient migrants, for example, money changers, pawn shops, phone stores, garment shops, hairdressers, food stores as well as eating houses. In most cases, a specific 'landmark building'—often a shopping mall—constitutes the TCH's centre, for example, The Goldenmile Complex, Lucky Plaza or City Plaza, giving each TCH an easily recognisable identity.

Even though there is no official recognition of these community hubs, the local population is fully aware of them as transient migrants' gathering places, and generally tries to avoid them; parts of the city thus convert to no-go zones for locals on Sundays. Residents in the vicinity of TCHs often complain about migrant gatherings, seeing them as a nuisance; residents have been quoted saying that migrants 'will drink together and get into fights' (today online portal, 14 March 2014), 'they defecate in carparks and sleep on the roads, causing traffic hazards' or 'they leave behind their litter, which attracts rats and cockroaches' (Asiaone, 20 June 2011). In many places signs and fencing have been put up to deter migrants from using the space in front of commercial and residential properties.

While Singaporean public opinion favours decreasing dependency on migrants, the government has announced its intentions to increase the numbers of foreigners especially low-skilled migrants from the current 1.5 million in 2013 to 2.5 million by 2030 (Marshall 2014, 6). From a governmental

point of view, further increase is necessary to ensure future economic competitiveness and steady GDP (gross domestic product) growth in times of labour shortages, an ageing population and declining birth rates (Prime Minister Office 2013). This governmental assessment, together with the reality that large numbers of transient migrants have been living in Singapore since the 1980s, highlights the necessity of viewing transient migrants as a permanent phenomenon.

3. A Bangladeshi community hub

Little India is a focal point of the South Asian—predominately Bangladeshi—foreign worker community, currently one of the largest transient migrant groups in Singapore, whose numbers have drastically increased since the 1990s. A local newspaper estimated the Bangladeshi population at over 100,000 in December 2012 (Tai 2012). The vast majority are young men in their 20s or 30s migrating for economic reasons.[2] On Sundays 12,000–30,000 foreign workers come to Little India either individually by public transport, by pickup busses or via special Sunday bus shuttle services (Chang 2013). Foreign workers gather in the area to socialise, entertain themselves and run errands, for example, shop for groceries or send remittances to their families abroad. All these basic needs go far beyond what a standard dormitory can offer, making the very existence of the TCH essential.

Historically, the neighbourhood was formed by South Indian Tamil immigrants in the early 1800s. Small, two- to three-storey shophouses[3] make up the main urban fabric. Nowadays the area houses many businesses either serving the foreign workers directly—like money transfer, travel agencies, mobile phone and convenience stores—or relating to their sectors of employment. Business establishments vary between makeshift stalls to actual shops (Figures 1 and 2). While the area has grown into a TCH, one can still encounter shops and services catering to a wider clientele,

Figure 1   Figure ground of ethnic enterprises catering to foreign workers in Little India.

for example, shops serving the local Singaporean Tamil Indian population as well as low-cost businesses such as second-hand furniture stores, recycling businesses, motorcycle repair shops and budget hotels. The rents for both commercial and residential units are reported to be generally lower than in other similar central neighbourhoods in Singapore.
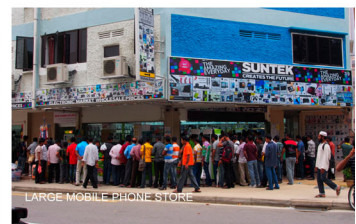

Figure 2   Images of ethnic enterprises catering to foreign workers.

The heart of the TCH is 'Bangla Square', a gravel square formally known as Lembu Road Open Space. The first Bangladeshi restaurant at 'Bangla Square' opened in the early 1990s, when the square was still a green vacant land plot. Local business owners around the square mentioned that large numbers of Bangladeshi workers started frequenting the area around the mid-2000s. A first sign of changing activities in the neighbourhood was the replacement of the previous transsexual sex business by Bangladeshi provision shops selling familiar groceries and ingredients to Bangladeshi migrants. With the crowding of foreign workers, the vacant plot became 'rather muddy', in the words of a local business owner, and finally was resurfaced by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA).[4] The temporary gatherings of foreign workers in the area appear to have led to a permanent change of the environment. Today there is a CCTV camera placed at the centre of the square. Cameras are uncommon features in Singapore's public spaces, and indicate fear as well as the wish to control the gatherings of foreign workers. Nevertheless, the CCTV camera does not seem to deter the thousands of foreign workers gathering in the square in small groups from late afternoon until late evening. At peak times on a Sunday around 6:30 p.m., I counted up to 2000–3000 people in the square (Figure 3).

While the square is most crowded on Sundays, there are also foreign workers socialising there every weekday evening, predominantly after dusk (i.e. after finishing work), playing Carrom[5] or the just chatting. These foreign workers often live in illegal 'dormitories' (converted shophouses with bunk beds) which have been generally tolerated by the authorities. While some smaller employers may take advantage of this illegal housing arrangement for their employees, many 'special pass' migrants[6] find temporary shelter there.

While Little India may be seen as a typical neighbourhood concentrating ethnic businesses as described by Waldinger, Aldrige, and Ward (1990)—as a low-rent neighbourhood housing large numbers of migrants and functioning as a central place where an ethnic economy serves a spatially dispersed ethnic community—the way the area transforms is uniquely linked to the transience of foreign workers and is guided by the restrictions under which they live. Having outlined the broader context of temporary migration in Singapore, as well as the role of TCHs, in the following section I describe how foreign workers around 'Bangla Square' have contributed to urban transformations.

3.   Urban transformations in Little India's transient community hub

3.1.   *Economic transformations*

The economic transformations can be described on two levels: from the perspective of foreign workers themselves and from that of the businesses catering to them. As the latter play a major role, I first describe them and subsequently discuss how they have transformed the city. Today one can count around 40–60 small shops specifically addressing the needs of the growing number of male Bangladeshi foreign workers. These offer a wide selection of goods and services: from betel nut or atta,[7] to religious books in Bengali and Singapore's only Bengali newspaper *Bangla Kantha* (Voice of Bengal) published locally. In addition to the shops selling ethnic goods directly to foreign workers, the area also houses businesses related to the industries where foreign workers are employed, for example, stores selling construction boots and clothing or construction machines. Collectively, these businesses have significantly increased the mix of retail choices in the neighbourhood.

A variety of specialised services can also be found around Bangla Square. These include doctors specialising in medical tests required for migrant workers, mass catering services (which, with a few men cooking over an

Figure 3   Foreign workers gathering at Bangla Square, Little India.

open fire, produce around 1400 meals a day for workers on remote sites) or tailors offering clothing-alteration services on the spot. These examples reveal how foreign workers' needs produce new, innovative, yet simple business ideas. Overall, the majority of ethnic-focused businesses are rather small, limited to the footprint of the shophouse ground floor (approximately 100 square metres). In order to maximise space, the

Figure 4   Subdivision of ethnic enterprises.

primary renter or sometimes the owner decides to further subdivide the space in order to provide various services in one place (Figure 4). For example, a shophouse ground floor may be primarily utilised by a store selling accessories for mobile phones, while part of the front entrance could be rented out to a booth selling prepaid cards and the back could be converted into a money exchange counter. In some cases, all services are provided by one entrepreneur; in other cases, different parts of the store are sublet to different entrepreneurs.

Lastly, as many foreign workers gather in the evenings or on Sundays, the neighbourhood has attracted many temporary businesses, often opening up after regular business hours on sidewalks or in front of otherwise closed stores. Thus, the general business hours in the area have been drawn-out, which leads to extended economic activity. Not by coincidence, Singapore's only 24-hour department store is also located here and night shopping is a popular leisure activity in the area. The variety of temporary businesses includes informal sidewalk stands, temporary small booths and full-fledged market stalls set up in empty car parks (Figure 2). While some stall owners are local entrepreneurs running shops on weekdays, other stalls are run by subcontractors for larger Singaporean companies such as SingTel, the nation's largest telecommunications company, which subcontracts roughly 12 stalls in Little India alone.

The smallest businesses involve peddlers with foldable tables or blankets illegally selling fruits or newspapers, which have been tolerated by local authorities over the past few years. Slightly larger stands often find space within the five footway[8] area of a shop and are rented individually from the main shop owner. By contrast, the largest stalls often utilise car parks or privately owned squares, renting space from shopping mall operators or in some cases from the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association (LISHA) managed by the Singaporean Tourist Board. Additionally, nearly every

other store in the neighbourhood adapts its range of products on weekends to cater to the foreign workers. Around midday on Sundays, shop owners fill the front row of their shops with large plastic boxes with ice for selling drinks or fruits to foreign workers in addition to their usual goods. It can thus be argued that space in the neighbourhood is used exceptionally well, as on the one hand spaces which are normally not used for commerce (such as sidewalks, car parks, etc.) are utilised as marketplaces in the early evening and on Sundays, and, on the other hand, space is utilised differently over the course of the day and week in accordance to the changing clientele and their requirements.

Many foreign workers living around 'Bangla Square' are officially not allowed to work, but 'moonlight' in the neighbourhood's restaurants and small businesses in order to cover their expenses. Illegally hiring cheap 'culturally aware' labourers is crucial for many small businesses such as restaurants serving authentic Indian and Bangladeshi cuisine. While this is known to local authorities, they intervene only occasionally. It can thus be said that the presence of foreign workers enriches and diversifies the overall labour supply in the neighbourhood and contributes to the generally low food and retail prices locally, which also attract other low-income groups—thus indirectly assisting in preserving a low-income neighbourhood within central Singapore.

Hence, the influx of foreign workers in Little India has created social–economic heterogeneity in the neighbourhood; land-use mix has been diversified, new business concepts have emerged, business hours and places have been enlarged, and the labour force has diversified. Socio-economic heterogeneity in cities as described in the Little India case study is generally praised for supporting dynamic labour and retail markets, leading to limited price and wage inflation, promoting enterprise and market opportunities, and helping prevent problems of spatial mismatch between housing and employment demand (Tonkiss 2013). In

other words, the ethnic-focused businesses and the foreign workers themselves have generally increased the area's economic vitality.

3.2. *Social–spatial transformations*

Not only have economic activities in Little India changed, expanded and diversified, but the influx of foreign workers has also led to new social–spatial transformations, especially visible in the use of public space. The neighbourhood has an abundance of open spaces, in which foreign workers can gather relatively undisturbed. Large vacant land sites, squares, playgrounds, car parks, Housing and Development Board[9] (HDB) green spaces, backlanes,[10] streets and sidewalks all play an important role in accommodating the weekend gatherings. Most places represent freely available open space for the foreign workers that can be appropriated partially also by large crowds. Within the larger vacant land plots up to 5000 people standing and chatting in small groups were counted on a Sunday afternoon.

The influx of foreign workers has transformed the uses and character of open spaces. Vacant land plots have been revitalised as 'picnic' spaces, where the foreign workers sit in circles in the grass, surrounded by their shopping bags sharing food and thoughts. In doing so, they create bonds and lasting social networks and reduce some of the stress of living abroad. On specific religious days such as the end of Ramadan, the vacant land plots allow foreign workers to celebrate Bangladeshi traditions and customs. The foreign worker gatherings manage to transform dull leftover plots into actual public spaces where social interactions are foregrounded (Figure 5).

In fact, the reuse of public and semi-public space by foreign workers has created temporary alternative public spaces in the neighbourhood. Semi-public playgrounds in front of shopping malls or HDB residences are re-purposed as public squares where adults meet and exchange news and gossip.

Around Bangla Square large crowds of foreign workers walk on the streets and informally pedestrianise them. Shopfronts displaying Bangladeshi dramas on TV screens turning the open spaces facing them into a temporary open-air cinema space. Private entrances to condominiums or HDB complexes become temporary mobile phone booths where foreign workers can rest and chat on the phone with their missed ones at home.

While not all local residents are happy about the transformation of public spaces, it is obvious that the influx of foreign workers adds a lot of vitality to the area. The liveliness of the open spaces is carried further into the urban fabric as most stores selling to the foreign workers have open street façades to accommodate large crowds of people. This practice allows people to meander easily in and out and results in a more fluid transition between public space and private space, which further enhances the liveliness of the streetscape.

While concrete open spaces change through Sunday gatherings, it can be argued that the whole neighbourhood suddenly becomes a very crowded and vital 'foreign place'. The particular rhythms that the foreign workers are forced to live by, and the restrictions on participating in urban life at other times, have produced a neighbourhood that is not only in constant flux but is regularly remade by large numbers of foreign workers. In this way, the neighbourhood is repeatedly transformed into a transnational space that becomes more foreign than local at certain times. While the intensity and rhythm is very specific to this particular form of temporary migration, in-between-ness and flux have both been described as typical components of transcultural place-making processes (Hou 2013b). Moreover, it should be underlined that the gatherings in Little India are among the very few moments in which foreign workers and local residents can encounter each other. Encounters are generally seen as a very loose form of interaction, happening often in places that are not primarily designed

TEMPORARY PICNIC SPACES ON VACANT LAND PLOTS

RAMADAN CELEBRATION ON VACANT LAND PLOT

IMPROVISED OUTDOOR CINEMA. SCREENING OF BANGLADESHI DRAMAS

ANNEXION OF CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS

INFORMAL CREATION OF PEDESTRIAN STREETS

READING ROOMS WITHIN PUBLIC CAR PARK

ATHLETIC GROUND - PLAYING CRICKET ON VACANT LAND PLOTS

ENTRACE TO HDB HOUSING TURNS TO MOBILE PHONE BOOTH

GATHERING SPOTS IN FRONT OF CLOSED SHOP FACADES

Figure 5   Foreign workers public space use.

for this purpose (Sassen 2005). These spaces can be seen as an example of what Peters (2010) calls 'multi ethnic encounter zones' in public spaces. He argues that these spaces are generally required in globalised cities, whether planned for or not.

4.   Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated that, foreign workers, transient migrants have initiated urban transformation processes at various scales. At the urban scale they are important as they enhance Singapore's competitiveness, forming an essential part of Singapore as a Global City, as described by Sassen (1991). At the neighbourhood scale they have generated a set of urban transformations that have turned Little India into a transnational space. My case study illustrates that these transformations are guided globally as well as locally: on the one hand, its agents are globally operating foreign workers; on the other,

its guiding framework (e.g. migration policies, businesses serving migrants, the vernacular urban context) derives from its local components. Economically, foreign workers have diversified business types, concepts, products, services, opening hours and spaces. Those on 'special passes' have been fuelling a black labour market supporting low-cost and ethnic businesses in the neighbourhood, and have added a new residential type of 'dormitory living' to the land-use mix. Socially and spatially, foreign workers have changed the use of open spaces and have remade vacant land into public space. They have created civic squares out of a green patch of land, have regularly established temporary pedestrian streets and have been operating markets in spaces normally used only by vehicles. In that sense, the Little India TCH supports and informs the broader discussion around how migrants act as active agents of urban transformation processes as initiated, for example, by Glick Schiller and Çaĝlar (2011), Smith (2007) or Hou (2013b).

Furthermore, I have demonstrated that while some elements of the neighbourhood structure and some elements of the transformation processes are typical characteristics of ethnic neighbourhoods as described by Waldiger, Aldrige, and Ward (1990) and others, factors such as the fact that the foreign workers are transient with restricted labour and citizen rights have led to the production of very specific and unique settlement patterns which differ distinctly from long-term migration settlement patterns. For this reason, I have introduced the term 'transitory community hub' to describe the economic, social and spatial urban transformation processes in Little India. What makes the TCHs unique is the inherently temporal status of their existence and the constantly changing time rhythm determining the intensity of the urban transformation. The very existence of a TCH relies on the continuous inflow of transient migrants of certain origins. In the past this dependency has shown itself to be fragile as not only has the number of foreign workers fluctuated depending on economic and political conditions but their places of origin have been changing due to changing labour availability and labour costs in the region.

Moreover, the restrictions under which foreign workers must live have led to distinct migration patterns, as have the restrictions on housing choice and living area, led to the creation of a central meeting place. The long working hours and the specific working rhythm have induced temporary activities and businesses that are flexible, matching the time rhythms of the workers. Throughout the week the rhythm of the foreign workers has prompted the establishment of a 24-hour shopping zone and has enhanced the evening vitality of the area. On Sundays the rhythm of the foreign workers has triggered the creation of new public spaces, the reformulation of existing public spaces and the drastic increase of weekend economic activities. Local restrictions on foreign workers have thus initiated a kind of 'change of ownership' process, through which what is normally a Singaporean neighbourhood with foreign influences transforms on Sundays into a foreign neighbourhood in Singapore.

In conclusion, the emergence of THCs proves that a purely regulative approach to inhibiting settlement has been unsuccessful in stopping foreign workers from acting as active agents of urban processes. Additionally, the December 2013 riots raise questions of whether regarding over a million transient migrants predominately as economic assets and leaving their livelihoods in the hands of private companies is a feasible way forward. On this note, Wood and Landry (2008) have noted the lack of positive planning policies for ethnic diversity in cities and have argued for research on ethnic diversity that will inform policy measures that strive to foster diversity in cities.

Lastly, comparable settlement patterns with distinct local colourings can also be found in other Asian countries like Hong Kong and Malaysia. Under conditions of increasingly ageing populations and existing or expected labour shortages in most Western countries, the intensification of temporary migration is seen as a possible option to secure a future workforce (Castles 2006). Countries such as Canada and the UK are already testing new temporary migration policies specifically designed to fill gaps in child and elderly care, other countries are due to follow. This trend will increase the importance of understanding temporary settlement structures in the near future and raises questions about citizenship and rights of temporary migrants in our cities.

Disclosure statement

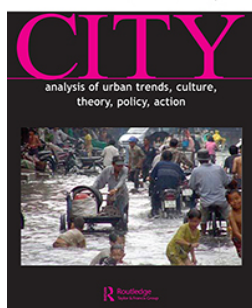No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1 A food court is an indoor plaza or common area within a facility that houses multiple food vendors and provides a common area for self-serve dining.

2 One-third of the workforce in Bangladesh is estimated to be unemployed (Rahman 2004), and remittances are Bangladesh's second leading source of foreign currency, after garment exports (Martin 2006).

3 A shophouse is a vernacular architectural building type in urban South East Asia, commonly two or three storeys high, with a shop on the ground floor for mercantile activity and a residence above the shop.

4 The URA is the governmental planning agency in Singapore. Through all-encompassing master plans, planning guidelines as well as through a government-led land sales programme, URA is able to steer nearly all urban developments in Singapore.

5 Carrom is a table game of Eastern origin similar to billiards and table shuffleboard.

6 Foreign workers are issued a special pass while they are in legal dispute with their employer, for example, over salary or medical claims. These foreign workers need to remain in Singapore until the dispute is settled as otherwise their claims will not be heard. Many either cannot as they are physically injured or are not allowed to work over the time in dispute.

