

AESOP-Young Academics

Open Access Journal



Volume 2 / April 2016

# plaNNext

*NEXT GENERATION PLANNING*

// IN //  
PLAN //  
/ NING

Please cite this as: Volume 2, plaNNext – *Next generation planning* (2016)  
<http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.vol.02>  
ISSN: 2468-0648



## plaNext – Next Generation Planning

Along the concentrated efforts of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) to Open Access scholarly planning debates, the young academics network of AESOP continues to publish its international peer-reviewed open access e-journal, *plaNext*. *plaNext* provides prospective authors an opportunity to engage their ideas in international planning debates as well as make their research available to the wider planning audience. *plaNext* invites authors to submit original work that includes: empirical research; theoretical discussions; innovative methodologies; case studies; and, book reviews on selected books, textbooks, or specific topics dealing within planning.

For more information about *plaNext* and to access all publications, please visit the journal's homepage at <http://www.inplanning.eu/menus/28>. You are also welcome to reach us at [yamail@aesop-youngacademics.net](mailto:yamail@aesop-youngacademics.net)  
*plaNext* Editorial Board

AESOP Young Academics Network, All Right Reserved

### Peer Review Statement

*PlaNext* is an international, peer-reviewed journal publishing high-quality and original research. All submitted manuscripts are subject to initial appraisal by the Editor, before being reviewed by two or three semi-open expert referees. All manuscripts are open access published at AESOP InPlanning publishing platform. This means that published manuscripts are freely and permanently available to the general public. There is no subscription fee, article pay-to-view fee or any other form of access fee; and no publication embargo is applied.

#### **Editorial Board**

- › Feras Hammami (Editor in Chief), University of Gothenburg, Sweden
- › Lauren Ugur, International School of Management, Germany.
- › Ender Peker, University of Reading, UK
- › Simone Tulumello, University of Lisbon, Portugal
- › Nadia Caruso, Politecnico di Torino, Italy

#### **Acknowledgment**

The Editorial Board of *plaNNext* would like to warmly thank the reviewers of this volume whose critique significantly helped the authors to strengthen their manuscripts.

- › Chandrima Mukhopadhyay, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology University, India
- › Cheryl Gige, University of Washington, USA
- › Deepa Naik, THIS IS NOT A GATEWAY, UK
- › Diane Siebrandt, Deakin University, Australia
- › Filippo De Pieri, Politecnico di Torino, Italy
- › Gwenda Van der Vaart, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
- › Karl Kim, University of Hawaii, USA
- › Khondokar Nahiduzzaman, King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals, Saudi Arabia
- › Lauren Ugur, International School of Management, Germany
- › Leonel Fadigas, Technical University of Lisbon, Portugal
- › Letizia Osti, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy
- › Ljiljana Vasilevska, University of Nis, Serbia
- › Manuel Appert, Lumière University Lyon 2, France
- › Michela Zonta, Center for American Progress, USA
- › Panagiota Manoli, University of the Aegean, Greece
- › Peter Schmitt, Nordregio, Sweden
- › Sudeshna Ghosh, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA
- › Trenton Oldfield, THIS IS NOT A GATEWAY, UK

## Open Access Journal

## VOLUME TWO

Following an open call for paper, the second volume of *plaNext* invited contributions from researchers and practitioners in planning and other related fields of research. All contributions went through open peer-review process before they were included in this volume. Unlike volume one, *Cities that Talk*, which was dedicated to the specific theme urban resistance and planning, the editorial board of *plaNext* selected the contributions to volume two as new ideas and perspectives on planning.

## Content

- 6 *Feras Hammami*  
*plaNext*: New Ideas and Perspectives on Planning
- 9 *Miriam Tedeschi*  
Towards an Ethical Turn in Urban Studies: On the Role of Information and Power in Contemporary Cities
- 28 *Geoff Boeing*  
Honolulu Rail Transit: International Lessons from Barcelona in Linking Urban Form, Design, and Transportation
- 48 *Annelies Van de Ven*  
The Spatialisation Struggle: The Heritage of Open Spaces in Baghdad
- 74 *Elena Greco*  
Preserving and Promoting the Urban Landscape. The French and Italian Debates of the Post-World War II Decades
- 90 *Jessica L. H. Doyle*  
Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Access to Information as a Local Economic-Development Problem
- 109 *Deepika Andavarapu and Mahyar Arefi*  
Understanding Resilience in Urban Slums: Lessons from Pedda-Jalaripeta, India
- 129 *Galya Vladova and Joerg Knieling*  
Prospects for an EU Macro-Regional Approach in the Black Sea Area
- 148 *Basak Tanulku*  
Book Review: *Critical Cities Volume 3: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation from Emerging Urbanists*

## Notes on Contributors

**Miriam Tedeschi** is a Ph.D. fellow in Regional Planning and Public Policy at IUAV University (Venice). She is interested in the way technologies shape both human behaviour and urban space and the ethical issues they raise. Her research draws from urban policies, surveillance, security, information ethics, information architecture and poststructuralism.

**Geoff Boeing** is a Ph.D. candidate in city and regional planning at the University of California, Berkeley. His research revolves around urban form and complexity theory.

**Annelies Van de Ven** is a PhD student, researching the display of contested sites and artefacts. Her background lies in Ancient History and Archaeology, and she completed her MA in these fields at the University of ST Andrews in 2013.

**Elena Greco** was born in Turin (Italy) in 1984. She achieved the master degree with honors in Architecture and Urban Design at Politecnico di Torino in 2009. She is actually ending a PhD in Cultural Heritage, whose research is based on a codirected thesis agreement between the Politecnico di Torino (Italy) and the Université Rennes 2 (France).

**Jessica L. H. Doyle** is a doctoral student in the School of City and Regional Planning at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. She is a former journalist and researcher for Georgia Tech's Centre for Quality Development and Regional Growth, and now a mother of two.

**Deepika Andavarapu** is a doctoral candidate in Regional Development Planning program at University of Cincinnati. Her doctoral dissertation is based on a qualitative research on a slum in Visakhapatnam, India. Prior to starting her academic career, Deepika worked as an urban planner in public and private sectors for over six

**Mahyar Arefi** is a Professor in the School of Planning at the University of Cincinnati. He is Co-editor of Urban Design International, and has published extensively in the areas of urban design and community development. His recent book "Deconstructing Placemaking: Need, Opportunities, and Assets" was the recipient of the 8th International Festival of Research & Innovation, in 2015 in Tehran.

**Galya Vladova** is a research associate at the Institute for Urban Planning and Regional Development of HafenCity University Hamburg. Her main research interest lies in the field of European regional policy, territorial cooperation in large-scale areas and coordination of territorial development process.

**Joerg Kniefing** is professor and head of the Institute for Urban Planning and Regional Development of HafenCity University, Hamburg.

**Basak Tanulku** is an independent researcher from Istanbul, Turkey. She holds a PhD degree in Sociology from Lancaster University, UK. Tanulku is interested in urban studies and works on gated communities, socio-spatial fragmentation, housing, urban transformation and its effects on urban communities and heritage, and urban vacant lands and buildings.

# PLANEXT: NEW IDEAS AND PERSPECTIVES ON PLANNING

**Feras Hammami**

University of Gothenburg, Sweden

This volume marks an important stage in *plaNext*. It publishes original works following an open call, as the special-issue inaugural volume was dedicated to selected contributions from the 8th AESOP-YA annual conference. With the growing interest in *plaNext*, we see a bright future as a leading open access journal in planning and other related fields. Thanks to the generous contribution of AESOP, all articles are openly available at AESOP's digital platform, InPlanning, and authors do not pay any article processing fee. In this respect, we envision *plaNext* as an effort by the young academic community of AESOP to help free the dissemination of knowledge from any unjust global academic system.

*plaNext* seeks to provide early academic researchers and practitioners with a critical forum for dialogues about the scope and meaning of “planning”, and thus influence evolving planning debates. The motivation is to explicitly open up trans-disciplinary and international dialogues about what “planning studies” is and how it could be understood and developed when engaged with other fields of inquiry. These dialogues are expected to will help us initiate and frame several debates, lending recognition, form and direction to a range of theoretical explorations and methodological innovations in the field. We hope to engage in these debates practitioners, academics and policymakers, as well as members of the diverse communities that connect, often very actively, with planning. With such an open and trans-disciplinary approach, we will try to establish a sound theoretical sense of where the field of planning is going, which draws on the insights of disciplines as diverse as urban and regional studies, geography, heritage studies, sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, political science, architecture, art, art history, and tourism studies.

Given the diverse and international range of contributors and readers that *plaNext* boasts, the published contributions are expected to critically engage with the discourses, thoughts and debates that have dominated policy and thinking on planning for so long. With the growing interest in challenging the theory-practice (and –action) divides and the Western-centric conception of planning, *plaNext* aspires to create an accessible space for scholars, practitioners and activists from inside and outside Europe in exploring what these challenges mean. Through enabling young academics to engage in dialogues of this sort, *plaNext* will draw on its broader international audience, and create a more inclusive

Hammami, F.

international community that self-reflexively explores the field of planning through different perspectives.

We have witnessed during the past years a growing number of studies, many of which are ethnographic in nature, that have examined the consequences of different approaches to planning, inspired by a range of social and cultural debates, promoting attention to identity and memory, as well as artistic and cultural expressions. These studies and debates are part of a significant shift in planning debates, marked by an increasing concern to unpack the political and the complex relationships of power that shape a range of dominant assumptions and ideas about the meaning and practices of planning. As the already diverse range of disciplines engaged with planning increases, and as the focus of analysis begins to consider not only practice, but also the effects of those practices, the rapid growing demands of contemporary societies requires new approaches to planning, or re-theorising it focusing on new ideas, approaches and thoughts drawn from different disciplines and by the multiple generations of academics, practitioners and activists. We see the pages of *plaNext* as an alternative space for young academics to critically engage with these debates. The first volume of *plaNext*, *Cities that Talk*, came in response to the contemporary phenomena of urban protests and resistances, including everyday life insurgencies, protests, riots and urban social movements, that call for re-thinking the future development of cities, challenging the traditional planning systems.

The second volume is another important step in this endeavour. As an open call, it received a broad response with original contributions from the different parts of the world. While most were planning schools- based, the contributions also came from the fields of heritage, sociology, geography, and art, raising new critical questions to planning debates. In the first paper, *Miriam Tedeschi* dwells on the works of Deleuze and Spinoza to theorise an ethical approach to urban planning that can be used to explain the role of information and power in contemporary cities. In the following paper, *Geoff Boeing* draws lessons from Barcelona's urban design and transportation systems to critically reflect on the urban form, transit accessibility, and planning and design decisions in Honolulu.

This inspiring international journey continues through the challenging paper by *Annelies Van de Ven*. Annelies visits Baghdad to demonstrate the significance of open space within the historical fabric of the city and the self-identification of its population through heritage and historical narratives of public space. Then, *Elena Greco* offers a different perspective on historic cities by unfolding the historical development of the concepts 'historic centre' and 'urban landscape' in the Italian and French debates during the post war decades.

The two following papers take us to a different inspiring topic. *Jessica Doyle* provides a stimulating paper that shows how immigrant entrepreneurs often start businesses largely

Hammami, F.

outside the existing local economic-development infrastructure. Her study shows that the difficulty of obtaining information and credit is a well-documented problem; that the immigrant entrepreneurs themselves move to solve this problem by soliciting information from existing social networks or community organizations; and that these resources are not necessarily available to all nascent immigrant entrepreneurs, and indeed may be harder to reach in less dense suburban environments. Following these ideas of resilience outside the official planning processes, *Deepika Andavarapu* and *Mahyar Arefi* use Holling's Adaptive Cycle model to explore how the residents of Pedda Jalaraipeta slum in Visakhapatnam, India, use their social capital (bonding, bridging and linkages) to survive and recover from disasters.

The final paper in this volume is co-authored by *Galya Vladova* and *Joerg Knieling*. The authors explore the debate about macro-regionalisation of the European territorial cooperation to assess the prospects for projection of the macro-regional idea upon the Black Sea area. Finally, *Basak Tanulku* provides an inspiring review of Naik Deepa and Trent Oldfield book, entitled *Critical Cities Volume 3: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation from Emerging Urbanists*.

Looking to the future, *plaNext* warmly welcomes contributions willing to critically re-theorise and re-engage with planning theory and practices. We encourage papers that present reflexive conversation and theoretical analysis as well as case studies and practice-based reports. *plaNext* is regularly published twice a year. One volume is dedicated for selected papers from the annual conference of AESOP-YA, and one follows an open call. We wish to continue the development of themed volumes, which can be published when the publication process allows. We will also encourage contributions in the form of short reports, around 2,000 words, giving accounts of casework that can help academics to reflect on their theoretical analysis. *plaNext* will also continue to reserve a section for book reviews, around 2,000 word, that can engage the readers of *plaNext* not only with planning debates, but also with other new and innovative materials, from areas/disciplines not usually covered in discussions of planning. The Editorial Board, including Feras Hammami (Editor in Chief), Nadia Caruso, Lauren Ugur, Simone Tulumello and Ender Peker, manage all *plaNext* volumes. However, we will continue welcoming all comments and suggestions from AESOP members that can help us strengthen our open access journal.

This Editorial is a great opportunity to thank our invaluable authors, readers, reviewers and guest editors as well as AESOP and InPlanning for their invaluable support.

# TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

**Miriam Tedeschi**

IUAV University, Italy

This article explores an ethical approach to urban planning, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of becoming. A central argument in this study is that the reality policymakers face when deciding how to pursue good (in the moral sense) actions or how to eschew bad ones is ontologically unpredictable and unstable. Unpredictability and instability are characteristics of urban assemblages, which compose and decompose affecting each other in a positive or negative way. Following Deleuze and Spinoza, this paper claims that urban composition and decomposition are good (empowering) and bad (harming), respectively, in an ethical and amoral sense. However, moral and fixed values, often left unchallenged in urban planning and policymaking, fail to describe these ethical transitions among assemblages: in fact, urban planning and policies' unavoidable *conatus*, namely their survival as rational system, is to avoid direct confrontation with ethical and dangerous happenings and, instead, increase their power of acting so as to make urban bodies docile, controlled and normalised through standardised moral categories and classifications. These categories are but ethically generated information shorn of their situated and eventful role, acquiring the shape of data and transformed into fixed layers of apparently stable and predictable reality.

*Keywords:* Morality, Affect, Assemblage, Ethics, Power, Information

Please cite this article as: Tedeschi, M., Towards an Ethical Turn in Urban Studies: On the Role of Information and Power in Contemporary Cities *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.2vol.02>

Tedeschi, M.