7 A specific whole ground wheat flour used for making 'luchi', 'porota' or 'pitha' in Bangladeshi cuisine.

8 A traditional arcade structure attached to shophouses acting as threshold between the public and the private domain.

9 HDB housing is substituted by the Singaporean government. In Singapore over 80% of the population live in HDBs.

10 Backlanes are a relict of an act of a sanitisation scheme. In the 19th century, shophouses were originally built back to back with only one entrance point. As this physical set-up proved to be insanitary as night soils and other waste had to be carried through the main hall, backlanes were introduced. Narrow lanes that were cut through the back of the shophouses provided the shophouses with a new rear access.

References

Cameron, Naomi. 1997. "Neighborhood Regeneration: The State of the Art." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 17: 131–144. doi:10.1177/0739456X9701700204.

Castles, Stephen. 2002. "Migration and Community Formation under Conditions of Globalisation." *IMR* 36 (4): 1143–1168. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2002.tb00121.x.

Castles, Stephen. 2006. "Guestworkers in Europe: A Resurrection?" *International Migration Review* 40 (4): 741–766. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2006.00042.x.

Castles, Stephen, and Mark J. Miller. 1998. *New Migrations, Ethnicity and Nationalism in Southeast and East Asia.* Vol. 98–09. Oxford: University of Oxford. Transnational Communities Programme.

Chang, R. 2013. "Door to Stay Open for 3 Groups of Foreign Workers." *The Straits Times,* January 30.

Glick Schiller, Nina, and Ayse Caglar. 2011. *Locating Migration: Rescaling Cities and Migrants.* New York: Cornell University Press.

Hou, Jeffrey. 2010. *Insurgent Public Space: Guerrilla Urbanism and Remaking of Contemporary Cities.* London: Routledge.

Hou, Jeffrey, ed. 2013a. *Transcultural Cities, Border Crossing and Placemaking.* New York: Taylor & Francis.

Hou, Jeffrey. 2013b. "Your Place And/or My Place." In *Transcultural Cities, Border Crossing and Placemaking,* edited by Jeffrey Hou, 1–16. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Huff, W. G. 1995. *The Economic Growth of Singapore: Trade and Development in the Twentieth Century.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kitiarsa, Pattana. 2006. "Village Transnationalism: Transborder Identities among Thai-Isan Migrant Workers in Singapore." *Asia Research Institute,* Working Paper Series, 71.

Light, Ivan, and Steven Gold. 2000. *Ethnic Economies.* Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Marshall, Jonathan. 2014. *Not the Singapore We Know: The Little India Riot 2013.* Singapore: Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore.

Martin, Philip. 2006. "Managing Labour Migration: Temporary Worker Programmes for the 21st Century." Paper presented at the International Symposium on international Migration Development, Turin, June 28–30.

Peters, Karin. 2010. "Being Together in Urban Parks: Connecting Public Space, Leisure, and Diversity." *Leisure Sciences: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 32 (5): 418–433. doi:10.1080/01490400.2010.510987.

Portes, Alexandro, and Leif Jensen. 1989. "The Enclave and the Entrants: Patterns of Ethnic Enterprise in Miami before and after Mariel." *American Sociological Review* 54: 929–949.

Prime Minister Office. 2013. *Sustainable Population for a Dynamic Singapore: Population White Paper.* Singapore: Prime Minister Office. http://www.nptd.gov.sg/portals/0/news/population-white-paper.pdf.

Rahbaran, Shadi, and Manuel Herz. 2014. *Nairobi/ Kenya, Migration Shaping the City,* edited by Jacques Herzog and Pierre De Meuron. Zurich: Lars Mueller Publisher.

Rahman, Md. M. 2004. "Bangladeshi Workers in Singapore: A Sociological Study of Temporary Labour

Migration." PhD diss., Department of Sociology, National University Singapore.

Ray, Brian K., and Eric Moore. 1991. "Access to Home-ownership among Immigrant Groups in Canada." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie* 28 (1): 1–29. doi:10.1111/j.1755-618X.1991.tb00142.x.

Sassen, Saskia. 1991. *Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Sassen, Saskia. 2005. "Cityness in the Urban Age." Paper presented at Urban Age Conference, Shanghai, July 8. http://www.intelligentagent.com/ME/Saskia_Sassen_2005-Cityness_In_The_Urban_Age-Bulletin2.pdf.

Smith, Michael Peter. 2007. *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.

Soon-Beng, Chew, and Rosalind Chew. 1995. "Immigration and Foreign Labour in Singapore. Asean Economic Bulletin." *Asean Economic Bulletin* 12 (2): 191–200.

Tai, C. 2012. "Capturing Poignant Tales of Bangladeshi Workers in S'pore." *The Straits Times*, December 14.

Tonkiss, Fran. 2013. *Cities by Design: The Social Life of Urban Form*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Urban Development Authority. 2013. *Hotel Accommo-dation Facilities Guideline*. Singapore: Urban Devel-opment Authority. http://www.ura.gov.sg/circulars/text/dchbnr/hotelotheraccommodationfacilities-dchbnr.pdf.

Waldinger, Roger, Howard Aldrige, and Robin Ward, eds.

1990. *Ethnic Entrepreneurs, Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*. Race and Ethnic Relations. London: Sage Publication.

Watson, Sophie. 2006. *City Publics: The (Dis)enchant-ments of Urban Encounters*. London: Routledge.

Winnick, Louis. 1990. *New People in Old Neighbor-hoods: The Role of New Immigrants in Rejuvenating New York's Communities*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Wood, Phil, and Charles Landry. 2008. *Intercultural City, Planning for Diversity Advantages*. London: Earthscan.

Yeoh, Brenda S. A. 2013. "'Upwards' or 'Sideways' Cosmopolitanism? Talent/labour/marriage Migrations in the Globalising City-State of Singa-pore." *Migration Studies* 1: 96–116. doi:10.1093/migration/mns037.

Yue, Chia Siow. 2011. "Foreign Labor in Singapore: Trends, Policies, Impacts, and Challenges." *Discussion Paper Series*, no. 2011. doi:10.1177/1367877915573764.

Zukin, Sharon, Philip Kasinitz, and Chen Xiangming. 2016. "Spaces of Everyday Diversity." In *Global Cities, Local Streets*, 1–29. London: Routledge.

Edda Ostertag is a researcher at the Future Cities Laboratory, Singapore-ETH Centre, Singapore. Email: ostertag@eo7.de

Afro-Colombian integration in mestizo cities

Jorge Ivan Bula Escobar

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Afro-Colombian integration in mestizo cities
The case of Bogotá

Jorge Ivan Bula Escobar

Bogotá is a city of around 8 million inhabitants, composed of migrants from across Colombia, but mainly descendants from Spaniards or mestizos. Black or Afro-Colombian residents represent just 1.5% of the urban population. Increasingly, larger numbers of Afro-Colombians are migrating to the city for different reasons: internal conflict (internally displaced people) or the search for economic opportunities (economically displaced people), among others. Though racism in Colombia is not considered a social problem, in fact, racial discrimination persists in the imaginary of a large segment of the population, making the urban integration of Afro-Colombians a stressful and difficult process. As a result, many black settlements have emerged across the city, creating zones that separate them from the rest of the city, and stress the cultural traits and ethnic identity of their inhabitants. This paper tries to assess the urban dynamics that might explain the living conditions and the modes of insertion of Afro-Colombian residents in large cities like Bogotá that are both racially diverse and racially segregated.

Introduction

Bogotá is said to have reached more than 8 million inhabitants. The majority of its population, composed of migrants from across the country, are mainly mestizos, descendants from Spaniards, and thus. Black Colombians, also called Afro-Colombians, represent only 1.5% of the city's total population. They have migrated to Bogotá for different reasons, including the violence related to the more than 50 years of internal conflict in Colombia. These migrants can be thought of as 'internally displaced people'. Others have migrated for economic reasons.

These 'economically displaced people' have come in search of economic opportunities since the regions from which they have migrated tend to be underdeveloped or have very few opportunities for improving the quality of life.

Though racism is not considered a social problem in Colombia, in fact, many studies have shown that racial discrimination persists in the minds of a large segment of the population. This makes the integration of Afro-Colombians in a big city such as Bogotá a stressful and difficult process. As a result, and despite Afro-Colombians being a minority among the larger population, many

Afro-Colombian settlements have emerged across the city. Such settlements have produced a range of cultural and economic activities led by Afro-Colombians, differentiating, to some extent, these zones from the rest of the city.

This paper assesses the urban dynamics that explain the living conditions and modes of insertion of Afro-Colombians in major cities in Colombia. In particular, it takes up *resilience* practices deployed in order to survive in large, racially-diverse yet segregated cities such as Bogotá.

A brief history

The first African slaves arrived in the Americas in the 16th century. In Colombia, the main settlements took place on the Caribbean and Pacific coasts (see Figure 1). Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada, Bogota's founder, brought the first African slave to Bogotá in 1539 as his personal assistant. Twenty more slaves were brought five years later by another Spaniard, Hernán Pérez. By 1789, there were 762 African-born residents in the city. Almost 100 years later (1886) out of the city's 18,455 inhabitants one-third were white and the rest were a mix of mestizo, mulatto, black and indigenous people (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 26–27).

In the 20th century, Afro-Colombian migration to Bogotá came from previously settled Afro-Colombian communities spread across the two coasts. The killing of a popular leader and presidential candidate of the Liberal Party on 9 April 1948 was the starting point of the period called *La Violencia* (The Violence), which arguably and in some respects has lasted until today. This was the start of a kind of civil war that took place mainly in the countryside and led to a large migration of peasants—among them some Afro-Colombians—towards the big cities during the second half of the 20th century. A second wave of Afro-Colombian migration started in the mid-1990s, when the internal conflict intensified, and at

which point the phenomenon of internally displaced people emerged as a significant issue. Afro-Colombians were forced to abandon their original communities in the south of the country, alongside the Pacific coast near the Ecuadorian border, as well as on the Caribbean coast in the north, close to the border with Panama (Arocha 2002, 16).

According to the 2005 census, 97,885 Afro-Colombians live in Bogotá, representing 1.49% of the city's total population (6,778,691). However, some Afro-Colombian organisations estimate the number of Afro-Colombians in the city to be between 800,000 and 1 million (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 27). The Afro-Colombian population in Bogotá's metropolitan area represents 2.39% of the total Afro-Colombian population in the whole country (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 3).

Traits of a racist society

Recent accounts have revealed that, despite the absence of a public debate about racial discrimination, Afro-Colombians experience discrimination in Colombia. As reported by the rapporteur of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights: 'In many cases, despite accepting the impact of deep social inequalities that affect Afro-Colombian people, authorities and public servants did not recognise racial discrimination as a structural problem' (Mow 2010, 8). Looking at some key figures may be indicative in that respect. While average life expectancy in Colombia is 72 years, for Afro-Colombians it is 55 years. One possible reason for this is lack of access to health services. While 80 percent of Colombians have access to health services some 53.5 percent of Afro-Colombian households living in cities and 73.8 per cent living in rural areas do not have access to any kind of health service. As mentioned previously, the recent migration of Afro-Colombian people to Bogotá and other major cities is related to the phenomenon of internal displacement in the country. In fact,

Figure 1 Map of Colombia and its position in South America (Source: http://obryadii00.blogspot.com/2011/04/maps-of-colombia-south-america.html).

Afro-Colombian people represent 54% of all displaced people in the country (Observatorio de Discriminación Racial 2008, 2). In many cases the lands and properties they left behind have been seized (legally or illegally) by more powerful economic actors (e.g. paramilitary groups, guerrilla groups, regular military forces, landlords and entrepreneurs).

Moreover, in 2004 nearly 85% of Afro-Colombians were estimated to live in poverty, compared to a nationwide poverty rate of 34%. Salaries for Afro-Colombians are 75% below the official minimum salary level, and on average their per capita income is around US$500, compared to a national average of US$1500. The number of Afro-Colombians with a secondary education is 40 percent below the national average level and only 2 percent of Afro-Colombian pupils have higher education, whereas the rate for the country as a whole is around 25 percent. The districts in which Afro-Colombians are the majority are among the ones with the lowest quality of life. While Chocó has improved its Conditions of Life Index (CLI) from 56.9 to 60.5 between 2002 and 2005, it remains the district with the lowest CLI in the country. In 2005, this was 0.67 compared to the national HDI of 0.78, a difference of more than 10 points. Looking

at the Conditions of Life Index (CLI), Chocó improved its CLI between 2002 and 2005 from 56.9 to 60.5, but even so it remains the lowest one in the country. In 2005, it was more than 18 points below the national level (78.8) (Reales Jiménez 2004; García Cano 2008, 10, 14).

With respect to racial discrimination against citizens of African descents, these trends are consistent with most Latin-American countries. According to Escarfuller and Frankel (2013), people of African descent represent one-third of the total population in the western hemisphere. The United States, Brazil, and Colombia are the main countries with a significant population of African descent. In Brazil, much like in Colombia, access to higher education is much more limited for people of African descent than for 'whites'. While only 1.3% of Afro-descendants possess degrees in higher education, 6.7% of the rest of the population have such degrees (Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 24). According to Paixão et al., in 2008, 20.5% of Caucasians between 18 and 24 years old were enrolled in a higher education institution compared to 7.7% for Afro-descendants (quoted by Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 26). As the authors state:

> 'Moreover, the discrimination and structural racism these people suffer are manifested in various forms and on several levels. Culturally appropriate education policies that recognise Afro-descendant history and identity and the contribution Afro-descendants have made to the development of their countries are virtually non-existent; and the lack of effective participation mechanisms combines with discrimination in classrooms to produce an even more dramatic situation than simply difficulties in gaining access to education establishments.' (Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 26)

Generally speaking, lack of enrolment in tertiary education may often imply transition in the labour market. However, in many Latin-American countries Afro-descendant youth are usually excluded from both higher education and decent employment: for example,

in Brazil, the youth unemployment rate for African descendants is 26%, twice the rate in Colombia where it is only 13% (Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 29). In addition, in the context of intensifying urbanisation, Afro-descendant youth tend to work for very low pay in the informal labour and a wage gap between ethnic groups has emerged:

> 'Several studies reveal the ethnic discrimination that persists in the region; in Brazil, for example, even when controlling for education levels and the number of hours worked, Afro-descendants receive lower pay than "whites" (Afro-descendant women lower still), and ethnic gaps are even growing in the higher education brackets.' (Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 33)

This is confirmed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in its report on the situation of African descendants in the Americas:

> 'As regards the right to work, the statistics indicate that the Afro-descendant population occupies the lowest positions in the job hierarchy and mostly perform informal-sector and low-grade tasks or work that is poorly remunerated—even when comparing wages of non-Afro-descendants people who perform the same tasks—they lack the social security benefits and the rate of unemployment of this community is greater than for the population as a whole.' (CIDH 2011, 19)

In the case of Brazil, for instance, the Commission found that:

> 'one half of all Afro-descendants receive a monthly income of less than two minimum wages, and inversely, in the upper income brackets, while 16 percent of whites receive over 10 minimum wages, the proportion of Afro-descendants, at 6 percent, is considerably lower'. (CIDH 2011, 6)

The Commission has also recognised that, based on a number of other social indicators—such as housing, quality health,

access to credit, life expectancy, nutrition rates, and access to public facilities—Afro-descendants in Latin-American countries experience discrimination, as many are concentrated in the poorest areas with the greatest exposure to violence and crime (CIDH 2011, 17). In Brazil, for instance, crime, drug trafficking and violence in poor neighbourhoods, notably in Rio de Janeiro, are instantly associated with black people, and 'favelas' are assumed to be inhabited mainly by Afro-descendants who make those places unsafe (Vargas 2006, 51). Yet, such an imaginary produces, in fact, an unsafe place for precisely those Afro-descendants living in these neighbourhoods. Excessive police intervention under the pretext of establishing order in these places usually gives rise to clashes between residents and the police. As Vargas argues, 'the police constitute the first line of attack—preemptive as well as reactive—against the politics of resistance emerging from marginalized communities' (Vargas 2006, 59). Such a situation resembles, for example, that of the United States—a country where racism has been clearly recognised, and has thus produced similar responses: in some favelas, inhabitants react to police intervention by means inspired by the African-American movements.

Finding a way in the big city

As stated earlier, many Afro-Colombians arrive in Bogotá either as victims of the internal conflict or for economic reasons. In the 1950s and 1960s, the latter was the main cause of migration to Bogotá. Since 1995, however, in regions where Afro-Colombians have a significant presence, internal displacement caused by violence created a new wave of migration. The main regions of origin were the Pacific littoral and, to a lesser extent, districts located on the Caribbean coast. These regions are rich in minerals, oil, fishing and many other export products, but are unfortunately areas in which guerrilla

and paramilitary activities are prevalent (Arocha 2002, 16).

Most Afro-Colombian settlements are located in 5 of the 20 localities in Bogotá, as shown in Figure 2: Bosa, Kennedy, Ciudad Bolívar, Suba and Engativá (Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 5). Afro-Colombians have an important tradition of collective life and the use of common properties as well as other cultural features, mostly inherited over centuries from their native communities in Africa. Social relations express the closeness of communities, where extended family kinship prevails in everyday life. Some of these—such as family and kinship relations, the leadership of women, and the way the urban territory is approached by their people—are reproduced, with slight variations, in the city (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 28).

Although many Afro-Colombians find better socio-economic conditions in Bogotá, similar patterns of social inequality as those persisting across the country are reproduced in the capital such as restricted access to education and health services. Although Afro-Colombians living in Bogotá have higher levels of university enrolment as compared to Afro-Colombians in other parts of the country, these rates are still comparatively lower: 14.3% of Afro-Colombians in Bogotá have a university degree compared to 17.1% of non Afro-Colombians, according to the last census (see Table 1). Moreover, 29% of Afro-Colombians between 12 and 18 years of age reach high school, whilst 33% of the rest of the population in the same age group have this opportunity. One of the reasons for the lower education levels is the need for adolescents to work; they often have to find a job in order to support their families in the city; in fact, 55.6% of Afro-Colombians abandon school in order to work (Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 10). Labour market insertion for Afro-Colombians in Bogotá takes place mainly through the informal sector, especially for young people. The informal labour market in Colombia is quite
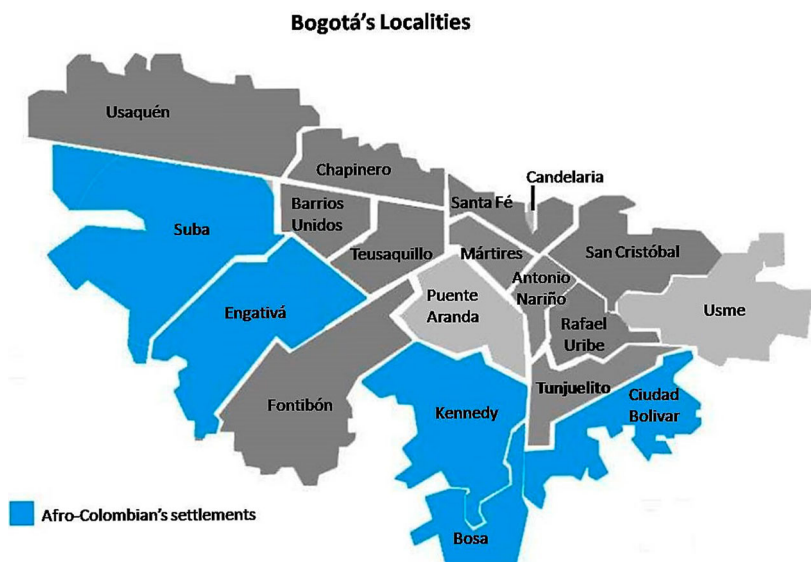
Figure 2 Areas in Bogotá with larger Afro-Colombian settlements (Source: Based on Figure 2 of Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 4).

significant, with around 45% of the active population estimated to work in the informal sector.

The lower rates of access to health services is also related to the working conditions of Afro-Colombians in Bogotá, as they are less likely than other segments of the urban population to contribute to the health system since such a high proportion work in the informal sector. Afro-Colombian women, in particular, because of their lower access to formal waged labour, have lower levels of health coverage as compared to Afro-Colombian men, who have better access to the subsidised system. Compared to women of other ethnic backgrounds, for instance, 13% of Afro-Colombian females work as domestic employees in households whilst only 2% of non-black women have this kind of job. In total, some 14.6% of Afro-Colombians did not have access to the health system in 2009, compared to 8.6% among the rest of the population; this has risen to 16.1% among Afro-Colombian women compared to 7.1% for females of other backgrounds (Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 11). Generally

speaking, however, Afro-Colombians in Bogotá are in a better situation than Afro-Colombians in other regions of the country in terms of access to the health system (14). Yet, this lack of access to health services has led to a reintroduction of traditional medicine in some Afro-Colombian communities, both as an alternative health support and as a way to recover traditional knowledge by the use of medicinal plants and practices of *paliadera*, that is, palliative care (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 29).

The difficult conditions confronting Afro-Colombians in Bogotá have had a significant impact of the role usually played by women in Afro-Colombian communities. During their daily life in the city, their leadership role is diminished because they are usually involved in low-level productive activities. Not only do they mainly engage in the informal sector but generally in sectors in which productivity is among the lowest (e.g. domestic labour). When they maintain their role as heads of households, this is usually because some Afro-Colombian households are led by women as breadwinners (often in displaced families where an adult male

Table 1 Percentage of population with higher education

City	Afro-Colombian			Other ethnic groups		
	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total
Bogotá	15.3	13.4	14.3	17.5	16.8	17.1
Cali	5.9	6.1	6.0	13.8	13.0	13.4
Pereira	7.9	7.5	7.7	9.6	9.4	9.5
Medellín	8.3	7.7	8.0	13.0	11.9	12.4
Total national urban	6.8	6.3	6.6	10.9	11.0	11.0
Cartagena	6.5	7.0	6.7	13.9	13.5	13.7
San Andrés and Providencia Archip.	6.5	8.2	7.3	7.5	7.8	7.7
Total national	5.4	4.9	5.1	9.1	8.7	8.9
Buenaventura	3.5	5.0	4.3	5.9	6.1	6.0
Quibdó	13.5	15.7	14.0	9.9	11.0	10.4
Total national rural	1.1	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.1

Source: Desigualdades sociodemográficas y socioeconómicas, Mercado laboral y discriminación con base en información censo 2005. Carlos Viáfara and Fernando Urrea (2009) (quoted in Dirección de Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 10).

member has been killed or disappeared), a situation less commonly found among other social and ethnic groups. These changes have also impacted fertility rates and household size. As opposed to the large family type that may be found in other regions of Colombia, Afro-Colombian families in Bogotá have an average size of 2.98 persons, the lowest for Afro-Colombians in the country, and lower even than the average family size of non-Afro-Colombians in Bogotá, which is 3.47 (Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales 2011, 6).

Afro-Colombians have also found ways to establish their own spaces in order to adapt to the urban way of life. For example, they have their own shopping malls in a city that has more than 50 malls across the city. In some malls (notably those located in wealthy areas), however, Afro-Colombians have been subjected to racial discrimination and in some cases denied entry altogether. Together with some public parks, shopping malls are the preferred place for leisure, since they are safer in terms of weather and exposure to violence and crime. Such is the case of the Galaxcentro mall, situated in the inner city, an area that has suffered from urban decay in the past. This is a place where Afro-Colombians may find restaurants with their own cuisine and services, including hairdressers. Near the shopping mall, there are nightclubs where Afro-Colombians are the main clients and which serve as meeting points (Arocha 2002, 16). This is an area that not only responds to potential or real racial discrimination, but also a space where Afro-Colombians can reinvent their social ties and re-establish an imagined community in an environment totally different from where they originally came from—spaces in which people, despite migrating from different regions, might share a worldview.

Downtown is also a coveted place for Afro-Colombians. Many restaurants owned by Afro-Colombians have become meeting places for Afro-Colombians from the Pacific coast to find seafood and fish. Since these places are also attended by non Afro-Colombians they also serve to highlight the unique characteristics of Afro-Colombian culture. No more than ten blocks from the historic centre, in an area of around 12,000 square metres, there is a high concentration of restaurants and seafood markets owned by Afro-Colombian migrants from the Pacific coast.

As strangers in the city, newcomers are often integrated into the city by relatives or friends who have settled earlier, whose homes constitute an initial place of contact and who introduce them to community networks, which in some cases have already been set up. Such a process leads to the formation of 'colonies', firstly based on households of the same origin (e.g. town or municipality), then on the province or district to which the town is administratively attached, and finally as an extended Afro-Colombian network. As stated by Quintero Ramirez (2010, 75), 'the role of colonies, understood as "communities of origin", which are formed through the immigration process, acquires roles of social cohesion and mediation between those immigrant groups and the recipient society'.

This form of adaptation contrasts with the hegemonic logic of entrepreneurialism that informs both the behaviour of social actors as well as political decision-making processes in contemporary societies. The former is produced at the micro level, the latter is (re)produced at the macro level. But certainly such a logic leaves Afro-Colombians at the crossroads between preserving (or adapting) their way of life and responding to the pressures of being successful in an environment that does not recognise itself as racist, yet does not provide equal opportunities. The latter perspective is exemplified in the Afro-Colombian youth aspiration to become a football player; becoming a football player is seen as a way to be successful, and an option that reaffirms the imaginary of black people as strong, fast and fitter to play sports. However, in this case, it is not sports that are an issue as such: football, as analysed by Ehrenberg (1991), is a kind of harmonious marriage between competition and justice. Being a popular game (the most popular one in fact), a mass sport, makes football '*la passion d'être égal*'; the imaginary that being a football player is an opportunity to scale up in the social structure, renders sporting success an equivalent to social success (Ehrenberg 1991, 28). However, what looks

like the means of overcoming racial discrimination is a very narrow and selective world that very few will enter.

Performing 'well' does not only apply to competition in sports; it is the leitmotiv of being in society today. By stressing the capabilities of the self, of building up the individual capable of overcoming any obstacle in his/her race to success, social and cultural ties may become threatened. Yet, for Afro-descendants, additional threats come from the entrepreneurial view at the macro level. The globalisation process has led to a worldwide competition between cities and even within them; building a world-class city, attractive to globalised agents, is today the main objective of most local governments, at least in the major cities in any country. Entrepreneurialism has become a new way of literally producing urban and social space. Through public–private partnerships new urban projects are conceptualised in order to make the city attractive and competitive. As David Harvey (1989, 7) states:

> 'entrepreneurialism focuses much more closely on the political economy of place rather than of territory. By the latter, I mean the kinds of economic projects (housing, education, etc.) that are designed primarily to improve conditions of living or working within particular jurisdiction.'

Urban development in this perspective tends to focus much more on a kind of 'pharaonic' project like a mall, an industrial park, etc. rather than public facilities. This public–private partnership prioritises speculation activities rather than improving conditions in undeserved neighbourhoods (Harvey 1989, 7).

This dynamic in our case may have a double impact on the neighbourhoods in which Afro-Colombians live. On the one hand, resources that could be invested to improve social conditions in poor neighbourhoods where most Afro-Colombians (or generally Afro-Americans) live, may be diverted towards such 'pharaonic' projects in order to make the city more competitive. On the other

hand, this kind of urban development may lead to processes of gentrification in decayed urban areas or poor neighbourhoods, once again putting at risk the places where Afro-Colombians live or work. Places that used to be inhabited by Afro-descendants may become places that they will find difficult to reach either because of economic barriers or racial discrimination. The construction of shopping malls across the city, for example, despite the economic status of the neighbourhoods in which they are located, has produced a rise in the price of land and houses that has made housing unaffordable for local residents. In Bogotá there are around 53 shopping malls, many located in low- and medium-income zones where, as mentioned before, Afro-descendants used to live. The most recent process of gentrification is taking place in parts of town where recolonization by wealthier people has yielded a rise of house prices thanks in part to the renewal of old buildings. An old and, in its time, very popular billiard room has been renewed and a disco installed with now a quite costly entrance fee.[1]

However, urban entrepreneurialism may be seen as a strategic dilemma. Since this competitive race between cities also tends to reinvigorate local culture and vernacular idiosyncrasies in some cases, there is the potential to appropriate urban and social spaces with more robust collective and individual identities based on traditions and new social representations of being 'Afro' in a predominantly 'white' and 'mestizo' city. According to Harvey (1989, 14), 'Urban entrepreneurialism (as opposed to the much more faceless bureaucratic managerialism) here meshes with a search for local identity and, as such, opens up a range of mechanisms for social control.' In this perspective, a way of curbing the entrepreneurial urban process is through collective action, which looks at strengthening the presence and recognition of Afro-Colombians as an urban minority enjoying complete human and citizenship rights based on the assertion of their own cultural traits and racial identity.

Towards collective action

The organisations that Afro-Colombians have been able to build up in Bogotá are at the same time a mechanism to be recognised as an active community in the city, ones capable of reproducing social relations in a large urban area. Since 1995, the number of organisations has increased due to the growth of migration caused by the internal conflict. Thanks to affirmative action policies introduced by the local government in 2006, by 2009 there were 128 organisations in Bogotá, formally recognised and registered vis-à-vis the Ministry of Interior's national entity responsible for minorities (Observatorio DDHH y DHI 2009, 30). Afro-Colombian organisations in Bogotá represent 15% of the total number of Afro-Colombian organisations across the country. Despite the fact that Bogotá is not recognised as a city of 'black' people, the capital has the second largest number of Afro-Colombian organisations in Colombia after Bolivar—a Caribbean district in the north of the country (Quintero Ramirez 2010, 69).

Colombia's Ombudsman Office defines collective action as the mobilisation of a group of people around a common identity, an interest or a situation of inequality, subordination and scarcity of material and symbolic conditions determined by the social and historical moment in which they take place (Romero Barreiro 2008, 40–41). Due to the fact that most recent migrations are connected to the internal displacement phenomenon, one of the main associations is related to Afro-Colombians who have suffered such a condition. The Association of Displaced Afro-Colombians (Asociación de Afrocolombianos Desplazados) which brings together around 2400 families at the national level aims at the 'autonomous reconstruction of life projects and cultural identity' (36). Certainly, other types of organisations have emerged according to the interests or objectives that arise from the community, such as gender issues, self-support, cultural identity, etc.—very often other ethnic

groups in the city look at Afro-Colombians as being a homogenous group, but in fact Afro-Colombians usually cluster around each other based on their geographical origins.

Following Quintero Ramirez's (2010, 74) classification there are five types of organisations: (1) those based on migrants' urban 'colonies'; (2) non-governmental organisations; (3) cultural organisations, representing both large and smaller groups; (4) political organisations of national or territorial representation, or those focused on grass-roots organisational processes; and (5) organisations of specific population groups (women, youth and students, professionals and internally displaced people). These organisations generally help Afro-Colombian migrants face two challenges. First, they provide individual pathways to social mobility in a new environment which is full of risks, problems of social exclusion, etc. and in which the organisation serves as a leverage to reinforce their social capital. Second, for those enrolled in these organisations, this is a way to strengthen their 'black identity' by reconstructing their collective life while adapting to a new environment, both as a defence mechanism to fight racial discrimination and other social and economic risks and in order to promote their racial and cultural identity (Quintero Ramirez 2010, 77). Perhaps this is why Afro-Colombian organisations in Bogotá, despite the relatively small size of the ethnic group they represent, have been playing an increasingly important role in Bogotá's life, leading a process which facilitates Afro-Colombian social insertion and at the same time promotes an awareness of Afro-Colombians as part of Colombia's cultural roots and as people with the same citizenship rights as any other social or ethnic group.

Similar processes, in spite of the particular conditions of Colombia, have taken place across Latin-American countries, notably in those with higher shares of Afro-descendant populations. This process of black identity building has been strengthened with increased awareness of their rights and citizenship. These new identities are stronger among young people and are related to a more active participation in civil society. In Brazil, for instance, two organisations deserve to be mentioned: the National 'Black' Youth Forum (Forito) and the 'Black' Youth political articulation. These organisations, 'aim to discuss and design proposals for the development of collective transformation and construction practices in education, health, human rights, employment, sexual diversity, and disability, culture and economy, among others' (Rangel and Del Popolo 2011, 42). Other organisations in Brazil include the National Black Youth Conference (EJEUNE), the Favela Black Youth Movement or the Young Black Active Women's Organisation.

Nevertheless, the development of institutions protecting Afro-descendants' human rights is very uneven in the region, as has been declared by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights:

> 'In terms of public policies, the approach in the countries of the Hemisphere is not homogeneous. In some cases, there is no federal agency specifically in charge of evaluating and promoting the situation of Afro-descendants nor is there an independent national institution on human rights or a Constitutional Court.' (CIDH 2011, 69)

Even so, some progress has been made in providing a legal framework and mechanisms in order to fight racial discrimination.

A final remark

This paper has tried to show that an ethnic group in Bogota that has suffered social and racial discrimination silently and is not formally recognised in the country, has nonetheless produced mechanisms of social survival and managed to reinvent collective life and cultural identity. To some extent the

discussion here shares findings derived from other contexts in relation to resilience mechanisms that serve Afro-descendants facing racial discrimination, notably in the USA. As stated by Danice Brown (2008, 43): 'Both theoretical and empirical research studies of African-American populations have noted the inherent role racial socialization and social support has in the lives of African-Americans and the protective power of these factors.' These kind of resilience mechanisms strengthen racial identity by contributing to 'the significance and qualitative meaning that individuals attribute to being Black in their conceptualizations of self' (Sellers and Shelton 2003, 1080, cited in Brown 2008, 33). Furthermore, apart from the survival strategies that become part of the social and economic life of the city, collective action becomes perhaps one of the main pathways through which to advance social insertion, by stressing the cultural values of Afro-descendants and making them visible in a mainly mestizo and white society.

This paper provides some steps towards an understanding of how such mechanisms, processes, and practices of migrants' settlement have made an impact in shaping social and urban spaces. It highlights how everyday practices help construct new urban environments thus effecting the social construction of space, in this case in the capital city of a developing country such as Colombia. It also identifies how Afro-Colombian spaces help in the building of racial identity and social defence mechanisms. Space thus is a social construction both as the product of social practices and as the producer of social behaviour. The way Afro-Colombians have been able to adapt to an aggressive urban social environment, shows the interplay of these processes. Considering that studies concerning these types of resilience mechanisms in the face of racial discrimination and urban insertion are not very common in Colombia, this paper may be seen as just a prolegomenon for deeper and more detailed research that should be undertaken in the future.

Disclosure statement

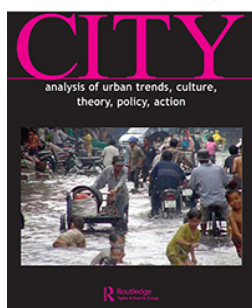No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Note

1 In this place, called London Billiards, one Afro-Colombian woman had not been allowed to enter based on excuses related to her look, not her ethnic origin (see Las 2 Orillas 2014, http://www.las2orillas.co/el-dia-en-que-no-me-dejaron-entrar-a-billares-londres-por-ser-negra/).

References

Arocha, Jaime. 2002. "Patrimonio afrocolombiano en Bogotá", *UN Periódico*, 36, July 21: 16. Universidad Nacional de Colombia Bogotá.

Brown, Danice L. 2008. "African American Resiliency: Examining Racial Socialization and Social Support as Protective Factors." *Journal of Black Psychology* 34 (1): 32–48.

CIDH - Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. 2011. "La situación de las personas afrodescendientes en las Américas", *CIDH, Organización de los Estados Americanos (OEA) documentos oficiales* OEA Ser.L/V/II Doc.62. http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/afrodescendientes/docs/pdf/afros_2011_esp.pdf.

Crow, Ben, and Mary Thorpe, eds. 1988. *Survival and Change in the Third World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales. 2011. *Población afrocolombiana en el Distrito Capital: Línea de base*, Dirección Equidad y Políticas Poblacionales, Secretaría Distrital de Planeación, Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá DC. http://www.sdp.gov.co/portal/page/portal/PortalSDP/SeguimientoPoliticas/Politicas%20Poblacionales/PoblacionAfrodescendiente/documentacion/L%EDnea%20de%20base%20afros%20Bogot%E1.%20SDP%202011%29.pdf.

Ehrenberg, Alain. 1991. *Le culte de la performance*. Paris: Calman-Lévy.

Escarfuller, Wilda, and Adam Frankel. 2013. *Racial Apartheid Persists in Latin America*. http://americasquarterly.org/content/racial-apartheid-persists-latin-america.

García Cano, Patricia. 2008. *Indicadores Sociales Departamentales.* Bogotá: Departamento Nacional de Planeación. https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/Desarrollo%20Social/boletin37.pdf.

Harvey, David. 1989. "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance

in Late Capitalism". *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 71 (1): 3–17.

Las 2 Orillas. 2014 (March 12th). "El día que no me dejaron entrar a Billares Londres, por ser negra". http://www.las2orillas.co/el-dia-en-que-no-me-dejaron-entrar-a-billares-londres-por-ser-negra/.

Mow, June Mary. 2010. *Población Afrocolombiana/ Negra, Palenquera y Raizal y Derechos Humanos.* http://centromemoria.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/ 2013/11/MDULO_4_pdf.pdf.

Observatorio DDHH y DHI. 2009. *Diagnóstico de la situación de las comunidades afrocolombianas priorizadas por la Honorable Corte Constitucional en Bogotá D.C. y Soacha*, Agencia Presidencial para la Acción Social y la Cooperación Internacional, Observatorio Derechos Humanos y Derecho International Humanitario, Vicepresidencia de la República. http://historico. derechoshumanos.gov.co/Observatorio/documents/ 2010/DiagnosticoAfro/BogotaDC.pdf.