## Introduction

‘The cosmos requires neither eyes to extend its vision to what is external to it, nor ears to take in anything from the outside. Instead it is both eye and the thing seen, ear and the thing heard, and the single sense in it knows all the sensible objects’ (Proclus et al., 2007, 85.15)

Over the last few years, scholars from planning, urban studies, geography and sociology have attempted to overcome planners’ and urban policymakers’ obsession for excessive rationality and for dichotomous descriptions of reality. Several have directly challenged the rigid, categorical, dual approach (subject / object, good / bad, private / public, inclusion / exclusion, formal / informal), while promoting a more flexible definition of the urban realm. In planning theory, Gunder and Hillier (2009, p. 23) suggest that ‘one of planning’s fundamental purposes and key justifications is to produce an illusion of certainty in order to provide a sense of ontological security in an unpredictable world’. In other words, planning practice provides an appearance of order in a reality that, far from being rigidly categorical, is in fact uncontrollable and profoundly unstable.

In geography, several scholars have also called for the need to overcome linear causality and the illusion of predictable connections. In this context, assemblage thinking has begun to spread insofar as ‘there is always an uncertainty to the agency of assemblages, a potential for relations to be otherwise. This is a conception of causality that seeks to depart from linearity and to make room for novelty and randomness in emergence’ (Anderson *et al.*, 2012, p. 182). In the same line of thought, Amin and Thrift (2002, p. 4) ‘understand the trajectory of cities not as being instantiated through replications of the present, but as a set of potentials which contain unpredictable elements as a result of the co-evolution of problems and solutions’, thus stressing the becoming of the real more than its stratification into fixed determinations.

In sociology, Latour (2005) has revolutionised the rigid subject/object approach. In fact, drawing on Gabriel Tarde (2000 [1898]), Latour’s Actor Network Theory (ANT) does not make distinctions between human and non-human entities. Instead, it dwells on temporary relations among elements, of whatever sort, to dynamically determine what is called *the social*. Other parallel approaches to the urban realm are developed in, among others, De Landa (2013), Fariás (2009), Graham and Marvin (2001).

Following these discussions, this paper aims to explore an ethical approach to urban planning, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy of becoming. This approach sees cities as always in becoming, human and non-human bodies relentlessly interacting in search of better combinations. These combinations form temporary aggregations that

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

are then dismantled, while new ones are established, in a continuous back-and-forth movement that both urban planning and policymaking tend to anchor through categories, definitions, and moral statements (Ansaloni & Tedeschi, 2015). However, these categories, while certainly helping to promptly deal with situations at hand, ultimately lack reality: they stratify a city that is already something else, something more than fixed terms can describe. To wit, they lack the eventfulness of the city, where a situated and amoral ethics takes place every time bodies compose and decompose by affecting each other. Indeed, according to Deleuze (1988) and Spinoza (2009 [1677]), (urban) compositions and decompositions are respectively good and bad in an amoral sense: in the former case, the assemblages' power (or capacity) to act or to be acted upon increases; in the latter, it decreases, leading the assemblages' components to seek new, positive aggregations.

During these encounters, bodies exchange information (Simondon, 2007) that is ontologically and spatially situated and eventually determines the result of bodies assembling. If information is despatialised – i.e. taken out of context and fixed somewhere else, transformed into *data* (Iliadis, 2013) – it becomes part of the moral categorisation and stigmatising statements that contemporary cities have been suffering from.

In this sense, a thorough analysis of the role of information is becoming more and more ethically relevant in the actual political regimes Deleuze (1995) has defined as control societies, whose urban planning is an actual part. In fact, these regimes, based on a teleological and human-centred morality, keep channelling the flows of affects, desires, and power by fixing them on moral and pre-categorised (informational) layers.

This moral operation is the regimes' *good*, their unavoidable *conatus* (Deleuze, 1988; Spinoza, 2009 [1677]), namely, their sole mean of survival as rational, moral, fully-working systems. This *conatus* recursively reproduces itself as the only effective way to overcome the otherwise unjust and unpredictable urban realm and to give the illusion of security and control (Gunder & Hillier, 2009). However, while urban planning strives to achieve the latter, it often ends up being overcome by unexpected results and occurrences.

After the introduction, the following sections of this article re-conceptualise the city as an ontologically rhizomatic and unpredictable reality, apply an ethical and amoral approach to the city, explain the role of information in contemporary cities, and provide examples that help clarify the previous concepts.

Tedeschi, M.

## The city as rhizomatic reality

‘The town [...] represents a threshold of deterritorialization, because whatever the material involved, it must be deterritorialized enough to enter the network, to submit to the polarization, to follow the circuit of urban and road recoding’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 432)

Digital vs. real, inclusion vs. exclusion, good vs. bad, public vs. private, innovative vs. old, secure vs. insecure, integrated vs. marginal, formal vs. informal, rich vs. poor: these are just a few examples of the dichotomous and rational categories that urban policies and planning system automatically adopt when readying initiatives, carrying out projects, evaluating specific actions, and even reporting results to the public.

The risks and limits of the rational approach, based upon these rigid classifications and taxonomies, have already been emphasized in the literature. For instance, Gunder and Hillier (2009) state that: ‘planning’s deployment of economic or communicative rational arguments and their resulting tools and processes are based on a presumed rationality of the actors involved, when in reality participants in the market, or in a polity engaged in a collaborative participation, are human actors actually driven by irrational *jouissance*’ (p. 184). If the basis of planning discourses is not *rational*, how can decisions be made?<sup>1</sup> Or how can urban development projects be carried out? In this paper, planning narratives are considered as the result of composing assemblages, whose *conatus* is ultimately to carry out fixed stratifications, which aim to give an illusion of stability and security (Gunder & Hillier, 2009) through specific interventions in urban built environment. These interventions are actually being applied to a spatial reality that, in the meantime, has already become something else.

To respond to these questions, it is important to engage with the aforementioned binary logic and, following Deleuze and Guattari (1987), examine whether (and how) binary logic can be successfully applied to reality – a city, for instance. Deleuze and Guattari see *reality* as complex, connected and disconnected, heterogeneous and multiple compositions of human and non-human entities, such as things, acts, thoughts, people, documents, buildings, that are incessantly transforming and affecting one another. In their terms, it is a *rhizome*, a network of bodies that relentlessly either compose into assemblages or decompose to form new, better aggregations. The term *assemblage* is central, here, because it allows for a better understanding of how bodies interact with each other in a

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘We are [...] unwilling to concede – in fact we find it intolerable to imagine – that our more lofty achievements, such as economic, social or political progress, could have come about by stumbling rather than through careful planning, rational behaviour, and the successful response to a clearly perceived challenge’ (Hirshman, 1967, p. 13).

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

given reality, such as a city. Several scholars from, among others, urban studies, planning, geography, sociology and philosophy have used the concept of assemblage to re-theorise the urban realm beyond any rigid classification of reality. Following Deleuze and Guattari, an assemblage is conceived in this study as an irreducible multiplicity, lying between two layers. 'One side of a machinic assemblage faces the strata, which doubtless make it a kind of organism, or signifying totality, or determination attributable to a subject; it also has a side facing a body without organs, which is continually dismantling the organism, causing [...] pure intensities to pass or circulate, and attributing to itself subjects that it leaves with nothing more than a name as the trace of an intensity' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 4). In other words, every assemblage faces the so-called *strata* – a body temporarily fixed in discernible form – and the *body without organs* – the virtual, yet real, possibility for the body to overcome fixed form, to enter a new composition or to evolve into something else. This second facet is especially significant because, in every composition, there is always a concrete possibility of discarding the given order, of becoming something else, of being transformed into a completely different reality. This was emphasized by De Landa (2013, p. 12), in attempting to explain the two faces: 'one and the same assemblage can have components working to stabilize its identity as well as components forcing it to change or even transforming it into a different assemblage'. Latour's ANT partially overlooks this double side. However, he emphasises the relational aspect of the assemblage, as well as the fact that connections do not take into consideration whether they involve human or non-human bodies. Hence, the aim of ANT is to make 'the social world as flat as possible in order to ensure that the establishment of any new link is clearly visible' (Latour, 2005, p. 16).