Observatorio de Discriminación Racial. 2008. *Población Afrocolombiana, Discriminación Racial y Derechos Humanos.* http://portal.ajintem.com/ dmdocuments/Cifras%20sobre%20discriminacion% 20racial[1].pdf.

Quintero Ramirez, Óscar. 2010. "Los afro aquí. Dinámicas e identidades de la población afrocolombiana en Bogotá." *Boletín de Antropología Universidad de Antioquia* 24 (41): 65–83. http://aprendeenlinea. udea.edu.co/revistas/index.php/boletin/article/ viewFile/7946/7448.

Rangel, Marta, and Fabiana Del Popolo. 2011. *Afro-descendant Youth in Latin-America: Diverse Realities and (Un)fulfilled Rights.* UNFPA-ECLAC. http://www. africanafrican.com/folder15/alot%20more%20of% 20african%20&%20african%20american% 20history12/afro/Afro-descendant_Youth.pdf.

Reales Jiménez, Leonardo. 2004. "Informe DD.HH (1994– 2004) / Movimiento Nacional Afrocolombiano CIMARRON sobre la situación de derechos humanos de la población afrocolombiana (1994–2004)." http://www.urosario.edu.co/jurisprudencia/catedra-viva-intercultural/Documentos/informecimarron.pdf.

Romero Barreiro, Patricia Claudia. 2008. "Condiciones de vulnerabilidad social y acción colectiva de la población desplazada ubicada en Bogotá." *Revista Colombiana de Sociologia* 30: 27–46. Bogotá.

Sellers, Robert M., and J. Nicole Shelton. 2003. "The Role of Racial Identity in Perceived Racial Discrimination." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 84 (5): 1079–1092.

Vargas, João H. Costa. 2006. "When a Favela Dares to Become a Gated Condominium: The Politics of Race and Urban Space in Rio de Janeiro". *Latin American Perspectives* 33 (4): 49–81. doi:10.1177/ 0094582X06289892.

Jorge Bula is Associate Professor, Universidad Nacional de Colombia. Email: jibulae@unal. edu.co

City

analysis of urban trends, culture, theory, policy, action

Can resilience be redeemed?

Zac Taylor & Alex Schafran

Published online: 15 Feb 2016.

Submit your article to this journal ⟶

Article views: 198

View related articles ⟶

View Crossmark data ⟶

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Debates
Can resilience be redeemed?
Introduction

Zac Taylor and Alex Schafran

In 2014, in response to an invitation to suggest topics for debate, Geoff DeVerteuil made the wise suggestion that the question of resilience remained wide open. Not the question of whether or how cities and societies were or were not resilient, but rather the issue of whether resilience as an idea, as a set of interwoven discourses, as a component of social movements and policy paradigms, was itself still useful, powerful and critical, or whether it had become hopelessly co-opted, overused and even dangerous. Stinging critiques were mounting, and as editors we wondered whether authors would respond effectively, if at all. Could resilience be redeemed, repurposed or rebuilt? Our initial call, for a debate held at the Association of American Geographers conference in Chicago, elicited many ideas and proposals. Six authors joined us in Chicago, and in the pages that follow, we bring together three very different perspectives on resilience, each offering a critical perspective on how the concept might be repurposed. A heartfelt thanks to all who made initial proposals, attended the sessions in Chicago or participated in any way to these conversations and debates.
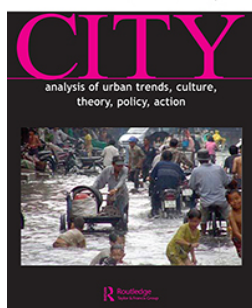
In the first piece, Geoff DeVerteuil and Oleg Golubchikov mine existing resilience debate as a means to propose a critical resilience that frames and aids processes of social resistance and transformation. Next, Tim Schwanen takes up resilience through the notion of endurance, using the example of automobility to consider how urban systems and structures evolve and iterate through specific path dependencies and feedback loops. Kate Driscoll Derickson rounds out the collection by drawing on her own entanglements with resilience talk as a scholar activist, redoubling her earlier calls to think about resilience in relation to the resourcefulness of social actors.

If there is one overarching sentiment that runs throughout this collection, it is that resilience can only be redeemed in so far as it is critically engaged with the everyday and actually existing urban politics and processes. In this view, we might view such a redeemed resilience as both a tool and a practice, as a means of both imagining and building better urban futures. Writing from Tampa Bay, Florida, as one of us is, a seemingly inevitable and potentially catastrophic sea level rise now stands to wash over the very low-lying and sprawling coastal communities that figured greatly in the still-simmering subprime mortgage crisis of the last decade. Here, as tides rise and an entrenched growth machine sputters, it is strikingly clear that the status quo cannot endure—that 'resilience is not enough', in the words of one of our contributors. And so, as we continue to reimagine and retrofit cities in the face of uncertain futures, can resilience be redeemed as a useful framework for knowing and shaping the urban?

Zac Taylor is based at the School of Geography, University of Leeds. Email: gyzjt@leeds.ac.uk

Alex Schafran is based at the School of Geography, University of Leeds. Email: a.schafran@leeds.ac.uk

Can resilience be redeemed?

Geoff DeVerteuil & Oleg Golubchikov

Published online: 15 Feb 2016.

Submit your article to this journal ⌐

Article views: 696

View related articles ⌐

View Crossmark data ⌐

Can resilience be redeemed?
Resilience as a metaphor for change, not against change

Geoff DeVerteuil and Oleg Golubchikov

Resilience has been critiqued as being regressively status quo and thus propping up neo-liberalism, that it lacks transformative potential, and that it can be used as a pretence to cast off needy people and places. We move from this critique of resilience to a critical resilience, based in the following arguments: (i) resilience can sustain alternative and previous practices that contradict neo-liberalism; (ii) resilience is more active and dynamic than passive; and (iii) resilience can sustain survival, thus acting as a precursor to more obviously transformative action such as resistance. These bring us more closely to a heterogeneous de-neo-liberalized reading of resilience, explicitly opening it to social justice, power relations and uneven development, and performing valuable conceptual and pragmatic work that usefully moves us beyond resistance yet retaining (long-term) struggle.

Key words: resilience, transformation, critical geography, critical resilience

Introduction

What is resilience? From a physical and natural sciences perspective, it implies the 'capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganize while undergoing change to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks' (Walker et al. 2004, 1). This is translated into the two essential categories: 'bounce-back-ability' and adaptability. But as critical geographers interested in transformative potentials, rather than disaster management, policy studies or ecology, we can underline Katz's (2004) more useful *social* definition of resilience as something additional to and yet distinct from 'reworking' and 'resistance'. Reworking involves shifting

the conditions of people's reality to enable more workable lives; resistance draws on and constructs a critical conscience to challenge and rectify conditions of oppression and exploitation. Meanwhile, resilience captures the 'autonomous initiative [and] recuperation', the 'getting by', protection, care and mutualism that ensure survival in circumstances that disallow changes to the frameworks that dictate survival (Katz 2004, 242).

We want to use Katz's formulation as a point of departure for revisiting resilience along the lines of *critical resilience*. In the next section, we outline the important critiques of resilience emanating from our academic discipline, but we also argue that critical geographers should not relinquish the term without trying to co-opt it for

their own ends, given that the resilience metaphor is powerful enough to capture the essence of important social processes and yet flexible to work for a variety of systems and temporal frames. Put bluntly, there is nothing inherently negative or positive about resilience, as it is entirely contingent on who is wielding it, and for what political purposes (Cretney 2014). Recognizing the value in resilience as an analytical tool, we offer insights into the possible entries through which the metaphor of resilience can be 'redeemed' from neo-liberalized connotation—*transforming a critique of resilience into a critical resilience*, articulated via three theses. What we are particularly concerned in formulating these perspectives is the resilience of those groups and institutions that are threatened by neo-liberal ideologies and practices. The conclusion will then address some of the emerging shortcomings of a thus formulated critical resilience.

Resilience subsumed?

Over the past decade or so, resilience has undoubtedly become a buzzword in the social sciences and the policy world (Brown 2014; Cretney 2014; Slater 2014), emerging to some

> 'as the perfect symbol of its time—a conveniently nebulous concept incorporating shifting notions of risk and responsibility bounded within a reconstituted governance framework—all of which can engender confidence and potentially facilitate the transfer of costs away from the state to the private sector and communities'. (White and O'Hare 2014, 947)

Not surprisingly, this ascendancy has sown suspicion, consternation and sometimes ridicule among critical geographers (e.g. Cook and Swyngedouw 2012; Ward 2012; Slater 2014), including the fear that resilience nullifies transformative action while lacking conceptual rigor. More to the point, we can summarize the various critiques under three rubrics:

(1) Resilience is not ideologically neutral (even if it appears so) but necessarily props up the dominant system, which today is decidedly neo-liberal in its ideology (Cretney 2014). Here, resilience becomes a reactionary 'tool of governance' (O'Hare and White 2013) to perpetuate, sustain and reinforce a hegemonic status quo of dispossessing, predatory capitalism. As MacKinnon and Derickson (2013, 258) strenuously argued:

> 'resilience is fundamentally about how best to maintain the functioning of an existing system in the face of an externally derived disturbance. Both the ontological nature of "the system" and its normative desirability escape critical scrutiny. As a result, the existence of social divisions and inequalities tend to be glossed over when resilience thinking is extended to society.'

While the general system stability and its boundaries are protected, the naturalistic and functionalistic framing of resilience is also mobilized to 'naturalize' particular agendas for reforms. The dominant powers provide a set of prescriptive fixes to ongoing problems or disturbances—be those linked to the crises of neo-liberalism or capitalism's environmental degradations—when what is essentially a political choice appears naturalized and thus void of alternative strategies that could disrupt the dominant modus operandi (e.g. Cook and Swyngedouw 2012).

(2) As an extension from the above, resilience lacks progressive potential, is inherently conservative yet appears politically anodyne, and thus serves the 'powerful interests to protect against … a dynamic or adaptive strategy' (Brown 2014, 109). Critical geographers insist that, as resilience cannot be constructed as a verb—contrary to the preferred 'rework' and 'resist'—it implies

passivity, a condition but not a process to secure a better future advocated. Here, calls for social justice and transformative (political) action are comfortably sidelined. As Hornborg (2009, 252) has vividly noticed in this regard, 'the rallying-cry of the early 21st century is not "revolution" (as in the early 20th century), but "resilience"'.

(3) 'Needy' people and regions can be cast off under the cynical pretence that they are ostensibly resilient (Andres and Round 2015). As MacKinnon and Derickson (2013) argued, this shedding means that resilience becomes integral to neo-liberal urban governance, in which 'the vacuous yet ubiquitous notion that communities ought to be "resilient" can be seen as particularly troubling in the context of austerity and reinforced neoliberalism' (262). This offloading and devolution of responsibility and redistribution leaves 'disadvantaged communities having fewer material resources, professional skill sets, and stocks of social capital to "step up" to fill the gaps created by state retrenchment' (263). In a charming (yet ultimately wayward) blog by Tom Slater (2014), the concern was that, at least in the policy and think-tank world, vulnerable people and places are deemed resilient for sinister means, and that it is 'no coincidence' that 'an entire cottage industry on "resilient cities" has emerged at a time of global austerity'.

These critiques must be taken seriously indeed, but they are insufficient to irrevocably and universally reject resilience. Rather, these critiques may be a useful handle for further (critical) engagement. Arguably, resilience per se is not born as a servile neo-liberal creation as much as it is a co-optation and strategic meshing; resilience is of course a social construct but it precedes neo-liberalism. While it may appear to be ready-made for these austere times, it is not an inevitable nor invariable fit. Rather,

resilience has been colonized by particular discourses and for particular means, and if this is the case, then other (non-neo-liberal) systems and agents can do the same. Resilience is far more polytonal and less inherently sinister and conservative; to argue otherwise is to maintain the fiction of the all-embracing nature of neo-liberalism—to which we say, not everything is neo-liberal or solely in response to it, nor should neo-liberalism be viewed as a self-explanatory, universal meta-narrative.

To this end, resilience deserves more than just discontent, caricatures, potshots and dismissal. As the philosopher Daniel Dennett (2014) has argued, a key strategy for critique is to respect one's opponent—this is done by choosing the best work to tangle with, rather than lambasting the worst of it (e.g. targeting of vacuous policy and think-tank proclamations on resilience). In this spirit, resilience deserves sustained intellectual engagement, the ultimate aim of which could be not just its deconstruction but *also* a reconstruction along critical lines. This paper is animated by the sense that the former is relatively easy, but that the latter is onerous yet necessary, in the manner that Burawoy et al. (1991) proposed—to reconstruct and strengthen useful, already-existing theory.

But why this effort to redeem a concept, which, at least in the eyes of some, has been discredited by particular connotations? We believe that acting otherwise would have meant intellectual capitulation over a seemingly fruitful and important conceptual terrain that holds much emancipatory promise and is a powerful and capacious metaphor to not only decipher a range of important geographical practices, but also their coexistence, interpenetration and co-constitution—which would otherwise require bringing together a whole bundle of alternative concepts. The eventual aim here is to propose a more sustained, sophisticated treatment—and critical co-optation—of resilience, of filling in 'theoretical gaps or silences' (Burawoy et al. 1991, 10) while suggesting the essential components of a

critical resilience—a task made even more crucial in these uncertain times (O'Hare and White 2013).

Assisted by the term's remarkable suppleness, we propose several theses for its redemption, prompted by our own research around 'persistent resilience' (Golubchikov 2011; also Andres and Round 2015) and the 'resilience of the residuals' (DeVerteuil 2015). This material focuses on the resilience of 'survivor' communities, providing ammunition for formulating the three 'theses' as entry points for the redemption of resilience as a critical concept: (i) resilience can sustain alternative and previous practices that contradict neo-liberalism; (ii) resilience is more active and dynamic than passive; and (iii) resilience can sustain survival, thus acting as a precursor to more obviously transformative action such as resistance. These bring us more closely to a heterogeneous de-neo-liberalized reading of resilience, explicitly opening it to social justice, power relations and uneven development, and performing valuable conceptual and pragmatic work that usefully moves us beyond resistance yet retaining (long-term) struggle.

Thesis 1: resilience can sustain alternative practices orthogonal to dominant ones

In response to the first critique of resilience, we argue that if resilience is neither inherently positive nor inherently negative, then surely it can be deployed to bolster alternate and previous practices that are residual yet orthogonal to the dominant, naturalized neo-liberalized one. For instance, resilience can be applied to the residuals of a previous, more equitable power structure such as that found in Keynesian relics like social housing and non-commodified clusters of the voluntary sector and the social economy that provided visions of opportunity and progress unsullied by the market (DeVerteuil 2015, 35). From this alternative and grass-roots vision, resilience acts as a bulwark against unmitigated neo-liberalism, but also in a

space entirely beyond it. Examples abound: faith-based organizations that eschew state funding in order to maintain their independence and presumably socially transformative goals (Williams forthcoming); legally mandated and politically protected social services, including local welfare in California (DeVerteuil, Lee, and Wolch 2002; see Fairbanks 2009 for Pennsylvania) or locally provided adult services in the UK (Fuller 2012) that make them virtually austerity-proof; and the presence of 'commons', in which spaces and activities are removed from commodification, becoming non- or even anti-capitalist. In all of these cases, neo-liberalism threatens but does not eliminate the social and spatial practices of alternative systems (Hall and Lamont 2013). This suggests the potential that resilience can be deployed in less regressive ways, 'as an organizing principle . . . to challenge the status quo and to design and shape alternative futures' (Brown 2014, 113).

These examples suggest that resilience becomes partially unmoored from neo-liberalism. This counters the understandably myopic tendency among certain critical geographers to only look—and thus only find—instances of co-opted neo-liberal resilience, a tendency that parallels the obsession with privileging punitive social policies rather than trying to see how other, more neutral or accommodative kinds of social policies work relationally (DeVerteuil 2014). Indeed, if one looks one will find many examples of co-opted uses of resilience, but this does not mean that *all* instances are neo-liberalized. Rather, some may well be and others not—a reconstructive approach necessarily must incorporate both kinds and be open to both kinds. The same logic applies to alternative terms to resilience—such as MacKinnon and Derickson's (2013) 'resourcefulness', which can equally be co-opted by neo-liberalism (Barrett 2014).

An important implication to this argument is that resilience does not simply mean 'bouncing back' to a previous, steady-state position—there is always opportunity for

articulation of a different status quo after the disturbance, such that there is no pre-ordained trajectory. Persistent resilience in the face of enduring contextual challenges and pressures may herald an active moderation of social relations (e.g. through empathy and reciprocity) than simply a passive response. As DeVerteuil (2015, 27) advanced in this regard, 'resilience should impart a sense of adaptive capacity, a pro-activity and potential for learning—it is produced and earned rather than being an inherent property'. As Raco and Street (2012, 1069) further contended, 'rather than seeing resilience as a process of bouncing back, a more radical deployment would ... view it as a dynamic process in which change and constant reinvention provide the grounds for fundamental ... reform'. In this sense, resilience need not be conservative or sinister, but rather open to change for those phenomena that actively endure and persist in time and space against the grain.

Thesis 2: resilience is not a passive condition, but is actively produced

Following up on the previous thesis, we must re-imagine resilience as something internally *produced* (not just externally induced), adaptive and capacity-building, rather than as an end point or a steady-state condition, or even necessarily desirable. White and O'Hare (2014, 934) deemed the distinction between 'evolutionary resilience', which is proactive and open to creating a 'new normality', and 'equilibrium resilience', which is 'fatalistic ... accepting the status quo, leaving unchallenged current norms of behavior that drive risky behavior, and privileging reactive responses to risk' (White and O'Hare 2014, 937). Given the increasingly corrosive trends in neo-liberalism (Hall and Lamont 2013), producing resilience has become more complicated and fraught, and so requires considerable effort and strategy, not simply inertial persistence (DeVerteuil 2015). Here, resilience can be envisioned as

something more proactive than reactive, a stance that 'accepts the inevitability of change and tries to create a system that is capable of adapting to new conditions and imperatives' (Klein, Nicholls, and Thomalla 2003, 39).

Along these lines, resilience can be deployed in instances when resistance and transgressions do not make sense, because the agents in question are too weak, disorganized or simply not interested. In this way, resilience can be a *middle ground* between victim and vanguard, when social actors cannot alter circumstances but still show agency, self-organization and adeptness in coping and adaptation, particularly in the face of filling gaps from neo-liberal austerity. Here, resilience tones down the prospect of the spectacular in favor of the mundane 'weak theory' (Hodkinson 2011) as a way to offset all of the fuss around the big, the vocal, the cries and demands heard in public spaces (Harvey 2012), as well as responding to the catastrophic (Vale and Campanella 2005). Andres and Round (2015) see resilience as everyday responses and informal coping strategies to the Schumpeterian trends of neo-liberalism and austerity. Accordingly, resilience is effective at capturing the actual space of the everyday life, even if critical geographers remain mesmerized by the promise of the spectacular.

We fully appreciate that resilience is by nature incremental, capturing the slow-moving rather than the spectacular nature of social change. However, Rajan and Duncan (2013) defended small, incremental social change initiated through small-scale institutions. What they emphasize is how the incremental necessarily involves a variety of 'first responder' social institutions and collectivities—family, community, local governments and the voluntary sector—that enable everyday social reproduction. But these institutions can also deploy resilience in creative and innovative ways—which implies knowing when to (spectacularly) resist but also when to endure, outlast and outflank, and when to ignore the (neo-liberal) system

altogether. Here, resilience necessitates the multiple, mutual and nuanced forms of adaptation of individual, households and communities to each other's activities and to the wider conditioning order. If everyday life has become an arena where late capitalism sustains and reproduces itself, as Lefebvre (2008) contended, and where neo-liberalism has been domesticated (Stenning et al. 2010), it is also where negotiation and renegotiation of the hegemonic tendencies are happening. Resilience can then be seen as a frontier negotiation vis-à-vis neo-liberalism—the process that is not necessarily leading to outright acceptance or unidirectional adaptation, but potentially to neo-liberalism's own diversion and particularization into more socially acceptable, or hybrid local practices (Golubchikov, Badyina, and Makhrova 2014).

The idea of produced resilience, as proactive renegotiation of everyday practices and relationships, also suggests that resilience has the potential to undermine the wider (contextually neo-liberal) hegemony. This necessary changes the conception of resilience from mechanistic and post-/non-political to actually political, relational and spatial. Resilience is political because it can be actively produced and gives voice to people who are not simply victims of change or top-down technical fixes, but themselves have the agency of (political) actions and transactions. Resilience here may involve an active moderation of existing social relations rather than being a passive response to the external stimuli of change. Resilience is also relational because it relies on a web of social relations. We need not idealize the capacity of ordinary people to produce systematic change (even when it is desired at all), but resilience can stimulate social activism, social movements and networks that are essential seeds of transformations. Finally, resilience is spatial because it belongs to the domain of the everyday and real-world engagement with spatial processes, where, for instance, the call for spatial justice can be articulated. The ability, for example, to sustain spatial presence in

the face of gentrification is itself a political statement (DeVerteuil 2012), without which any further acts and forms of mobilization and resistance against displacement become empty signifiers. Here, as we discuss below, resilience can work as a precursor for resistance, if not as its constitutive part.

Thesis 3: resilience acts as the precursor to resistance and transformation

It follows that resilience can be at the forefront of defending previous, current and future social and economic gains, gains that can no longer be taken for granted. This 'persistent resilience' (Golubchikov 2011) is all the more important at a time when urban life is not only pervasively dynamic and neo-liberalized, but also increasingly temporary, in the form of pop-up geographies and an emphasis, via technologies such as Airbnb, on transient users and uses, all of which can displace the more long-standing urban materialities. This enforced temporariness and flux, however, must bump up against the more resilient components of previous and current renderings of the city, and in this way resilience can prove positive against trends that only exacerbate the precarious nature of disposable urbanity, providing a much-needed slowing down of the frenetic and the disruptive.

Resilience can thus be seen as *primordial*, *prefigurative* and *embryonic* rather than merely an inadvertent, short-term coping mechanism and make-do survival—the latter of which can be seen as merely absorbing and obscuring state abandonment and thus putting off much-needed transformative change. Resilience is not solely the 'in-between' before inevitable displacement— it can become long term or even permanent. In this way, resilience can be understood as a social and spatial foundation, an anchor for future resistance and reworking, its essential underpinning and precursor. In this regard, Slater (2014) is perhaps too rushed in pitting resistance vs. resilience, as they do in fact work in temporal sequence (or can

be even temporary co-constitutive), not either/or. By plugging gaps in the short term and ensuring survival in the long term, resilience ensures the future whereby transformation may occur. As a precursor to potential transformation, resilience becomes an important first link of the sequence, but also as a social and spatial 'fix' to sustain certain social orders and absorb crises. This fix of course can be abused by neo-liberalism, obscuring state abandonment and thus averting the revolution, but without the immediate plugging of gaps we really would risk totalitarianism or social collapse, which is hardly worth the price of our ideological purity (DeVerteuil 2014). Yes, resilience is recursive and provisional (Martin 2012), and yet it demands a longer attention span than the spectacular and the one-off.

Returning to the third critique of resilience—how resilience is used as a pretence to offload responsibility to vulnerable places and people—we can argue that critical geographers tend to underestimate the degree and agency of resilience in those targeted places and people, the resolute and obstinate persistence and endurance that build on layers of previous and existing resilience. This layering can be difficult to disentangle, but stout enough to withstand the newest layer of the neo-liberalizing city. In this way we can see urban space through a palimpsest metaphor, with each spatial and historical layer offering its own resilience, but with the caveat that it is unrealistic to expect urban space to never change. Moreover, rarely is there complete abandonment and dismissal of places and people, at least not in a supposedly democratic society; there is usually a carrot to go along with the stick, which returns us to the point of systems and phenomena that exist beyond neo-liberalism/austerity. And rarely are communities so completely helpless that they cannot activate at least some resilient, mutualistic behavior, which may be abused by the neo-liberal system but which also ensures survival and *secures a potentially better future*. Therefore, we should not forfeit the positive side of resilience entirely, like Slater (2014) did in his characterizations

of an austerity-bound, neo-liberalized and territorially stigmatizing resilience. If anything, we need more resilience, but the right kind, not the one that props up the neo-liberal.

There are many other ways to reimagine resilience in the way of its redemption—if not liberation—from its neo-liberalized connotations (both in dominant politics and as its derivatives in critical literature). However, what is central is that resilience should not be seen as inherently and invariably positive or negative. Although it can be easily a political tool to ensure rigidity or the conceptually anodyne, it is not doomed to be such. Overly positive, romanticized views of resilience (as well as of its bearers—such as communities or vulnerable social groups) are not productive either, but the metaphor remains powerful as an epistemological insight into societal changes, continuities, contradictions and struggles. More to the point, and in response to some post-structural critiques that deem resilience an 'empty signifier' (Braun 2014), resilience has real spatial and temporal effects on, and implications for, critical understandings of society, cities and the nature of struggle in the 21st century—of what should change and what should stay the same.

Conclusion

Our overriding concern has been the potential to redeem (but not romanticize) resilience, especially in the eyes of critical geographers, but also to indirectly contribute to what may be termed 'resilience theory' (Berkes and Ross 2013). What we have shown is that resilience can be orthogonal to neo-liberalism, that it can be active and capacity-building rather than passive, and that it can be a necessary precursor to resistance and transformation—in short, a metaphor for change, not against change.

Following on from this last point, we can argue that resilience can be integral to social and spatial struggle—defensive and protective of course (Churchill 2003), but a struggle

that cannot be passed over. Resilience therefore can be about securing the future and 'much less about bouncing back' (Andres and Round 2015, 678), equally contingent, emergent and simultaneous. As DeVerteuil (2015, 236) contended, resilience of alternative systems 'counters the fiction of a fully … neoliberalized … city, and valorizes the study of slow tectonic shifts of urban space over the violent, acute events that still capture too much of our attention'. If we cannot hold on to the gains made previously or presently, what hope have we of transforming the future world? This seems trite but it is frequently assumed away by, and for, a critical audience.

We duly admit that resilience constitutes a 'politics of necessity' (Zuern 2011) that only partially foregrounds a politics of change (but see Cretney 2014). We thus cannot solely rely on resilience, as it is not always very effective in promoting large-scale new systems out of the deformation of old ones, and certainly not in the short term. Therefore, resilience promotes small-scale and incremental transformation, so that resiliently alternative spaces can become springboards for more fundamental transformation via the concept of the 'commons', which can be

> 'preservative and generative, defensive and productive, a necessary way-station on the path towards more socially just transformation, rather than merely as "anti-enclosures", which imply only delaying and obfuscating, but never truly changing, the inevitable outcome of eventual enclosure and displacement'. (DeVerteuil 2015, 242)

As distillations of non-commodified enclaves, commons obstruct the process of neo-liberalism and austerity urbanism, and provide an entry point of engagement for critical geographers.

Disclosure statement

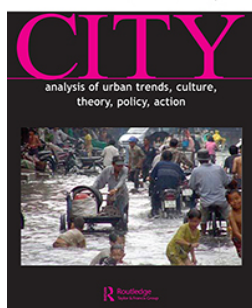No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

Andres, L., and J. Round. 2015. "'The Role of 'Persistent Resilience' within Everyday Life and Polity: Households Coping with Marginality within the 'Big Society'." *Environment and Planning A* 47 (3): 676–690.

Barrett, C. 2014. "Toward a Theory of Resilience for International Development Applications." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111 (40): 14625–14630. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1320880111

Berkes, F., and H. Ross. 2013. "Community Resilience: Toward an Integrated Approach." *Society & Natural Resources: An International Journal* 26 (1): 5–20.

Braun, B. 2014. "A New Urban Dispositif? Governing Life in the Age of Climate Change." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32: 49–64.

Brown, K. 2014. "Global Environmental Change: A Social Turn for Resilience." *Progress in Human Geography* 38 (1): 107–117.

Burawoy, M. et al. 1991. *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.

Churchill, S. 2003. "Resilience, not Resistance a Contribution to an Expanded Urban Conversation." *City* 7 (3): 349–360.

Cook, I., and E. Swyngedouw. 2012. "Cities, Social Cohesion and the Environment: Towards a Future Research Agenda." *Urban Studies* 49 (9): 1959–1979.

Cretney, R. 2014. "Resilience for Whom? Emerging Critical Geographies of Socio-ecological Resilience." *Geography Compass* 8 (9): 627–640.

Dennett, D. 2014. *Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Thinking*. New York: Penguin.

DeVerteuil, G. 2012. "Resisting Gentrification-induced Displacement: Advantages and Disadvantages to 'Staying Put' among Non-profit Social services in London and Los Angeles." *Area* 44 (2): 208–216.

DeVerteuil, G. 2014. "Does the Punitive Need the Therapeutic? A Sympathetic Critique of Current Grammars of Urban Injustice." *Antipode* 46 (4): 874–893.

DeVerteuil, G. 2015. *Resilience in the Post-welfare Inner City: Voluntary Sector Geographies in London, Los Angeles and Sydney*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

DeVerteuil, G., W. Lee, and J. Wolch. 2002. "New Spaces for the Local Welfare State? The case of General Relief in Los Angeles County." *Social and Cultural Geography* 3 (3): 229–246.

Fairbanks, R. 2009. *How it Works: Recovering Citizens in Post-welfare Philadelphia*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Fuller, C. 2012. "'Worlds of Justification' in the Politics and Practices of Urban Regeneration." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 30 (5): 913–929.

Golubchikov, O. 2011. "Persistent Resilience: Coping with the Mundane Pressures of Social or Spatial Exclusion:

Introduciton to a Special Session." *Paper presented at RGS-IBG Annual International Conference,* 2 September 2011. London.

Golubchikov, O., A. Badyina, and A. Makhrova. 2014. "The Hybrid Spatialities of Transition: Capitalism, Legacy and Uneven Urban Economic Restructuring." *Urban Studies* 51 (4): 617–633.

Hall, P., and M. Lamont, eds. 2013. *Social Resilience in the Neoliberal Era.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Harvey, D. 2012. *Rebel Cities.* New York: Verso.

Hodkinson, S. 2011. "Housing Regeneration and the Private Finance Initiative in England: Unstitching the Neoliberal Urban Straitjacket." *Antipode* 43 (2): 358–383.

Hornborg, A. 2009. "Zero-Sum World: Challenges in Conceptualizing Environmental Load Displacement and Ecologically Unequal Exchange in the World-System." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 50 (3-4): 237–262.

Katz, C. 2004. *Growing up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Klein, R., R. Nicholls, and F. Thomalla. 2003. "Resilience to Natural Hazards: How Useful is this Concept?." *Environmental Hazards* 5: 35–45.

Lefebvre, H. 2008. *The Critique of Everyday Life, Vol 1–3.* Verso: London.

MacKinnon, D., and K. Derickson. 2013. "From Resilience to Resourcefulness: A Critique of Resilience Policy and Activism." *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (2): 253–70.

Martin, R. 2012. "Regional Economic Resilience, Hysteresis and Recessionary Shocks." *Journal of Economic Geography* 12 (1): 1–32.

O'Hare, P., and I. White. 2013. "Deconstructing Resilience: Lessons from Planning Practice: Special Edition of Planning Practice and Research." *Planning Practice & Research* 28 (3): 275–279.

Raco, M., and E. Street. 2012. "Resilience Planning, Economic Change and the Politics of Post-recession Development in London and Hong Kong." *Urban Studies* 49: 1065–87.

Rajan, S., and C. Duncan. 2013. "Ecologies of Hope: Environment, Technology and Habitation – Case Studies from the Intervenient Middle." *Journal of Political Ecology* 20: 70–9.

Slater, T. 2014. "The Resilience of Neoliberal Urbanism." www.opendemocarcy.net/opernsecurity/tom-slater/resilience-ofneoliberal-urbanism.html.

Stenning, A., A. Smith, A. Rochovska, and D. Swiatek. 2010. *Domesticating Neo-Liberalism: Spaces of Economic Practice and Social Reproduction in Post-Socialist Cities.* Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Vale, L., and T. Campanella, eds. 2005. *The Resilient City: How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Walker, B., C. Holling, S. Carpenter, and A. Kinzig. 2004. "Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability in Social-ecological Systems." *Ecology and Society* 9 (2): 5.

Ward, K. 2012. "Of comparison, Learning and Models: Thinking Through the City." *Political Geography* 31 (1): 20–21.

White, I., and P. O'Hare. 2014. "From Rhetoric to Reality: Which Resilience, Why Resilience, and Whose Resilience in Spatial Planning?" *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 32 (5): 934–950.

Williams, A. forthcoming. "Spiritual Landscapes of Pentecostal Worship, Belief and Embodiment in a Therapeutic Community: New Critical Perspectives." *Emotion, Space and Society.*

Zuern, E. 2011. *The Politics of Necessity: Community Organizing and Democracy in South Africa.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Geoff DeVerteuil is based at Cardiff University. Email: deverteuilg@cardiff.ac.uk

Oleg Golubchikov is based at Cardiff University and Visiting Professor, National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE), Moscow, Russia. Email: GolubchikovO@cardiff.ac.uk

Rethinking resilience as capacity to endure

Tim Schwanen

Published online: 15 Feb 2016.

Submit your article to this journal ⬚

View related articles ⬚

View Crossmark data ⬚

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Rethinking resilience as capacity to endure
Automobility and the city

Tim Schwanen

Now resilience has become one of the decade's buzzwords, urban scholars cannot afford to renounce or abandon it; they should reclaim it for critical purposes. This piece offers one way of doing this, by moving away from socio-ecological systems thinking and reworking some concepts elaborated by Alfred North Whitehead. It proposes that resilience be seen as the capacity of a configuration of elements to endure through an intricate mixture of stability and change. This capacity emerges from this configuration's entanglements with its environment and from symbiosis, friction and contestation. The conceptualisation is subsequently utilised to caution against over-optimism about the post-automobile city. The continuing dominance of the privately owned internal combustion engine, the neutralising absorption of car sharing by the car industry and the current enthusiasm over autonomous cars are reinterpreted as manifestations of automobility's capacity to endure through adaptation and influence over its environment. The socio-spatial inequalities and injustices associated with automobility are likely to persist through change as well.

Key words: automobility, autonomous cars, car sharing, resilience, society, Whitehead

Re-appropriating resilience

Both celebrated and maligned, resilience is one of the buzzwords of the current decade (Brown 2014), at risk of turning into a signifier as empty as sustainability now is (Weichselgartner and Kelman 2015). For critical urban scholars and geographers it is an easy target to aim at, given its co-optation by neo-liberalism and its complicity in making crisis ubiquitous, uncertainty perennial and securitisation the putatively natural response (MacKinnon and Derickson 2012; Amin 2013; Wakefield and Braun 2014; Welsh 2014). Some even go so far as to suggest that the term is best avoided at all as an analytical concept (MacKinnon and Derickson 2012), but that is undesirable: not only should academics be able to critically reflect on governmental initiatives across the world to make cities, communities and individuals resilient, there is also a flourishing stream of community activism and subaltern scholarship that seeks to subvert top-down, technocratic, neo-liberal appropriations of resilience as a concept (Cretney 2014; Beilin and Wilkinson 2015). Moreover, scholarship on socio-ecological systems—one of the main intellectual sources of the recent resilience turn—is not immune to criticisms from

geographers and other social scientists. It evolves and seeks to renew itself and its conceptualisations of resilience (cf. Folke et al. 2010; Beilin and Wilkinson 2015). There may be all sorts of problems with recent reworkings of socio-ecological thinking and also subaltern scholarship on resilience,[1] but the important point here is that resilience is, in the words of Ben Anderson (2015, 61–64), a multiplicity: there are different resiliences rather than a single, purified, ideal type of resilience. Some of these can be re-appropriated for scholarly purposes, much like Donna Haraway re-appropriated feminist visions in the late 1980s (Haraway 1991). In the remainder of this commentary I will outline the contours of one such re-appropriation which draws on the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead from the early 20th century and use this to discuss some recent tendencies in the everyday mobility of people in the city.

From Holling to Whitehead

Social science critiques of resilience thinking typically point out Holling's (1973) distinction between engineering and ecological resilience, and also discuss his later (2001) thinking on adaptive cycles and panarchy. However, more recent conceptual developments are not always given due attention, and this includes the socio-ecological systems thinking on transformation. For Folke et al. (2010), '[c]onfusion arises when resilience is interpreted as backward looking, assumed to prevent novelty, innovation and transitions to new development pathways'. In fact, they argue, resilience is key to the interplay of stability and change and to transformation, here understood as a crossing of critical thresholds and a shift from one system with its specific state variables and stability domain to another. This is because 'transformation involves breaking down the resilience of the old and building the resilience of the new'. The hypothesis

here is that small-scale experiments—for instance, with cycling, car sharing or the use of cooking oil as biofuel for buses and driven by a decidedly urban grass-roots activism as in several UK cities (Schwanen 2015a)—may induce feedback effects and pave the way for systemic change in urban mobility systems. Not only may such experiments increase the resilience of alternative forms of mobility provision; they might also affect the resilience of incumbent actors, such as car manufacturers and bus operators, forcing them to adapt their habits and pushing them into more radical forms of innovation and experimentation (but see below). As Folke et al. also note, there is an evident parallel between this thinking on resilience and transformation and the diverse body of work on socio-technical transitions (Geels 2002, 2012; Smith and Seyfang 2007).