Although the relational aspect of the assemblage is certainly important, this paper places much greater significance on every aggregation's capacity for disruption, since 'entities are never fully actualized within any of the relations that constitute an assemblage' (Anderson *et al.*, 2012, p. 179). This disruption, or always actual possibility of changing the given order, is what urban planning and policymaking often seek to control. Their attempts of achieving a morally *good* order constitute their own *conatus*, or reason of existence.

Deleuze and Guattari's description of the rhizome, as being composed of an infinite number of assembling (and decomposing) entities, explores its capacity for disruption while unfolding its principal characteristics:

- *connection*: 'any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 7). A rhizome might connect whatever (human and non-human) entities, be they organizations of power or social struggles, in addition to agglomerating different acts, such as the perceptive, mimetic, gestural, etc.
- *heterogeneity*: in a rhizome we find only absolute and irreducible diversity. By way of example, what might a temporary assemblage formed by a wasp and an orchid (Deleuze

Tedeschi, M.

& Guattari, 1987) resemble on closer inspection? Despite being completely different, the two bodies (the insect and the flower) successfully create a map of reciprocal and relentless territorialised / deterritorialised (namely, temporary stabilised / destabilised) relationships.

- *multiplicity*: multiplicities are rhizomatic and, as such, have neither subject nor object, but only intensities, 'determinations, magnitudes and dimensions' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 8).
- *asignifying rupture*: 'a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 9). Take, for example, ants: although their procession may be stopped, this makes no difference. Rather, the line of ants persists, going on to reform a line, again and again. Explicitly, cities are systems that, despite what might befall them, have great resilience, i.e. the capacity to absorb the damage, heal, and carry on.
- *cartography and decalcomania*: looking back to the wasp / orchid example: what the two bodies form is literally a map, not a trace. However, the tracing operation is needed in order to fix the map into an image (the above-mentioned assemblage's *strata*, a body temporarily fixed into a discernible form) and allow us to subsequently navigate (and give signification to) its structure.

To sum up, if we consider the city our sample reality, it might then be described as the occurrence of relentless assemblages or dismantlements of connected, heterogeneous, multiple, ruptured, mapped / traced elements, always able to actualise their concrete capacity of becoming something else. In fact, the city originates from myriad assembling bodies, where assemblage results from processes of either composition or separation of individuals: 'the ontological status of assemblages, large or small, is always that of unique, singular individuals' (or *hacceities*, using a Deleuzian expression). These *hacceities* might be human beings, objects or even larger structures such as cities (De Landa, 2013).

To come back to our first point, in a reality like this, how can standardised, dichotomous logic be applied? It cannot: 'one can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything [...]. Good and bad are only the products of an active and temporary selection, which must be renewed' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 9-10). The *line of flight*, or deterritorialisation / destabilisation, is 'the maximum dimension after which the multiplicity undergoes metamorphosis, changes in nature' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 21). In other words, it is the concrete possibility of disruption, which is immanent in every entity. For instance, the line of flight can be seen in 'a group of people forming a new political party or planning practitioners conceiving a new form of adaptive strategic spatial planning' (Hillier & Abrahams, 2013, p. 21).

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

To put it differently, in Deleuze and Guattari's work, dichotomous categories such as inside / outside, digital / real, good / bad, immaterial / material do not apply to reality *per se* – in fact, they are superimposed upon it through moral narratives and discourse, which aim at temporary fixing unpredictable reality into strata by trying to avoid the potential danger of instability, or line of flight. These narratives, fixed into strata, do exist and are effective in the sense that they are the temporary result of urban policy compositions and of attempts to carry out planning projects or make decisions, which actually constitute urban planning's own *conatus*, namely its need to survive as a powerful, rational, reassuring, stable system.

What is *conatus*? In Deleuze's (1988) and Spinoza's (2009) words, *conatus* might be described as an entity's 'effort to experience joy, to increase the power of acting, to imagine and find that which is a cause of joy, which maintains and furthers this cause; and also an effort to avert sadness, to imagine and find that which destroys the cause of sadness' (Deleuze, 1988, p. 101). Urban assemblages' *conatus* may take shape when, for example, residents team up to protest against urban renewal or gentrification, communities of people work together for a specific purpose, neighbourhood watches protect their area against crime. On the other hand, planning or urban policy's *conatus* may be to apply the aforementioned binary logic and moral discourses in order to control, prevent disorder as well as regenerate urban spaces. Urban assemblages' *conatus* and planning's or urban policy's *conatus* often differ, and the result of their encounter and negotiation is what an urban space ultimately becomes, what it is stratified, redesigned or regenerated into.

Let us stress that the prolonged, despatialised use of moral narratives and rational discourse, often policymakers' wont, eventually risks widening the gap between planning narratives and space. In fact the latter is already becoming something different by changing its course and enhancing better urban compositions. For instance, by the time a development project is decided, local communities may have organised themselves to protest against the decision; by the time a new security policy is applied to an area, the geography of crime might have changed. As a result, the urban space has become something different from the one initially set by policy. How can policy ultimately compose with a reality like this and work for a shared goal?

These discussions are developed in the next section based on issues of ethics in planning and policymaking: if good and bad are 'only the products of an active and temporary selection' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 10), and every assemblage's *conatus* tend toward its own fulfilment, how can urban policies' moral *good* meet and compose with that, ontologically ethical and much less stable, of urban assemblages? Do the former need to give up some of their power, based upon standardised and categorical reasoning, in order to empower bodies through situated and positive (good) affections? Isn't it going to put the survival of the whole urban and (rational) planning system at risk?

Tedeschi, M.

## Towards an ethical and amoral approach to the urban realm

‘In the state of reason, law is an eternal truth, that is, a natural guide for the full development of the power of each individual. In the civil state, law restrains or limits the individual’s power, commands and prohibits, all the more since the power of the whole surpasses that of the individual’ (Deleuze, 1988, p. 107)

The above discussions of the rhizomatic city reveal how elusive it can be to conceive it through predefined categories. Although (urban) planners always aim at the *ideal city* (Gunder & Hillier, 2009) they eventually need fixed terms to execute any development project. What they have to deal with, in reality, is a kind of space that is far from ideal, one where hierarchies are often discarded, where events lack finalism and are mostly unpredictable.

In an attempt to better explore how (urban) bodies are connecting (or not-connecting) among themselves, producing ethical and unpredictable happenings, this paper follows Levi Bryant’s book *The Democracy of Objects* (2011), in which he explores how bodies – termed ‘objects’ – relate to each other by defining their characteristics:

- they are subjectless, and, as such, characterized by their own completely independent existence, entities existing for themselves, which cannot be subsumed as mere *things*, i.e. inferior and opposed to a (typically human) subject. That is to say that there is only one type of being that exists: objects (human beings included).
- They are simultaneously *self-othering* and withdrawing from all relations. This is the reason why human beings cannot have complete access to them, apart from being able to observe their local manifestations. In other words, the bodies’ structure is such that they disclose themselves by displaying their qualities<sup>2</sup>. These qualities are ‘produced out of virtual<sup>3</sup> structure as “local manifestations” [...] events, actions or activities on the part of objects’ (Bryant, 2011, p. 31).
- Like Leibniz’s (2007 [1714]) windowless monads, they are operationally closed ‘such that they constitute their own relation and openness to their environment<sup>4</sup>. Relations between objects are accounted for by the manner in which objects transform perturbations from other objects into information or events that select system-states. These information-events [...] are [...] among the agencies that preside over the production of local manifestations in objects’ (Bryant, 2011, p. 31). (The concept of information will be explained below.)

---

<sup>2</sup> Bryant refers to Aristotle when developing the relationship between the substance and its quality.

<sup>3</sup> Bryant refers to Deleuze when talking about virtualities.

<sup>4</sup> Bryant refers to Luhmann when speaking of the system, environment, and operation of closure.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

Taking a narrower view, and according to the Object Oriented Ontology (OOO) as presented by Bryant (2011), the rhizomatic city planners have to deal with can then be more precisely conceived as subjectless, composed of monadic bodies (objects), and characterised more by non-communication than communication, more by closure than openness. It is a reality where the assembling bodies (or objects) are constantly withdrawing from mutual relationships in order to maintain the real possibility to overcome fixed form and evolve into something else. At the same time, they are composing with one another, insofar as the very act of affecting one another does not threaten their survival (i.e. does not lead assemblages to decompose, which happens in case of bad affections).

In his *Ethics*, Spinoza defines the affect as follows: ‘by [affect] I mean the modifications of the body, whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications’ (Spinoza, 2009 [1677], part III definition III). It is through affections (the result of being affected by a body) that bodies assemble (compose) and separate. The former happens when the affection is amorally considered good, positive (in the sense of empowering) for the individual, and the latter bad, negative (in the sense of deprivation of energy, an escape from contamination due to the contact with other undesired bodies). If we follow this reasoning, good and bad cannot be dichotomous, predefined, moral categories. Rather they must be intensities, affective situated events that occur among bodies.

Indeed, returning to Bryant and Deleuze’s interpretation of Spinoza, all bodies have and interact through that which Spinoza calls affects. ‘And these affects consist of both an entity’s “receptivity” to other entities and the various capacities an entity has to act’ (Bryant, 2011, p. 117), where *capacity* has nothing to do with the idea of potential or possibility but is closer to the already mentioned Deleuzian concept of virtuality. This idea centres on the notion of being concrete without being actual, of preceding individuality only to become a different actual individual every time, one ready to compose with new, positive assemblages. And the city urban planning and policymaking aim at categorising through fixed moral values is always something else, something more than we can perceive, ready to disrupt the given order. ‘It is only through tracking local manifestations and their variations that we get any sense of the dark volcanic powers harboured’ (Bryant, 2011, p. 281) within urban bodies.

It is exactly by spotting these local manifestations in terms of affects that proper ethical discourse can emerge in urban planning and policymaking narratives. In fact, every object has more or less<sup>5</sup> moral value (Floridi, 2007), not simply for being (or doing) *good* or *bad*

---

<sup>5</sup> ‘The informational nature of an entity that may, in principle, act as a patient of a moral action, is the lowest threshold that constitutes its minimal intrinsic worth’ (Floridi, 2005, p. 13).

Tedeschi, M.

in the traditional categorical sense (Nietzsche, 2007 [1887]), but because of the above-mentioned Spinozist and Deleuzian interpretation of (the temporary result of) the composition of bodies or agreement with their nature<sup>6</sup>.

Strictly speaking, every action, not only those initiated by a human being, has ethical significance in itself (Maturana & Valera, 1980), because it affects (i.e., enters a positive or negative composition with) other objects. The ethics we are talking about here is not, as may have already been guessed, a teleological, dichotomous, human-centred (or self-centred) ethics. Rather it is a subjectless, radical ethics that works in the eventfulness of the city and 'must take account of the possibilities of ethical action in zones where subjects are not fully given<sup>7</sup>, but where the forces of stabilization, coding, territorialisation and domination at work to construct and configure modes of subjectivation can be negotiated, opposed, resisted, and transmuted. Insofar as ethics is concerned with subjectivity, the problem is not located in debates about how given moral subjects ought to act, but in the interplay of power between forces of domination and possibilities of freedom in the formation of subjects' (Frohmann, 2007, p. 273).

In other words, in urban planning we need an ethics that is able to acknowledge how bodies are affected, how they compose and decompose, what their lines of flight are, how good and bad might change their morally fixed definitions depending on the singular compositions / decompositions. This is an ethics rooted in the eventfulness of the city, as well as spatially situated. Ethics should stop being a human-centred subject, based on consciousness, but ought to be a result negotiated among bodies in space. But how can planners or policymakers reach decisions if they have to take every singularity into consideration? Isn't this going to lead to deadlock – an inability to act or to carry out projects?

As this study aims to show, this conception of ethics may certainly represent a huge challenge for urban policies, as well as for planning's rational systems. It might threaten their survival or mandate radically new rules and approaches. 'It would be planning

---

<sup>6</sup> 'When we encounter an external body that does not agree with our own (i.e., whose relation does not enter into composition with ours), it is as if the power of that body opposed our power, bringing about a subtraction or a fixation; when this occurs, it may be said that our power of acting is diminished or blocked, and that the corresponding passions are those of sadness. In the contrary case, when we encounter a body that agrees with our nature, one whose relation compounds with ours, we may say that its power is added to ours; the passions that affect us are those of joy, and our power of acting is increased or enhanced' (Deleuze, 1988, p. 27-28).

<sup>7</sup> See also Simondon (2007) and his process of individuation, where the individual is not pre-given, never final, but always not-concluded – a reservoir of potentials constantly open to possibilities of further individuation.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

that [...] devotes its energy to kindling fires for a generalized explosion, to building revolutionary connections among escaped elements [...] so that they can grow strong enough to achieve a breakthrough, to spill out beyond the limit of our current society and into a new land' (Purcell, 2013, p. 35). However, it may be worth taking this risk, starting to see reality from a completely different, radical perspective. Why?

Lured by the illusion (or urge) to control everything<sup>8</sup>, as well as by the need to build the *ideal city*, urban planning and policymaking nowadays interpret the bodies they have to deal with while making no attempt to understand their power to be something else, to become an actual part of their assemblages, to immerse themselves in their continuous movements of composing and decomposing. This is what is dangerous for a system that wants to appear stable and rational. Taking bodies as mere *means to an end* (Heidegger, 1977 [1954], p. 4), where the *means* are to reduce them to manageable and less problematic strata and *end* denotes nothing other than preserving themselves (i.e., urban policies and planning) as fully-working systems from a human-centred, rational perspective. Actually, every urban planning process can be seen as a system that selects and includes from outside only those elements that already exist inside itself (such as good and bad in a *moral* sense – or any such category). This is to ensure the system's survival (*conatus*) and to rule out any external threat by entering a potentially dangerous composition (Bryant, 2011).

What happens now in the case of urban planning and policymaking systems is exactly what Foucault (1978) describes in terms of power effects – which we might even call power *affects*. These systems are such that people should act as docile, passive bodies to be managed, normalised, and included, following standardised moral classification. Put another way, everything is but the means through which power is exercised and generates controllable events. However, being affected by external elements – even in a controlled, regulated manner – cannot but entail the possibility of putting the system at risk: indeed reality cannot be reduced to fixed categories, and any attempt to do so in most cases, simply, fails.