While Folke et al. open up a more progressive and dynamic perspective on resilience, they remain caught in complex system thinking, which is problematic in light of 'its tendency to metabolise all countervailing forces and inoculate itself against critique' (Walker and Cooper 2011, 157). It is nonetheless possible to rethink resilience along counter-systemic lines, for instance, by drawing on Whitehead (1967, 1968, 1978). Detailing all arguments for mobilising his rather technical and speculative philosophy is beyond this commentary but at least three reasons can be put forward (over and above the claim that Whitehead's metaphysics should be seen more as a toolkit for developing new modes of thinking rather than as a plausible account of how the world actually is). The first of these aligns with Anderson's (2015) claim about resilience as multiplicity, because for Whitehead resilience would be what he calls an 'eternal object'. This is best described as a pure potential that cannot be experienced and known directly, only through the ways in which it becomes part of—ingresses into—the events that constitute the actual world: 'you cannot know what is red by merely thinking of redness. You can only find red things by adventuring amid physical experiences in *this* actual world'

(Whitehead 1978, 256; emphasis in original). Hence, talking about resilience in general is pointless and 'how we deal with generality and specificity' (Anderson 2015, 64) needs rethinking and refocusing. Attention ought to be directed towards 'resiliences' as articulated in specific bodies of thought and emerging from concrete material particularities. Second, Whitehead goes beyond Folke et al. in resolving the binary of persistence vs. change. His speculative philosophy sought to keep stability and change, permanence and flux mutually implicated, for as he wrote in *Process and Reality* 'those who disjoin the two elements can find no interpretation of patent facts' (Whitehead 1978, 338).

Finally, for Whitehead configurations of elements—societies—are always-already social and entwined with their environment. Whitehead's notion of society differs in various ways from other, more widely deployed concepts for denoting changing constellations of elements, such as actor-network or assemblage. In Whitehead's philosophy a society is any grouping of 'actual occasions'—the elementary units of process out of which the world consists—that is held together by a common characteristic or order inherited from the past. Societies come in any shape or form, from a person to a city or indeed automobility. The key idea here is that a society is constituted by its historical trajectory of inherited development. Thus, given that a more complex society like a person or automobility encompasses other societies, it can be thought of as 'an entanglement of orders, a series forming a historical route; this historical trajectory is itself composed of subordinate series—for example, knowledge of Greek—which in turn have their own historical routes' (Debaise 2013, 104).

For Whitehead the reproduction over time of such orders depends crucially on environmental conditions and, since environments change continuously, is a question of repetition with difference (cf. Deleuze 1994). Yet, he also emphasised that a rigorous separation of an 'inside' (society) from an 'outside' (environment) is already an abstraction that is often not appropriate. One should not simply separate a society from its environment and then ask questions about its resilience in cases of sudden external shocks or longer-term external pressures; the emphasis should always be placed on the relations that co-constitute a given society and its environment. This also means that resilience is not simply about adaptation or adaptability. It rather is about reciprocity or 'mutual infection' (Debaise 2013): adaptation and being able to influence the environment.

In fact, a Whitehead-inspired analysis would focus on the endurance of a particular society, *given* its entwining with an environment that is always changing in various ways, at multiple speeds, according to different rhythms and with diverse degrees of difference compared to what once was. Endurance, on this view, is always an intricate combination of stability and change and always and fundamentally uncertain. This is because, despite myriad forms of (relative) inertia and lock-in, futures are always open and full of potentiality for being otherwise. A Whitehead-inspired analysis would also ask about how the endurance of a given society robs others of their endurances, thereby replacing a naive predisposition towards harmony with a focus on symbiosis, friction and contestation. In this context, resilience can be thought of as a society's capacity to navigate the fundamental uncertainty of existence and aid in endurance. However, this is a capacity that is thoroughly relational, never a property or trait of an entity, always emerging from the entanglements of a given entity with the myriad entities that make up its environments.

Analysing endurances

Critical geography and urban scholarship can benefit significantly from thinking about resilience in this way, in particular to better understand how unjust and/or oppressive configurations endure and in so doing

sideline, marginalise and simply kill off alternatives. The crux, of course, lies in how the generic notion of society is operationalised. Whitehead's writings on this concept can easily lead to the same depoliticised understandings as those characterising most socio-ecological systems literature. However, this inadequate abstraction can be circumvented by understanding capacities to endure—resiliences—at a particular point in time as unevenly distributed, much like MacKinnon and Derickson's (2012) resourcefulness, and by paying particular attention to issues of symbiosis, friction and struggle. A leading contemporary expert on Whitehead, Isabelle Stengers (2011), is adamant about distinguishing symbiosis from harmony: symbiosis highlights how different societies need each other for their own endurance but that 'does not mean having the same interest in common' (60). Connections are partial and allegiances may shift if a new situation arises; coalitions and endurance require constant negotiation.

At the same time, it is important for critical geographers and urban scholars to consider carefully which societies they consider. The analytical emphasis is often on resilient subjects and communities in the critical geography and urban scholarship literature, and for good reasons. Much of the policy discourse around resilience is focused on exactly those levels and rather problematically constructs individuals and communities as autonomous agents whose interests in an era of ubiquitous crisis and perennial uncertainty are best served by adaptation to the vagaries of capital, the whims of nature, the unpredictability of the weather and so forth (Amin 2013; Welsh 2014). Alternatively, it is often at the level of small-scale communities—often, but not exclusively, in cities— that academics see potential for progressive forms of change and transition. Yet, there is no a priori reason for limiting attention to individuals and communities. The focus can, and should, be broadened to more complex societies with greater spatial extension. In my own research I find it very useful to

utilise a Whitehead-inspired perspective on endurance and resilience for thinking about the stability and change of automobility— the configurations of practices, institutions and materialities that are centred around the private car, continue to have a profound influence on the physical shape of cities and urban politics, are utterly unsustainable from an environmental perspective, and that enhance all kinds of socio-spatial inequalities and divisions across urban regions (Sheller and Urry 2000; Paterson 2007; Schwanen 2015b).

Against post-automobility

A growing number of publications in transport studies and the wider social sciences now argue that the heydays of automobility are behind us in the global North owing to such processes as peak car,[2] rail renaissance, cycling boom, the rise of mobile information and communication technologies, and broader lifestyle and cultural changes (Millard-Ball and Schipper 2011; Newman and Kenworthy 2011; Cohen 2012; Metz 2015; Zipori and Cohen 2015). However, this analysis is not without problems and under-appreciates the capacity of automobility to endure.

This capacity emerges from the inherited nature of automobility as a society and its environments. It is to some extent machinic (Amin 2013), resulting from the dynamic linkages amongst a whole host of societies that are somehow involved. Key here are the inherited physical infrastructures of cities marked by decades of car dominance and urban sprawl—that is, roads; facilities for the selling, refuelling and maintenance/ repair of cars; out-of-town retail, leisure and healthcare complexes; low-density, monofunctional residential areas; and so forth. Equally important are the historical trajectories of financial resources, car production facilities and processes, forms of knowledge (e.g. about car production, car advertising, car purchases) and links with politicians and

policymakers that are held by car manufacturers and others in the car industry. Moreover, most of the practices and expertise of urban/transport planners and policymakers seeking to stimulate the use of alternatives to the private car remain premised on logics, concepts and methods that were invented to first encourage and later manage the growth of private car use. Consider the notion of the cycle highway with which such cities as Copenhagen and London have been experimenting. It is as much based on the techno-economic principles that travel time is dead time and that speeding up mobility is an effective means of encouraging a particular way of getting around as its namesake for private cars developed in Europe and North America from the early 20th century onwards. And it is not only planning where cars and their use remain in many ways the norm: a spate of cultural values and affectivities—independence, flexibility, freedom, social status, the sensation of speed and so forth—remain in many ways tied to cars and driving, whilst road expansion and construction remain popular governmental strategies advanced by coalitions of private and public sector actors for stimulating local and regional economic development. Hence, the environment of which automobility is part continues to be more receptive and attuned to this society than to, say, bus- or velomobility. Mutual infection is of a different intensity and extent than with other types of everyday mobility.

At the same time, it should be emphasised that there are stark geographical differences in how environments continue to nurture and infect automobility—and hence also in the resilience of the latter—among localities: central London or Amsterdam are really different from Phoenix or even Liverpool. Sweeping generalisations about the state of automobility should be traded for specificities, and care should be taken not to posit the likes of London and Amsterdam as the golden standard to which other cities, or parts thereof, should somehow conform.

Endurance through delay and neutralisation

Even so, the resilience of automobility manifests itself in many places in multiple ways. One can be described as delaying more radical forms of change, with car manufacturers concentrating resources and attention on further optimisation of incumbent technologies—in particular the internal combustion engine—and policymakers at national and supranational (European Union) level condoning this approach. This is one way in which, at least until recently, manufacturers have successfully fended off pressures to transition towards electric propulsion or fuel cells (Dijk and Yarime 2010; Wells and Nieuwenhuis 2013; Penna and Geels 2015). The growing demand for cars across the global South has no doubt entrenched this business-as-usual approach: why depart from a proven way of doing things when huge opportunities for selling a classic product continue to present themselves?

A second approach is the absorption of potentially destabilising alternatives through acquisition and mergers (Wells and Nieuwenhuis 2013), as can currently be seen with formal car sharing schemes, or car clubs as they are known in the UK. Started in the UK as grass-roots innovations run by community organisations and—often environmentally conscious—new entrants, for instance, in Hackney in London and Lewes near Brighton (Truffer 2003; Akyelken et al. 2013), the sector is increasingly dominated by incumbent automobile manufacturers and car hiring companies such as Daimler-Benz and Enterprise. These incumbents have moved into car sharing experiments, of which Car2Go[3] and Zipcar are but two examples, to neutralise potential competition and learn and develop new business models. After all, running a car club requires understanding of how people use cars whilst car manufacturers' have specialised in knowledge about selling cars and after-sales (Akyelken et al. 2013).

Because of their financial resources, technical expertise, technological capabilities (e.g. to develop advanced smartphone-based

reservation and payment systems), clout with urban planners and politicians and their infrastructures for planning and organising experiments, those incumbent actors are able to set up new initiatives in specific cities across the world—for example, San Francisco and London—where experimentation is likely to both attract widespread (media) attention and be successful because of the presence of potential markets, specific policy cultures, particular cultural values and so forth. They are, in other words, much less place dependent and spatially contingent than grass-roots initiatives involving community organisations. And what holds for command over space extends to time: short-term pressures to make ends meet financially tend to be lower because of easier access to monetary resources and longer-term planning horizons among initiatives involving incumbent actors (Akyelken et al. 2013). This of course not to suggest that failure won't befall individual car sharing initiatives involving the car industry; the 'pausing' of Car2Go's operations in London shows that such initiatives are not immune to environmental influences (in this specific case lack of buy-in from many of the city's boroughs). Nonetheless, capacities to endure seem to be uneven: those of car sharing initiatives involving car manufacturers and hiring companies seem to be larger than those of many grass-roots initiatives because the former—*qua* societies—tend to be larger, more internally differentiated and capable of drawing in more money, intelligence and other forms of support if and when needed. It can therefore be expected that incumbent actors will increasingly dominate car sharing in years to come. They may also find it easier to up-scale their operations in cities to meet what appears to be a rise in demand, at least in the UK.

Endurance through symbiosis

Over the past few years the resilience of automobility is most evident from the momentum that is building around autonomous vehicles, which are widely popularised as driverless cars. Automation of driving practices is of course nothing new but Google's—and other IT companies'—involvement may well turn out to be a game changer: more so than the likes of Tesla, they may be able to break open an industry where entry barriers are notoriously high. They have also spurred new cycles of innovation and experimentation among traditional car manufacturers. As a result, there is now much enthusiasm around autonomous vehicles, which for some expert commentators offer unrivalled opportunities to reduce the environmental and social burdens of widespread car use (Burns 2013; Anderson et al. 2014). A range of recent papers suggest that public opinion is fairly divided (Payre, Cestac, and Delhomme 2014; Kyriakidis, Happee, and de Winter 2015; Woisetschläger 2015), although one survey from 2014 among 5000 participants in 109 countries found that '69% of people believe that fully automated driving will reach a 50% market share between now and 2050' (Kyriakidis, Happee, and de Winter 2015, 139).

Perhaps most striking is how (sub)national governments are now trying to outcompete each other with attempts to overcome legislative barriers and enable real-life experiments with autonomous vehicles. Nevada—close to Google's homestead—came first but has rapidly been followed by, amongst others, the UK and the Netherlands. In the latter two countries powerful elements in government, large corporations and universities see such experiments as a means to create competitive advantages for their knowledge economies (both) and car industry (UK only). In the UK this neo-liberal ethos of territorial competition can also be found at the city level, in part because of the way the UK government awards funding through Innovate UK—formerly known as the Technology Strategy Board—for demonstration town projects set up by coalitions of private companies, consultancy firms, universities and local authorities. At the time of writing, Milton Keynes is prevailing over other cities

(London, Coventry, Oxford), but this geographical patterning is likely to evolve in the near future.

Governments' willingness to adapt quite rapidly to the disruptive technology of autonomous vehicles is indicative of how environments continue to nurture and thereby infect automobility. Given the many technological and regulatory hurdles—insurance issues may well be the biggest of all—that autonomous vehicles face, this willingness is on one level surprising. Yet, on another level it goes to show the significance of symbiosis: the car industry, actors with a stake in big data and anything 'smart' and entrepreneurial governments all have something to gain from promoting discourses of autonomous vehicles as maintaining/restoring the 'fun' and benefits of driving whilst also reducing the associated collective problems (e.g. excessive energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions; traffic injury due to human failure; congestion arising from irrational behaviour); and from playing off a century-long co-evolution of automobility, wider society and urbanisation processes.

A collective consequence of that symbiosis will be the persistence of automobility, although the extent of difference vis-à-vis its historical manifestations is as yet unclear. Autonomous vehicles may enable a transition towards the sharing of non-individually owned vehicles powered by clean propulsion technologies (Burns 2013). Yet, they may also help to re-entrench the car industry's conventional business models premised on individual ownership. In whichever ways mobility systems are reconfigured and whichever differences will occur in this regard across cities, it is quite likely that the ongoing evolution of autonomous vehicles will reinforce and benefit from age-old discourses espousing technology's superiority over the inherent flaws built into human nature and decision-making. Thus, automobility's endurance is likely to be secured in part by a modernist instrumentalist imagining of technology. Little has been learnt from both Heidegger's (1977) trenchant critique of this understanding

and more recent insights from science studies (Haraway 1991; Latour 1999).

Who/what benefits?

Moreover, it is quite clear who will *not* benefit from the latest rounds of reinvention through adaptive inheritance in automobility. The urban poor—itself a problematic label—seem unlikely to gain much, both in the global North and especially the South. They are also unlikely to gain much from developments in car sharing in so far as these are driven by commercial motivations. My own research on car sharing schemes is restricted to a few UK cities, but my situated and modest findings do not bode well for thinking about a shift to mobility service provision as a 'just transition' (Newell and Mulvaney 2013) in cities and elsewhere. Universalist claims are to be avoided, but a working hypothesis for further empirical research in specific localities would be that commercial car sharing is catering to the needs of middle-class, often young(ish) urban professionals and closely entangled with gentrification processes.

This conjecture about who benefits from the mutual infection of automobility and its cultural, institutional and economic environment can be extended to autonomous vehicles. More generally, then, the endurance and persistence-through-change of automobility in cities—at least in the global North—may well rob other societies, such as mobility systems that genuinely redistribute life chances and well-being across the full range of urban populations, from their endurances and resiliences. This places questions of social equity and justice at the heart of the appropriateness and acceptability of the past-to-future trajectories of urban mobility societies. These questions cannot be answered in general and need to be worked through in particular settings. Yet, resilience, if thought of in terms of uneven capacities to endure through simultaneous entanglements of persistence and change, can offer a useful

lens to explore place-specific futures of automobility and their associated forms of social and environmental injustice.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

Funding

Notes

1 Consider, for instance, the often reified understanding of scale that remains uninformed by the discussions from the 1990s and 2000s in human geography (Brenner 2001; Marston 2000; Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005).
2 The levelling off, stabilisation and sometimes decline in car use and car ownership that has happened since 1990 or thereabouts across large parts of the global North.
3 This is a so-called free-floating car sharing scheme involving Daimler-Benz: cars are not picked up and returned to a small number of designated parking bays on specific streets but can be hired and dropped off at any site where parking is permitted within larger zones within a city. A smartphone-based system for identification and reservation of cars is a key technology that supports this mode of operation.
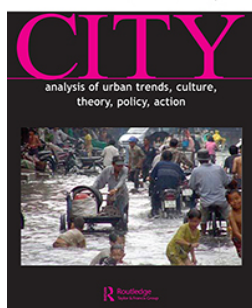
References

Akyelken, N., K. Anderton, A. Plepys, O. Mont, and D. Kaufman. 2013. *Mobility Sector Report: Deliverable 5.1*, FP7 Project Servicizing for the Resource Efficient Economy project (SPREE). http://www.spreeproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/D5.1-Mobility-sector-report_website.pdf

Amin, A. 2013. "Surviving the Turbulent Future." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 31 (1): 140–156.

Anderson, B. 2015. "What Kind of Thing is Resilience?" *Politics* 35 (1): 60–66.

Anderson, J. M., N. Kalra, K. D. Stanley, P. Sorensen, C. Samaras, and O. A. Oluwatola. 2014. *Autonomous Vehicle Technology: A Guide for Policymakers*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Beilin, R., and C. Wilkinson. 2015. "Introduction: Governing for Urban Resilience." *Urban Studies* 52 (7): 1205–1217.

Brenner, N. 2001. "The Limits to Scale? Methodological Reflections on Scalar Structuration." *Progress in Human Geography* 25 (4): 591–614.

Brown, K. 2014. "Global Environmental Change I: A Social Turn for Resilience?" *Progress in Human Geography* 38 (1): 107–117.

Burns, L. D. 2013. "Sustainable Mobility: A Vision of Our Transport Future." *Nature* 497: 181–182.

Cohen, M. J. 2012. "The Future of Automobile Society: A Socio-Technical Transitions Perspective." *Technology Analysis & Strategic Management* 24 (4): 377–390.

Cretney, R. 2014. "Resilience for Whom? Emerging Critical Geographies of Socio-Ecological Resilience." *Geography Compass* 8 (9): 627–640.

Debaise, D. 2013. "A Philosophy of Interstices: Thinking Subjects and Societies from Whitehead's Philosophy." *Subjectivity* 6 (1): 101–111.

Deleuze, G. 1994. *Difference and Repetition*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Dijk, M., and M. Yarime. 2010. "The Emergence of Hybrid-Electric Cars: Innovation Path Creation Through Co-Evolution of Supply and Demand." *Technological Forecasting & Social Change* 77 (8): 1371–1390.

Folke, C., S. R. Carpenter, B. Walker, M. Scheffer, T. Chapin, and J. Rockström. 2010. "Resilience Thinking: Integrating Resilience, Adaptability and Transformability." *Ecology and Society* 15 (4): 20.

Geels, F. W. 2002. "Technological Transitions as Evolutionary Reconfiguration Processes: A Multi-level Perspective and a Case-Study." *Research Policy* 31 (8): 1257–1274.

Geels, F. W. 2012. "A Socio-Technical Analysis of Low-Carbon Transitions: Introducing the Multi-Level Perspective into Transport Studies." *Journal of Transport Geography* 24: 471–482.

Haraway, D. J. 1991. *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge.

Heidegger, M. 1977. "The Question Concerning Technology." In *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, edited by W. Lovitt, 3–35. New York: Garland Publishing.

Holling, C. S. 1973. "Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems." *Annual Reviews of Ecology and Systematics* 4: 1–23.

Holling, C. S. 2001. "Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological, and Social Systems." *Ecosystems* 4: 390–405.

Kyriakidis, M., R. Happee, and J. C. F. de Winter. 2015. "Public Opinion on Automated Driving: Results of an International Questionnaire Among 5000 Respondents." *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour* 32: 127–140.

Latour, B. 1999. *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

MacKinnon, D., and Derickson, K. D. 2012. "From Resilience to Resourcefulness: A Critique of Resilience Policy and Activism." *Progress in Human Geography* 37 (2): 253–270.

Marston, S. A. 2000. "The Social Construction of Scale." *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (2): 219–242.

Marston, S. A., J. P. Jones III, and K. Woodward. 2005. "Human Geography Without Scale." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30 (4): 416–432.

Metz, D. 2015. "Peak Car in the Big City: Reducing London's Transport Greenhouse Gas Emissions." *Case Studies on Transport Policy*, in press. doi:10.1016/j.cstp.2015.05.001

Millard-Ball, A., and L. Schipper. 2011. "Are We Reaching Peak Travel? Trends in Passenger Transport in Eight Industrialized Countries." *Transport Reviews* 31 (3): 357–378.

Newell, P., and D. Mulvaney. 2013. "The Political Economy of the 'Just Transition'." *The Geographical Journal* 179 (2): 132–140.

Newman, P., and J. Kenworthy. 2011. "Peak Car Use: Understanding the Demise of Automobile Dependence." *World Transport Policy & Practice* 17 (2): 31–42.

Paterson, M. 2007. *Automobile Politics: Ecology and Cultural Political Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Payre, W., J. Cestac, and P. Delhomme. 2014. "Intention to Use a Fully Automated Car: Attitudes and a Priori Acceptability." *Transportation Research Part F: Traffic Psychology and Behaviour* 27: 252–263.

Penna, C. C. R., and F. W. Geels. 2015. "Climate Change and the Slow Reorientation of the American Car Industry (1979–2012): An Application and Extension of the Dialectic Issue LifeCycle (DILC) Model." *Research Policy* 44 (5): 1029–1048.

Schwanen, T. 2015a. "The Bumpy Road Toward Low-Energy Urban Mobility: Case Studies from two UK Cities." *Sustainability* 7 (6): 7086–7111.

Schwanen, T. 2015b. "Automobility." In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edn, edited by J.D. Wright, Volume 2, 303–308. Oxford: Elsevier.

Sheller, M., and J. Urry. 2000. "The City and the Car." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24 (4): 737–757.

Smith, A., and G. Seyfang. 2007. "Grassroots Innovations for Sustainable Development: Toward a New Research and Policy Agenda." *Environmental Politics* 16 (4): 584–603.

Stengers, I. 2011. "Comparison as a Matter of Concern." *Common Knowledge* 17 (1): 48–63.

Truffer, B. 2003. "User-led Innovation Processes: The Development of Professional Car Sharing by Environmentally Concerned Citizens." *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research* 16 (2): 139–154.

Wakefield, S., and B. Braun. 2014. "Guest Editorial: Governing the Resilient City." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32 (1): 4–11.

Walker, J., and M. Cooper 2011. "Genealogies of Resilience: From Systems Ecology to the Political Economy of Crisis Adaptation." *Security Dialogue* 42 (2): 143–160.

Weichselgartner, J., and I. Kelman. 2015. "Geographies of Resilience: Challenges and Opportunities of a Descriptive Concept." *Progress in Human Geography* 39 (3): 249–267.

Wells, P., and P. Nieuwenhuis. 2013. "Transition Failure: Understanding Continuity in the Automotive Industry." *Technological Forecasting & Social Change* 79: 1681–1692.

Welsh, M. 2014. "Resilience and Responsibility: Governing Uncertainty in a Complex World." *The Geographical Journal* 180 (1): 15–26.

Whitehead, A. N. 1967. *Adventure of Ideas*. New York: The Free Press.

Whitehead, A. N. 1968. *Modes of Thought*. New York: The Free Press.

Whitehead, A. N. 1978. *Process and Reality*. Corrected Edition. New York: The Free Press.

Woisetschläger, D. M. 2015. "Marktauswirkungen des automatisierten Fahrens." In *Autonomes Fahren: Technische, rechtliche und gesellschaftliche Aspekte*, edited by M. Maurer, J. C. Gerdes, B. Lenz, and H. Winner, 709–732. Berlin: Springer.

Zipori, E., and M. J. Cohen. 2015. "Anticipating Post-Automobility: Design Policies for Fostering Urban Mobility Transitions." *International Journal of Urban Sustainable Development* 7 (2): 147–165.

Tim Schwanen is based at the Transport Studies Unit, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford. Email: tim.schwanen@ouce.ox.ac.uk

Resilience is not enough

Kate Driscoll Derickson

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Resilience is not enough

Kate Driscoll Derickson

Resilience is more than a buzzword: it is a normative good to which civil society groups and regional governments aspire. In this brief piece, I argue that 'resilience' as an end in and for itself is an uninspiring political vision that fetishizes the status quo and is not suited to the emancipatory social change desired by groups that have employed the term. Following Braun (2014, "A New Urban Dispositif? Governing Life in an Age of Climate Change." Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 32: 49–64) in suggesting that resilience has become a 'dispositif of government,' I propose 'resourcefulness' as the political posture that hold more promise than resilience or anti-resilience.

Key words: resilience, resourcefulness, urban governance

I began to pay attention to resilience talk in 2010 not because I was interested in the concept on its own terms, or because I was thinking about complexity theory or complex adaptive systems as such. Rather, I was interested in the concept to the degree that it was being offered up as an answer to questions that I was, and remain, interested in: what is the socio-ecological formation that we ought to engender? And: what kinds of relationships between individuals, communities and regions and the environment and the economy are likely to engender that formation? Resilience, I noticed, was increasingly being offered up as the answer to both of those questions. A whole range of actors, from community-based organizations to elite policymakers and foundations were promoting 'resilient' socio-ecological formations as a normative goal, and positing 'resilient' relationships as a way to get there.

At the time, I was working closely with The GalGael Trust, a community-based organization in the Govan neighborhood of Glasgow. In the 18th and 19th century, Govan grew as the Gaels in the Scottish highlands and western islands were displaced during the British Enclosure Acts. This forced migration to newly industrializing cities threatened a subsistence livelihood based on small crofts and the associated Gael/Gaelic culture and language. Displaced Gaels brought their shipbuilding craft to the shipyards of the River Clyde, contributing to its eventual status as a premier shipbuilding site. Govan was also ground zero for the Red Clydeside militant unionism of the early 20th century. Over the past 50 years, however, 90% of the shipbuilding jobs in the neighborhood have been lost, as footloose industrial manufacturing moves elsewhere. Thus, the story of Govan is emblematic of the long arc of globalization, from settler colonialism, capitalist industrialization and neoliberalization.

The marquis program of GalGael, Journey On, provides residents with the opportunity to learn traditional shipbuilding, woodworking and other Gaelic crafts, training them not to gain skills for job placement in the latest industry to pass through the region, but to work for fulfilment and pleasure and have a sense of belonging, value and

connectedness to their history and culture. The design of the program is rooted in a critique of alienated wage labor and attempts to reclaim meaning and value through means other than the capitalist economy. I was drawn to the organization because of their explicit critique of capitalist alienation and their attempt to reclaim a Gaelic identity as a foundation from which to inform and respond to their critique. I was invited to work with them on a project called 'Govan Together' which would attempt to study poor and working-class livelihood strategies in Govan to derive a model for middle-class behavior modification as a way to limit consumption and lower carbon footprints. The notion that the middle class could learn from the poor about how to live better was so unflinchingly audacious that I couldn't say no.

Yet I was immediately struck by the fact that 'resilience' and 'self-reliance' were the keywords that would organize the project and would be the lens through which the livelihood strategies of Govan residents would be interpreted. As a scholar of neoliberalism and narratives of poverty and redevelopment, celebrating the 'self-reliance' of the poor raised a red flag to the degree that it echoed ideologies that justified the dismantling of the redistributive functions of the state. More importantly, however, it didn't correspond to their own descriptions of the kinds of futures they wanted to see. The project we were working on was called 'Govan Together' and was about understanding commoning and sharing practices amongst the poor and working residents of Govan. In this sense, self-reliance didn't seem to be what they were after. Moreover, while they took great pride in their capacity and the capacity of their ancestors to remain resilient in the face of tremendous hardship borne through the violent dispossession of the Clearances and the cruel vagaries of footloose capitalism, it seemed to me they were after something more than surviving and navigating their unevenly borne burdens of capitalist globalization.

When pressed, organizers said they wanted to enable their communities to shape their economic and environmental futures, not become better and responding to conditions that were the consequence of processes over which they had no influence. They wanted to work together to bring about the social, economic and environmental futures collectively envisioned. Through our discussions over the course of the project, their framework shifted from self-reliance and resilience to self-determination and resourcefulness. The notion of 'resourcefulness' emerged as a way to describe a normative vision for the relationship between the broader social formation and the community itself in which they were properly and fairly resourced to collectively arrive at and work to realize their own visions for the future. For them, this meant meaningfully influencing the way that state institutions related to citizens and find new channels for shaping economic decision-making. To build coalitions and work toward these monumental transformations, they needed physical space, access to the means of communication, some professional and technical knowledge about the economy and the mundane workings of the state, and the time away from productive and social reproductive obligations to work together to conceive of and try to execute a plan to realize these objectives.

Influenced by this collaboration, Danny MacKinnon and I decided to systematically investigate the way 'resilience talk' was being mobilized in the policy literature, in academic work and by community-based organizations. Based on our review of the existing literature at the time, we made a three-pronged argument (MacKinnon and Derickson 2013). First, we argued when the term resilience migrates from the field of ecology to the field of social relations, much like the term 'sustainability', it imports a celebration of the status quo—and is in this sense a conservative term. Celebrating the status quo of social systems, we argue, is very different from celebrating the status quo—or the ability to reproduce a steady

state—of ecological systems. There is very little about the present state of things that we are interested in preserving, especially if we are thinking in terms of regional development or most 'communities' that are the subject of resilience talk.

Second, in practice, what constitutes a resilient community—or this normative good of resilience—has been defined by governing elites and state agencies and in this sense is imposed from the top down. While it is clearly the case that progressive and social justice seeking organizations find value in the concept of resilience, the term is frequently co-opted and defined by governing elites. Third, the conditions and socio-natural relations to which communities and regions are expected to be resilient *to*—that is, the answer to the question 'resilient in the face of what?'—are often extra-local processes, namely, environmental change or footloose capital. By turning attention toward the capacity for communities to survive and thrive in relation to these extra-local processes, we argue that it takes for granted the very dynamics to which communities are meant to be resilient. For these reasons we think it is especially ill-suited for politicizing the wildly uneven causes and consequences of environmental change and the structural causes of uneven relationship to what we might call 'world-making'.

The third point, in my view, is the most consequential one: who is supposed to be resilient to what? Despite the objections I have raised to the way the term has been working, clearly one cannot be against resilience or resilient social relations in general. Indeed, we might envision and work to engender a socio-economic formation in which the global economy was resilient in the face of the complexities and evolving needs of a democratically governed polity, a rather desirable vision in my view. But for all the crowing about resilience that has occurred in the past decade, more often than not, in our reading of the literature, the objective was for communities to become more resilient to changing economies and environments. In our Govan Together work, folks came to understand the message of resilience as a normative good for poor and historically marginalized communities as essentially telling them they should keep taking 'knock after knock' and get better at coping.

Clearly, this is not what many people mean when they use the term, especially not communities who find some value in it. Wendy Larner (2012) has posited that the term is doing some important work of producing new political subjectivities, and I think that is probably true. But I also know that it is finding a perverse alignment with organizations like the fantastically misnamed Centre for Social Justice in the UK, which has become quite compelled by the idea of resilience as 'the surest way to reverse social breakdown and the poverty it creates' by building 'resilience within individuals, families and innovative organizations able to help them' (Centre for Social Justice 2015). This organization—notably allied with David Cameron—did some research into the causes of poverty, and came up with what they call an 'unprecedented diagnosis of deprivation' that led them 'to identify five "pathways to poverty". These were: family breakdown, economic dependency and worklessness, educational failure, drug and alcohol addiction and serious personal debt.' The Centre for Social Justice reached out to GalGael in 2013 to learn more about what they were doing to cultivate resilience among the poor. As my collaborator Gehan MacLeod who runs GalGael told me, their analysis included 'nothing about greed, unfair pay differentials, corruption, pension scandals, bank bail outs, nothing about excessive wealth and inequality'.

Resilience talk animates a political vision of a strong community that can't be undone by footloose capital doing its thing, or the climate doing its thing, but rather, like the Centre for Social Justice calls for, one that is resilient to withstand poverty and austerity (and I would add climate change) without breaking down. This is not a politically

inspiring vision to me. And once we scratched the surface in my collaborative research, it wasn't that inspiring to my collaborators, either. They were not looking to withstand whatever came their way, they were looking to organize themselves to influence the economic and environmental future. They were not looking to stop asking the state for redistribution, or to become self-reliant—but they were looking for a social formation that is designed to resource self-determination.

One of the most troubling assumptions in resilience talk, one which comes up frequently when I raise my objections along the lines outlined above, is the assumption that systems that are resilient will necessarily have some kind of justice component built in because capitalism and extractive livelihoods are inherently brittle, and thus not resilient. This is sustainability redux, and I think it is both logically and empirically wrong and an analytically and politically dangerous move. Objections to capitalism and the social relations that it engenders cannot be reduced to an implied metric of the quality of the social system—they are political and normative questions, and must remain so. If resilience is to mean anything whatsoever, it has to refer, first and foremost, to the capacity of a system to reproduce itself and function after shock. It is quite easy to imagine, frankly, highly undesirable socio-natural systems that are resilient, just as it is easy to imagine fragile democratic utopias. Given that we are inhabiting the former and nowhere near the latter, resilience talk seems dangerous to me.

Of all the interpretations that have emerged regarding the work that the concept of resilience is doing, I find Bruce Braun's (2014) argument that resilience is a 'dispositif' of government to be the most valuable. This conceptualization marks the 'diverse and often divergent means by which life in liberal societies comes to be managed and modulated in the face of an "urgency" or crisis'. This interpretation of resilience as a 'dispositif' helps us understand

the myriad ways the term resilience is mobilized and taken up in governance. More importantly, however, it draws our attention to the degree to which its ad hoc, decentered nature 'does not allow for any singular politics of opposition'. For Braun (2014),

> 'the political task (of creating alternative worlds) is to shift them from a dispositif freighted with the task of sustaining a political–economic system that generates the very problems it purports to solve, to a politics of mitigation and adaptation that has its roots in the lives and communities in which we live, and that refuses the separation of being from action'. (63)

In the spirit of refusing a separation of being from action, and in cultivating a politics rooted in the lives and visions of everyday people, Danny MacKinnon and I have proposed an 'interim politics of resourcefulness' as an alternative to a politics of resilience (Derickson and MacKinnon 2015). It is interim in the sense that it insists that we cannot even begin to talk about what futures should or should not look like until we've proliferated the capacity to contribute to these conversations and shape these futures. The objective of a politics of resourcefulness is to produce social relations and associated knowledge that can cultivate and proliferate the capacity of what I call historically marginalized communities, but could also be called the 'subaltern', to meaningfully participate in shaping socio-natural futures. This is in sharp contradistinction to the objectives we understand to be invited by resilience talk as I've argued above.

We can't know what socially just socio-natural futures will look like until the capacity to contribute to the visioning process is far, far more widely shared. We know this lesson from nearly every social movement ever, but let's take feminism. As well-intentioned, deeply political and sometimes radical as First World white second wave feminism was at times, it was so impossibly blind, or maybe willfully ignorant, to so

many things that Third World feminism and queer feminism had to say. So it is in deference to this history that I'm suggesting that the 'proper political posture' (Braun 2014) to respond to the dispositif of resilience and the political moment it reflects is to enact a radical interim politics of the present that explicitly aims to proliferate and cultivate the capacity of historically marginalized communities to contribute to this visioning of socio-natural futures.

The analytical object of a politics of resourcefulness is the social formation, and the way in which it has produced uneven infrastructure in ways that make world-making so hard for some, and so much less so for others. So when we think about how, as a society, we might begin to cultivate the will for different futures, or engage with a politics of mitigation and adaptation in communities, we need to think about the kinds of civic infrastructure we have—the social and institutional processes and relationships we have in place that help us make futures. We can't ignore the fact that in some communities, there is something called the school to prison pipeline, but there are also very basic and perhaps banal issues around resources, distribution and maldistribution that makes it harder to make futures.

In my work in Atlanta with the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and the Proctor Creek Watershed Stewardship Council, as well as past work I've done in Glasgow and Mississippi, there are very real barriers to the sustained participation of historically marginalized groups in city-making or environment-making. West Atlanta is a community that is over 95% African American, mostly poor, and home to 26 EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) hot spots in one watershed. There is nothing new or mind blowing about the list I'm offering—we all know very well that there exists a maldistribution of resources in marginalized communities and that maldistribution takes the form of less time, less money, fewer professional connections, more caring responsibilities, less paid

support staff, etc., and that there are real barriers to participation, like lack of child-care, precarious work arrangements, less free time, less flexible work arrangements and so forth. These are the conditions that an interim politics of resourcefulness seeks to engage and transform as a way of moving toward policies and social relations that mitigate this uneven capacity, in order to seed the conditions for envisioning and engendering socially just futures.

In our initial article (MacKinnon and Derickson 2013), we identify four types of resources communities draw on to realize self-determination and influence urban and environmental futures that are unevenly distributed: material resources, folk knowledge, technical knowledge and recognition. These are the realms, we argue, with which advocacy, activism, scholarship and policy should be concerned if the objective is redistributing the capacity for self-determination. In addition, Paul Routledge and I (Derickson and Routledge 2015; Routledge and Derickson 2015) have posited ways for scholar-activism to resource historically marginalized communities through approaches to collaboration that invite the concerns, priorities and experiences of such communities to shape the research questions and data analysis and channel resources in ways that support their efforts. Thus, MacKinnon, Routledge and I have attempted to articulate and flesh out an interim politics of resourcefulness as a political posture and approach to scholarly research.