This is why it is worth the risk of taking a completely different approach, one whose binary logic (digital vs. real, inclusion vs. exclusion, good vs. bad, public vs. private, innovative vs. old, secure vs. insecure, integrated vs. marginal, formal vs. informal, rich vs. poor, etc.) is not defined once and for all but it is locally, ethically negotiated among urban assemblages. In this framework, the power (or capacity) to become something else is not normalised but is recognised and empowered. Hence, unpredictable events might be better received and

---

<sup>8</sup> 'Making policy is at best a very rough process. Neither social scientists, nor politicians, nor public administrators yet know enough about the social world to avoid repeated error in predicting the consequences of policy moves. A wise policy-maker consequently expects that his policies will achieve only part of what he hopes and at the same time will produce unanticipated consequences he would have preferred to avoid' (Lindblom, 1959, p. 86).

Tedeschi, M.

processed. And the whole urban planning and policymaking systems might more easily open up to new, unexpected possibilities for action.

In this context, what is the role of information? And why is it important to integrate information into a new *ontology* of the city?

### The role of information

‘For there to be information presupposes that there is a tension in the system of the being: the information must be inherent in a problematic, since it represents that by which the incompatibility within the unresolved system becomes an organizing dimension in its resolution. The information implies a change of phase in the system because it implies the existence of a primitive preindividual state that is individuated according to the dictates of the emerging organization’ (Simondon, 1992, p. 311)

The concept of information has been taking on increasing significance in recent decades, to such an extent that we are now officially in the so-called *information era*. However, information has ancient roots and has always played a central role in our lives and being in space. As often happens, the etymology of the term reveals hidden, powerful meanings: from the Latin *informare*, to inform means to shape, to form.

This idea is clearly echoed in Simondon’s (2009) line of thought, where information – far from being composed only of immaterial data or being limited to the sphere of technology or media – has primary ontological relevance to our being in the world. It has the actual power to dynamically, ontogenetically shape bodies and their space. In other words, according to Simondon, information takes full part in the process known as individuation, i.e. the being and becoming of bodies in their environment. For Simondon the individual (the body, using Deleuze’s term; the object, in Bryant’s words) is a unity of information system: when a point of the latter is *affected*, information is being spread throughout the organism and becomes a movement. In other words, information is what brings about the process of individuation of a body in its space (Simondon, 2005). It is the agency that, according to Bryant, controls the production of local manifestations in objects (i.e. the results of their virtual structure). In this conception, the individual is ‘grasped as a relative reality, a certain phase of being that supposes a preindividual reality<sup>9</sup>, and that, even after individuation, does not exist on its own, because individuation does not exhaust with one stroke the potentials of preindividual reality. Moreover, that which the individuation makes appear is not only the individual, but also the pair individual–environment. The individual is thus relative in two senses, both because it is not all of the being, and because it is the

---

<sup>9</sup> In a way, preindividual reality is in Simondon what virtuality is for Deleuze.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

result of a state of the being in which it existed neither as individual, nor as principle of individuation' (Simondon, 2009, p. 5).

Again, the Deleuzian idea of virtuality, as well as Bryant's conception of objects' inner power is echoed in Simondon's definition of the individual as non-finished reality always in becoming, ready to follow its line of flight, to change, and to be transformed into something else or compose with new assemblages. In this fashion, we do not analyse the subject in order to understand how it relates to the world outside. Rather, we focus on the process (of individuation), which ignores distinctions between subject and object. We try to grasp how the process itself involves 'different domains such as matter, life, mind and society' (Simondon, 1992, p. 312).

Urban planning and policymaking systems are rooted into the clear distinction (categorisation) subject vs. object as well as a static and moral conception of information. Hence, the philosophy of becoming represents by all means a challenge to the system. However, this challenge can be worth being taken on, as will be further discussed in the article.

If we delve into the city's becoming, we realise that its assemblages attract and actively take part in the process of bodies' individuation. By so doing, they relentlessly generates happenings, which in turn have ethical consequences in the urban realm.

'Ethics is the sense [*le sens*] of an individuation [...] is the sense whereby the interiority of an act expresses a sense in the world outside' (Simondon, 2005, p. 335, author's translation). Hence, urban space is intended as ontologically ethical in the sense that it constitutes the accustomed dwelling, the place bodies are used to. At the same time, it is ontogenetically part of the process of bodies' individuation. The city is and becomes bodies, and vice versa (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2015), in relentless movements of information exchange that characterise the very process of individuation of bodies in space. 'We must begin with individuation, with the being grasped at its center and in relation to its spatiality and its becoming, and not by a realized [...] individual faced with a world that is external to it' (Simondon, 1992, p. 310).

Let us take buildings: they individuate themselves into bodies (and vice versa). Hence, whatever shape space may take, the very shaping will eventually (in ethically and amorally good or bad ways) affect the bodies that are meant to compose with it (Deleuze, 1988).

Specifically, let us now consider a space that is classified as dangerous, as an actual threat to safety and security. For instance, many social housing estates, in London, are either considered too run-down to be worth repairing, or are morally stigmatised as criminal (Greater London Authority, Mayor of London, 2005). So do bodies that live there, as a

Tedeschi, M.

consequence. In order to build the utopia of the perfectly secure city (Gunder & Hillier, 2009), which urban planning and policymaking are striving to achieve, all these moral stigmatisations are slowly making social housing disappear. In fact, regeneration is gradually reducing the number of social housing units and the amount of public space, which is also considered ontologically dangerous. Hence, it is constantly under surveillance and, when possible, normalised and framed into rules to design out crime (open spaces, CCTV cameras everywhere, no blind spots, lightning, etc.).

In other words, spaces that play a central role in the process of individuation (of becoming bodies in the environment) are either disappearing or dramatically changing shape. These new-fangled, normalised spaces, in turn, do have a power of individuation. Such power, however, does not include elements like disorder, irregularity, and unpredictability. These spaces are brought about by urban planning's fixed, moral classifications. As such, they do attract normalised bodies, eventually doomed to be afraid of what is different or unexpected (Minton, 2006), in a way that it is still underestimated in the planning field, not fully grasped, and yet to be accurately studied.

However, what happens in reality, beyond these stigmatising narratives and attempts to frame space? As a matter of fact, assemblages of bodies and space actually become criminal (or not) depending on situated information exchanged and layered over time. This exchange is the fuel of the process of individuation. It is ontologically ethical (and amoral) and territorial. It may affect and individuate bodies in space in various ways, depending on the circumstances.

Criminals may individuate and compose with a non-controlling / non-controlled space, be it more or less degraded, because it (apparently) increases their power to act<sup>10</sup>. At the same time, low-income residents may compose with that very same space (for example social housing estates), because it is the only space presently affordable to them. Again, in social housing we may find middle-class residents as well, who bought their houses years ago at a great discount through Thatcher's *Right to Buy* policy.

In a nutshell, every single building is multiple, heterogeneous yet unique, always in becoming – and, far from being morally repellent (bad), might assemble in different and unexpected ways with each of the residents. Phrased differently, information exchange between bodies and space is ontogenetic, heterogeneous/multiple, affective, ethical, and situated – in contrast to the moral and fixed judgements (stigma) that have stuck to public spaces and social housing for decades.

---

<sup>10</sup> We are not going to develop here the whole Spinozist theory of how the amoral ethics has to be applied to offenders.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

Planning narratives, media/technologies, and local authorities keep fuelling this stigma (i.e. through information fixed / stratified into data) of social housing and (public) space as nests of crime – and anti-social behaviour (ASB), without realising to what extent these narratives, being powerful collections of stratified and decontextualized information, may contribute to actually affecting bodies living in these spaces and their process of individuation, as well as increasing socio-spatial divisions and prejudices.