If Braun is right, and resilience is working like an ad hoc dispositif, a position 'for' or 'against' resilience is nonsensical. What I have argued instead is that resilience talk directs our attention toward a social formation that is uninspiring in its emphasis on enduring the effects of the very processes we ought to be focused on transforming. Resourcefulness, by contrast, invites us to consider how those very processes, and the act of producing knowledge about them, are deeply bound up in the capacity for communities—particularly those that have

been historically marginalized—to realize self-determination, or the ability to shape the economic and environmental future in accordance with their desires.
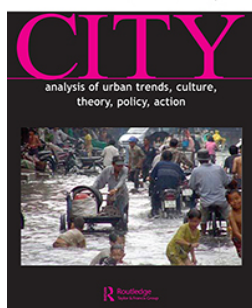
Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

Braun, Bruce. 2014. "A New Urban Dispositif? Governing Life in an Age of Climate Change." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 32: 49–64.

Centre for Social Justice. 2015. Accessed August 27, 2015. http://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk.

Derickson, Kate, and Danny MacKinnon. 2015. "Toward an Interim Politics of Resourcefulness for the Anthropocene." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105 (2): 304–312.

Derickson, Kate and Paul Routledge. 2015. "Resourcing Scholar-activism: Collaboration, Transformation and the Production of Knowledge." *The Professional Geographer* 67(1): 1–7.

Larner, Wendy. 2012. "Regeneration, Resilience, or Resistance? The CoExist project." Conference presentation In Against, and Beyond Neoliberalism Glasgow, Scotland.

MacKinnon, Danny, and Kate Derickson. 2013. "From Resilience to Resourcefulness: A Critique of Resilience Policy and Activism." *Progress in Human Geography* 37: 251–268.

Routledge, Paul, and Kate Derickson. 2015. "Situated Solidarities and the Practice of Scholar-activism." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 33: 391–407.

Kate Driscoll Derickson is based at the Department of Geography, Environment, and Society, University of Minnesota. Email: kdericks@umn.edu

The paradoxical slum

Sukriti Issar

Review
The paradoxical slum

Sukriti Issar

The durable slum: Dharavi and the right to stay put in globalizing Mumbai, Liza Weinstein. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2014, 256 pp., ISBN-10 0816683107, US$25.00 (pbk), US$75.00 (cloth).

The Durable Slum is a historical and ethnographic account of Mumbai's slums, seen through the lens of Dharavi, famous in the 1990s as Asia's 'largest slum'. Liza Weinstein traces out the shifting fortunes of Dharavi over the last 50–60 years, as the state cycled between 'violent insurgencies … interspersed with more benevolent programmatic interventions' (66). The title reflects the key argument—the slum-as-paradox; vulnerable yet resilient (xi), exploited yet empowered (20), ephemeral yet entrenched (7), being materially transient and make do yet temporally persistent. As an object of paradoxical state intervention, the book argues that this urban form has been subjected to 'supportive neglect' resulting in a 'precarious stability' (21).

The key strength of the book is its depth of empirical detail. The book traces out the history of state interventions into Dharavi (and the broader urban context), and focuses on a range of actors including bureaucrats, developers, residents, activists and international agencies. Weinstein marshals a diverse and rich set of documentary and interview evidence. The book thus provides a nuanced perspective from which to evaluate policy interventions, which are always implemented in a complex political field. Another important contribution is the attention paid to the understudied middle years of the last century. This book is thus a counterpoint to the abstractions and 'over-generalizations' of the more apocalyptic writings about developing world cities (Gilbert 2009, 37).

Weinstein compellingly demonstrates that neighborhoods that are labeled 'slums' are embedded within a dense institutional network of state agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), activists, politicians and historical legacies of repertoires of mobilization. These networks and repertoires enable what many see as marginalized, even 'invisible' or 'shadowy' urban spaces to exercise some agency, if not power, in sustaining what Weinstein calls their 'right to stay put'. The 'right to stay put' allows residents a modicum of legitimacy, the ability to resist the plans of a powerful but fragmented state, and predatory but often disorganized business interests. The political embeddedness of such neighborhoods also enables residents to access services and infrastructure, albeit patchily. Weinstein argues that this embeddedness has the downside of maintaining residents in a limbo that restricts investment in housing stock and local infrastructure. The 'right to stay put' thus paradoxically entrenches this tenuous urban form.

Early in the book, Weinstein points out that she uses the word 'slum' despite the objections of some authors that the pejorative connotations of this word can be used to legitimize drastic solutions particularly demolitions, displacement and eviction

(Gilbert 2007). Weinstein chooses to use the word since it is widely used in Mumbai, confers legal rights on neighborhoods and can be an appellation that housing activists seek out for particular localities. In this review, I use the term with the caveat that this term is always a political category that connotes not only urban poverty or low-income housing, but also localities that are in some ambiguous relationship with respect to property or municipal law. As Weinstein notes, in Mumbai, since the 1950s, neighborhoods termed slums tend to have non-existent or uncertain legal tenure, and are 'technically illegal' (4).[1] This is why residents must fight to exercise their 'right to stay put' because legal rights are ambiguous and actions must be taken in the political arena.

Dharavi has long been a named locality in Mumbai. It was a fishing village, a tannery, a working-class neighborhood and then labeled a slum. In the rest of the review, I recap key policy interventions that the book outlines, and end with a consideration of the type of analysis that I think this book gestures toward. In 1947, Modak, chief municipal engineer, and Mayer, an American town planner, drafted a *Master Plan* for the city, with a special proposal for redeveloping Dharavi. They proposed moving all industry out of Dharavi, and constructing housing that would accommodate at most 50% of low-income residents. The plan also proposed a cap on total population. This would have required relocating and rehousing a significant proportion of Dharavi's residents. The plan was not authorized by the state government, even though Modak made valiant lobbying efforts over the years. Weinstein notes that the jurisdictional structure of urban governance is such that regional governments (here, the state government of Maharashtra), with electoral logics biased toward rural areas, often failed to provide enough financing for urban policy implementation. Weinstein terms the non-implementation of the Modak–Mayer plan a 'sordid history'. After a strong program of slum clearance in the 1960s, the Slum Areas Act of 1971 created

some protection for residents of slum areas from 'uncompensated displacements' (63). In 1985, the Prime Minister's Grant Project (PMGP) committed extensive funds toward slum improvement. Like the *Master Plan*, the PMGP aimed to reduce the population of Dharavi by 40%, and to rebuild 40,000 new apartments. Despite financial backing from the central government, and political backing by the regional state, the PMGP also failed to make much impact on Dharavi's housing needs with only a few dozen residential buildings built by the end of the 1980s. Weinstein points out that opposition from community groups and NGOs, and the state's fragmented bureaucracy were some of the reasons for this non-implementation. Starting in the late 1970s and 1980s, the World Bank provided financing and technical assistance for slum upgrading, regularization and the provision of serviced plots. Eighty-eight thousand residents purchased these plots, and by relocating to the plots were 'regularized'—however, they still lacked legal tenure, and were still living in 'precarious stability' and legal ambiguity. World Bank funded programs like the Land Infrastructure Service Program (LISP) and Affordable Low Income Shelter (ALIS) also fell far short of their targets. One of the reasons cited for this 'failure' was competing agendas and lack of coordination across programs with similar goals (provision of free or subsidized housing, and infrastructure development).

Each of these programs despite their patchy or non-existent implementation had important effects; Weinstein focuses on two in particular—mobilization by local community groups, activists and NGOs, and the accumulation of knowledge about policy design elements.

By the early 1990s, the state had been experimenting with slum redevelopment, which is today the main policy intervention in Mumbai. Slum redevelopment uses a 'public–private partnership' model to cross-subsidize housing redevelopment. In return for access to land of earmarked slum neighborhoods, developers build 'free'

apartments for the residents, and as an incentive, are allowed to use the remaining land to build apartments for sale on the market. Weinstein notes that slum redevelopment has been popular amongst residents and developers, although progress can be slow and real estate development is increasingly criminalized. However, the aim for Dharavi has been more ambitious, where Dharavi would be redeveloped as a locality rather than as individual buildings. This is an important part of the book and also reflects Weinstein's challenge to the neoliberal argument. The DRP or Dharavi Redevelopment Project was the brainchild of Mukesh Mehta, an investor and developer who spent many years in the early 2000s lobbying the government to adopt his plan for redevelopment. Eventually, in a highly publicized global tender, a consortia of global developers were invited to undertake redevelopment (in contrast to the small local developers that usually undertake slum redevelopment). Such an entry of global real estate players into a slum neighborhood would seem like a perfect example for 'actually existing neoliberalism' or even 'neoliberalism' served plain. Activist groups in Mumbai did see redevelopment as having the potential of being a 'land grab' or accumulation by dispossession. Gaining community consent for DRP seems to have been difficult and residents were strongly opposed to the plan on a number of counts (including cases of fraudulent tactics taken for gaining resident consent). Due to this strong resistance, political contestation and the global recession of 2008, the international investors pulled out of the project. The neoliberal plan was abandoned. In recent years, the state has itself taken up Dharavi's redevelopment though progress has been exceedingly slow—thus, rather than the rise of the market, it's the return of the state (at least in this specific case). This example challenges the perspective of global capital sweeping away local structures and is an important theoretical framework for Weinstein's book.

The wealth of empirical detail in the book gestures toward the potential for more empirically grounded analytical generalizations for understanding developing world states and urbanization. A relook at the history of state interventions outlined above will make this clearer. Weinstein notes that the first Master Plan of the 1940s failed to be implemented despite the best efforts of Modak and Mayer, the planners who formulated it. Some of their plans included relocation of Dharavi residents (a tactic that is always politically contentious)—in other words, the plan was not sound. The Development Plan of 1964, which *was* authorized and adopted by the government, has had many unintended consequences. Thus, the counterfactual of the failure of the Modak–Mayer plan is not successful redevelopment of Dharavi—this might be the assumed counterfactual of the book given that the failure of the state to authorize the Modak–Mayer Master Plan is seen as a 'sordid history'. The plans did not gain any financial backing, were not vested with jurisdictional power and did not attain political authorization. At the same time, subsequent plans whether the PGMG of the federal government, or ALIS and LISP of the World Bank, also seem to have failed, prompting Weinstein to note that housing and even sanitation have been 'virtually elusive policy goals' (56). In other words, whether the plan was a technocratic plan with no jurisdictional support and a lack of political backing (Modak–Mayer Master Plan), a federal government program with financial, jurisdictional and presumably political backing (PMGP), or an internationally funded development program (LISP, ALIS), no program could make substantial inroads into slum redevelopment or improvement. By identifying what these programs were cases of (diverse degrees of financial and political backing) an important analytical generalization emerges; regardless of the degree of political and financial backing, many state programs seem to have been failures of implementation. This undermines a state

capacity argument since financial and political backing did not enable implementation. Administrative coordination and front-line implementation remain possible reasons for non-implementation as these have been persistent background factors. Similarly, slum redevelopment is backed by the regional state (countering the argument that regional governments cannot create effective urban policy due to rural biases); it is a program popular with most stakeholders, and yet this too remains patchily implemented.

At the end of the book, Weinstein notes that 'Plans like these routinely fail, and *it's often a good thing that they do*' (174; emphasis added). Rather than seeing non-implementation as evidence of weak state capacity, authors argue that such non-enforcement indicates the state's *forbearance* or intentional 'nonenforcement of law' (Holland 2015). Weinstein describes the state's position as 'supportive neglect'—it is neglectful since non-implementation is the central theme of slum-related urban policies, but it is supportive since the state does provide electricity, water, roads, infrastructure, sanitation, even if patchily, and often looks the other way when the same is acquired through illegal or quasi-legal means. The ideas of forbearance and supportive neglect are important perspectives on the nature of the state in developing world cities.

Weinstein's book is an important read for those interested in cities, low-income housing politics, South Asia and the Indian state. The book is a rich and nuanced picture of the political life of a 'slum', the way that neighborhoods evolved with the wider political economic development of a city, the political savvy and can-do nature of precarious urban living, and the political entrenchment of low-income neighborhoods.
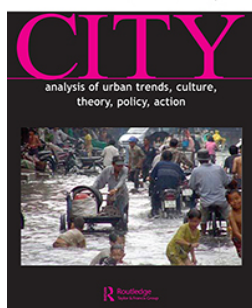
Note

1 A common origin story for such neighborhoods is that of land invasions or occupations, which are then 'regularized' by the state through ad hoc interventions (e.g. through the collection of license fees). Such interventions create legitimacy and some types of legal rights but do not create formal title or legal tenure.

References

Gilbert, A. 2007. "The Return of the Slum: Does Language Matter?" *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31 (4): 697–713.
Gilbert, A. 2009. "Extreme Thinking About Slums and Slum Dwellers: A Critique." *SAIS Review* 29 (1): 35–48. doi:10.1353/sais.0.0031
Holland, A. 2015. "The Distributive Politics of Enforcement." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (2): 357–371.

Sukriti Issar is Assistant Professor of Sociology, Observatoire Sociologique du Changement (OSC), Sciences Po, Paris, France. Email: sukriti.issar@sciencespo.fr

Comparing relational urbanism

Colin McFarlane

Review
Comparing relational urbanism

Colin McFarlane

Cities in relation: trajectories of urban development in Hanoi and Ouagadougou, Ola Soderstrom. Wiley Blackwell, Oxford, 2014, 230 pp., ISBN 978-1-118-63280-2, £19.99 (pbk), £55 (cloth).

Ola Soderstrom's *Cities in Relation* makes two key contributions to urban studies. First, on the comparison of relations, which advances both debates on relationality and debates on comparative urbanism. The book compares not so much cities as urban trajectories made in part through relations, where relations are usefully differentiated by their type, intensity and orientation. This is an important set of specifications and guides that take us beyond the 'everything is relational' mantra that we see repeatedly across almost all urban research.

Second, the focus on two cities often marginal to theories of global urbanism—Hanoi and Ouagadougou—provides a powerful illustration of the deeply variegated, contingent and increasingly translocal nature of urban development. Soderstrom shows that translocal relations emerge in large part from the historical political and economic development of the city in question, and are best characterised not through recourse to an expansive 'global neoliberalism' but to 'grounded narratives of mondialisation', that is, the specific forms of global interconnectedness (3). In doing so, he shows how transitions from socialism to market-oriented economies emerge in radically different ways and shape particular kinds and intensities of relations, from efforts to build a specific aesthetic and economy of the 'world city' (in Hanoi's case) to urban visions built more squarely around international development debates (in Ouagadougou's case).

The book is built around seven chapters through which the following steps unfold. In Chapter 2, the historical trajectory of urban development in both cities is understood through the political and economic contexts of those cities. Soderstrom shows that those historical trajectories foster particular kinds of relations with different elsewheres (Asia in Hanoi's case, North Africa and Europe in Ouagadougou's case). The next two chapters build on urban policy mobility debates to show how inter-municipal networks produce multiple and contradictory outcomes that go beyond neoliberalism. Chapter 5 shifts focus to the built form and examines how the making of urban architectures reflects different kinds of translocal relations: the 'starchitecture' and master-planned neighbourhoods of Hanoi are less in evidence in Ouagadougou, where a smaller scale translocal architecture is tied more to development aid and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Chapter 6 presents a discussion on everyday life and 'travelling types', principally shopping malls and road interchanges, which have multiple impacts on the spatial form and experience of the city that cannot be confidently anticipated in advance. The final chapter pulls the arguments together to argue that urban development should be understood and pursued not through a preoccupation with city rankings and role models, nor via an inward focus on particular territories, but through a 'politics of relatedness'.

This is both a politics of learning in which actors strategically reflect on what works for their cities and how, and a politics of making strategic relations in which different actors and contexts are called upon for quite distinct aims (and here Ouagadougou in particular provides an example of one route forward).

The arguments are convincing, rigorous and very clearly expressed. The book is a pleasure to read and delivers on its promise. It is useful to researchers and students working on urban theory, relationality, comparison, global (or planetary, or worldly) urbanism and urban development. There is a lot to be said about how the book speaks to these different questions, but in closing I will highlight just two issues that the book provokes but does not quite resolve, and which speak to wider debates in urban studies.

The first is to do with relationality itself. Soderstrom makes a vital contribution in specifying the different kinds and intensities of relations that constitute urban development. That said, the book does work with a particular conception of relationality. As in some other recent accounts of urban relationality (e.g. McCann and Ward 2011), the problem of relations is handled through a dualism of territory (the stuff 'in here') and relationality (the connections to 'out there'). Soderstrom is particularly interested in how this problematic of relationality–territory gives rise to novelty and urban possibility ('affordances') in policy, architecture and everyday life that cannot be easily read in advance. The dualism works well on the whole in that it serves to anchor the book in both place and connection to elsewheres, but the dualism itself can work to undermine a nuanced reading of relationality in that it leaves us with an underspecified sense of territory as both relational and non-relational. If territory points to a largely non-relational process that is nonetheless forged in part through relations, how do we then differentiate between relational and non-relational territory? The territorial part of the relational–territorial equation falls to one side here, and territory becomes little more than a signifier for the place itself. It is perhaps here that debates on urban relationality need to connect more thoroughly with debates on territory (e.g. Elden 2013).

The second and final issue is to do with neo-liberalism. The book has an interesting relationship to debates on neo-liberalism. On the one hand, a focus on neo-liberalism is taken to be 'indispensable' (60). On the other hand, the book shows that there are lots of other important processes besides neo-liberalism at work in urban development, and that a focus on neo-liberalism can limit our abilities to see this. Some of these other issues are to do with historical legacies (e.g. of socialism or traditional power structures or local aesthetics and practices), others are forged through forms of learning with specific actors in other places (policymakers, NGOs, architects, planners, etc.). Soderstrom deals with this multiplicity by talking about transnational policy as 'more than neoliberal'. Neo-liberalism is, for Soderstrom, to be *found* in the relations, alongside all manner of other kinds of political economic and social processes, and should not then be taken as a starting point. This non-singular account of urban policy and production is valuable and convincingly demonstrated through the two cities. And yet—and again this point goes beyond the book—the term 'more than neoliberal' is revealing of the dearth of conceptual vocabulary that we have in urban studies to describe different political economic urban configurations. I was looking for a descriptor or conceptualisation that emerged more directly from the relations and trajectories examined in the book. Perhaps this is what the focus on mondialisation opens up for future research. Soderstrom's lively text is a useful entry point to that process.

References

Elden, S. 2013. *The Birth of Territory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McCann, E., and K. Ward, eds. 2011. *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Colin McFarlane is based at the Department of Geography, Durham University. Email: colin.mcfarlane@durham.ac.uk