In London's case both local authorities and the media need such narratives in order to gain and keep full control over space (this is their *conatus*). Full control is maintained by first criminalising (scapegoating) space and then despatialising it, to eventually assure citizens a false sense of security through an embodied utopia. To despatialise space means to modify its power of individuation, its ethical eventfulness by decontextualizing situated and affective information exchanged among assemblages of urban bodies and space, so as to annihilate what is already morally and categorically defined as not controllable, criminal or degraded (which, sometimes, might be an actual part of a space's singularity and character).

This procedure, far from being neutral, affects bodies that are actual parts of these spaces, in the sense that their process of individuation cannot help being modified. Consequently, they may become normalised bodies. On the other hand, trying to control their lines of flight and depriving them of their power to act might provide a false sense of security that, in the long term, is doomed to increase (in)tolerance towards other bodies, fear of what is different, not normalised or the like.

What consequences do these ideas have? First, we can no longer rely on the subject/object dichotomy urban planning and policymaking systems are rooted into. Once this division is overcome, every change in the space has direct and powerful effects (in the sense of affects) on bodies – and, of course, vice versa.

Second, these alterations in bodies and spaces are brought about by the exchange of information between them. Information 'is the tension between two disparate realities [...] is a demand for individuation, for the passage from a metastable system to a stable system; it is never a given thing [...] Information can only be inherent to a problematic; it is that by which the incompatibility of the non-resolved system becomes an organizing dimension in the resolution [...] An information can be said to always be in the present, current, because it is the direction [*sens*] according to which a system individuates itself' (Simondon, 2009, pp. 9-10).

Phrased another way, information is produced spatially every time two or more bodies meet (affecting each other) and compose. It is the dynamical, ethical and situated result of every assemblage. In this sense, if it is stratified, much as a despatialised ethics is transformed into the fixed and moral categories of good and evil (Deleuze, 1988),

Tedeschi, M.

information automatically becomes something else, shorn of its situated and eventful role, and acquires the shape of *data*.

In other words, it becomes fully part of the regimes of information we live in (Elichirigoity, 2007) or, to be more specific, of the control societies (Deleuze, 1995) as entities that detect and modulate these ‘flows of desire, taste, affect<sup>11</sup>, and other transient personal attributes, but [are] abstracted from individuals and controlled by techniques of aggregation’ (Frohmann, 2007, p. 274). Indeed, according to Deleuze, ‘individuals have become “*dividuals*,” and masses, samples, data, markets and “*banks*” (Deleuze, 1995, p. 5).

Here the data are but interfaces, relentlessly, dynamically producing and fixing themselves in layers of interaction among bodies. The focus here is on how flows of data (interpreting data as an externalisation and stratification of ethical affections through information) operate through bodies, how affective and situated activities, at different levels, contribute to (or are spoiled by) the engineering of actions and policies, and how after-event informational traces, far from disappearing, shape the bodies and their process of individuation (Iliadis, 2013) – and are crystallised in layers of raw data, maps, and statistics that may have, in turn, a specific impact over the whole city.

Technology might play an important role in developing and reengineering these layers, greatly contributing to their steadiness over time and their spread over space: indeed, technology makes informational traces always visible and de-localised, thus having impact (by adding layers) on the very atmosphere of the urban realm. As already mentioned, stigma is a clear example of fixed / stratified information, which has visible consequences on urban spaces and bodies. The former are often regenerated as a result of stigma, whereas bodies can be morally judged and classified on the basis of the (either good or bad) place where they live.

As a matter of fact, just as cities need to guarantee their own good, these regimes (control societies), whose urban planning and policymaking are an actual part, in order to guarantee their continued survival as well-reasoned and efficient systems that control cities, do not intend the flows of information in themselves – as the temporary result of assemblages’ becoming. Instead, falling back on a teleological and self-centred ethics, such regimes treat these flows as the means to an end (Latour, 2002), namely, so as to exercise their own pervasive power. Regimes’ purpose is exactly to use the affects, as well as the ontologically generated information, to include, aggregate, and normalise (Foucault, 1978) bodies and space.

---

<sup>11</sup> Affect is here intended not in the Deleuzian sense, but in the more common sense of emotion.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

As a result, the new ethics needed for the regimes of information / control societies is an ethics strong enough to ‘tear ourselves away from instrumentality, reaffirm the sovereignty of ends, rediscover Being’ (Latour, 2002), as well as to pinpoint irretrievable ruptures, absences, non-acting, and insufficiencies, as well as non-being – i.e. places that act excluded from ongoing inclusive and normalising processes.

Accepting the ontogenetic role of information, overcoming the subject vs. object separation as well as the predefined moral understanding of the urban realm are serious challenges for urban planning and policymaking rational systems. However, they are needed in order for the latter to stand a chance at dealing with the city’s unpredictable outcomes and its ability of always redefining itself as something different from the given order. Also, these challenges can help the system empower urban bodies’ process of individuation and becoming, instead of only trying to normalise it as potential source of disorder to avoid at all costs.

### Conclusions

This study explored an ethical approach to urban planning, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy of becoming. The theoretical analysis resulted in these questions: how can a subjectless ethics influence urban planning and policymaking and their relationship with the (rhizomatic) city? What policymakers actually do when classifying and categorising is to exclude reality and proceed using *traditional* ethics, which does not venture into grasping in-between categories but concentrates solely on the aforementioned dichotomies of digital vs. real, inclusion vs. exclusion, good vs. bad, public vs. private, innovative vs. old, secure vs. insecure, integrated vs. marginal, and – last but not least – subject vs. object dualism.

In order for the policy analyst to become aware of things as such, to let these things be, and to act according to their nature, while also minimising bias, what is needed is a non-categorical, non-finalistic, non-human-centred approach. Such an approach would shed new light on failures in (urban) planning, by ethically (in the Spinozist sense) recognising them not as sheer faults to *normalise* at all costs, but as something that might affectively combine with new, un-predictable occurrences into (*good*) assemblages of becoming-interventions.

Therefore, what policymakers and planners ought to do is to ethically and amorally challenge the very system’s rational *conatus*. They could do this by using situated information, the eventfulness of the urban space, and its intrinsic power to be something else, to map urban events in rhizomatic, non-dichotomous ways that open up new possibilities for action.

Tedeschi, M.

## References

- › Amin, A., & Thrift, N. (2002). *Reimagining the urban*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- › Anderson, B., Kearnes, M., McFarlane, C. & Swanton, D. (2012). On assemblages and geography. *Dialogues in Human Geography*. 2(2): 171-189.
- › Ansaloni, F., & Tedeschi, M. (2015). Ethics and Spatial Justice: Unfolding Non-Linear Possibilities for Planning Action. *Planning Theory*, advanced online publication. DOI: 10.1177/1473095215591676.
- › Bryant, L. (2011). *The Democracy of Objects*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Open Humanities Press/MPublishing.
- › De Landa, M. (2013). *A New Philosophy of Society*. London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.
- › Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- › Deleuze, G. (1988). *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Publishers.
- › Deleuze, G. (1995). *Negotiations, 1972–1990*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- › Elichirigoity, F. (2007). The Internet, Information Machines, and the Technologies of the Self. In Capurro, R., Frübauer, J., & Hausmanninger, T. (Ed.), *Localizing the Internet: Ethical Issues in Intercultural Perspective* (pp. 289-300). Munich, Germany: Fink.
- › Farias, I. (2009). Decentering the Object of Urban Studies. In Farias, I. & Bender, T. (Ed.), *Urban Assemblages. How Actor-Network-Theory Changes Urban Studies* (pp. 1-24). New York, NY: Routledge.
- › Floridi, L. (2005). Information ethics, its nature and scope. *Computers and Society*. 35(2): 3-21.
- › Floridi, L. (2007). Global Information Ethics: The Importance of Being Environmentally Earnest. *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction*. 3(3): 1-11.
- › Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction – Volume 1*. New York, NY: Vintage.
- › Frohmann, B. (2007). Subjectivity and Information Ethics. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*. 59(2): 267-277.
- › Graham, S., & Marvin, S. (2001). *Splintering Urbanism*. London, UK: Routledge.
- › Greater London Authority, Mayor of London (2005). *The London Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2005-2008*. London, UK: Greater London Authority.
- › Gunder, M., & Hillier, J. (2009). *Planning in Ten Words or Less*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.
- › Heidegger, M. (1977 [1954]). *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*. London, UK; New York, NY: Garland Publishing.
- › Hillier, J., & Abrahamas, G. (2013). *Deleuze and Guattari: Jean Hillier in Conversation with Gareth Abrahams*. Wroclaw, Poland: Association of European Schools of Planning.
- › Hirshman, A. (1967). The Principle of the Hiding Hand. *National Affairs*. 6: 10-23.

## TOWARDS AN ETHICAL TURN IN URBAN STUDIES: ON THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY CITIES

- › Iliadis, A. (2013). Informational Ontology: the Meaning of Gilbert Simondon's Concept of Individuation. *communication +1*. 2(5): article 5.
- › Latour, B. (2002). Morality and Technology: the Ends of the Means. *Theory, Culture and Society*. 19(5/6): 247-260.
- › Latour, B. (2005). *Reassembling the Social*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- › Leibniz, G.W. (2007 [1714]). Monadology. Retrieved April 24, 2015, from <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/leibniz1714b.pdf>
- › Lindblom, C.E. (1959). The Science of "Muddling Through". *Public Administration Review*. 19(2): 79-88.
- › Maturana, H., & Valera, F. (1980 [1973]). Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of the Living. In Cohen, R.S., & Wartofsky, M.W. (Ed.), *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol. 42*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: D. Reidel Publishing Co.
- › Minton, A. (2006). *The privatisation of public space*. London, UK: The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.
- › Nietzsche, F. (2007 [1887]). *On the Genealogy of Morality*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- › Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, A. (2015). *Spatial Justice: Body, Lawscape, Atmosphere*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, UK; New York, NY: Routledge.
- › Proclus, Tarrant, H., & Baltzly, D. (2007). *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus. Volume III Book 3 Part I: Proclus on the World's Body*. Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- › Purcell, M. (2013). A new land: Deleuze and Guattari and planning. *Planning Theory and Practice*. 14(1): 20-38.
- › Simondon, G. (1992). The Genesis of the Individual. In Crary, J., & Kwinter, S. (Eds.), *Incorporations* (pp. 297-319). New York, NY: Zone Books.
- › Simondon, G. (2005). *L'individuation à la lumière des notions de forme et d'information*. Grenoble, France: Millon.
- › Simondon, G. (2007). *L'individuation psychique et collective: A la lumière des notions de Forme, Information, Potentiel et Métastabilité*. Paris, France: Aubier.
- › Simondon, G. (2009). The position of the problem of ontogenesis. *Parrhesia*. 7: 4-16.
- › Spinoza, B. (2009 [1677]). The Ethics (Ethica More Geometrico Demonstrata). Project Gutenberg. Retrieved April 24, 2015, from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3800/3800-h/3800-h.htm>
- › Tarde, G. (2000 [1898]). *Social Laws: An Outline of Sociology*. Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books.

# HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

Geoff Boeing

University of California – Berkeley, USA

The city of Honolulu, Hawaii is currently planning and developing a new rail transit system. While Honolulu has supportive density and topography for rail transit, questions remain about its ability to effectively integrate urban design and accessibility across the system. Every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip from origins and to destinations: transportation planning must account for pedestrian safety, comfort, and access. Ildefons Cerdà's 19<sup>th</sup> century utopian plan for Barcelona's Eixample district produced a renowned, livable urban form. The Eixample, with its well-integrated rail transit, serves as a model of urban design, land use, transportation planning, and pedestrian-scaled streets working in synergy to produce accessibility. This study discusses the urban form of Honolulu and the history and planning of its new rail transit system. Then it reviews the history of Cerdà's plan for the Eixample and discusses its urban form and performance today. Finally it draws several lessons from Barcelona's urban design, accessibility, and rail transit planning and critically discusses their applicability to policy and design in Honolulu. This discussion is situated within wider debates around livable cities and social justice as it contributes several form and design lessons to the livability and accessibility literature while identifying potential concerns with privatization and displacement.

*Keywords:* Honolulu, Barcelona, Cerdà, accessibility, rail transit, urban design

Please cite this article as: Boeing, G., Honolulu Rail Transit: International Lessons from Barcelona in Linking Urban Form, Design, and Transportation *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.3vol.02>

Boeing, G.

## Introduction

The Honolulu urban area is the fourth densest in the United States, trailing only those of Los Angeles, San Francisco-San Jose, and New York. Honolulu was the most traffic-congested U.S. city in 2011, ahead of stalwarts like Los Angeles and San Francisco (INRIX 2012). Yet unlike Los Angeles and San Francisco, Honolulu has not had an operational rail transit system to serve as an alternative to automobility since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Simpson and Brizzdle 2000). It is, however, currently developing one. Honolulu's topography constrains the city to a long corridor along the coast, making rail development a sensible alternative. However, the new rail project may face challenges in integration and pedestrian access, given entrenched automobility and a sprawling urban periphery. Different researchers have theorized about investing in rail transit and its place within the complex transportation-land use connection. Cervero (1998) highlights three key preconditions for successful, sustainable rail transit systems: a strong city center, dense residential development, and long corridors of development in which to focus the rail lines. Downs (2004) also stresses the importance of density in rail catchment areas. Honolulu is presently a city dominated by the automobile (Kim 2010): despite its overall density, its periphery sprawls and its roads suffer from crippling congestion. Integration from institutional, operational, and physical perspectives is crucial for public transportation to compete with the automobile (Preston 2012). Integrating rail transit means luring drivers out of their cars (with carrots) and making drivers pay the full social cost of automobility (with sticks). It means strategic land use policy to shift origin-destination patterns and urban growth toward rail stations (Cervero 1998). Finally, it means supporting pedestrian access to transit, origins, and destinations through urban design and land use policy that fosters walkability (Lo et al. 2008). Every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip *from* origins and *to* destinations: transportation planning must account for pedestrian safety, comfort, and accessibility.

This discussion is thus inherently situated within wider debates around livable cities. Livability has been theorized in innumerable ways since the dawn of urban planning. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ildefons Cerdà – the father of modern Barcelona – developed a utopian theory of planning that emphasized the redistribution and homogenization of space to redistribute social differences and promote equality (Cerdà 1867). This theory of livability and the physical methods used to pursue it had enormous impacts on the urban form and human experience in Barcelona (Neuman 2011). Livability in the urban design literature today is commonly theorized as a bundle of interrelated characteristics linked to physical design that promote equity, stability, safety, comfort, walkability, accessibility, and community (Macdonald 2005; Bosselmann 2008). Livability is in turn nested within even broader debates around urban sustainability and justice, as it is inextricably dependent on the city's ability to meet all of its residents' ongoing needs into the future (Boeing et al. 2014). Several planning models – some competing, some complimentary – have taken

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

up the mantle of livability in the U.S. today, including smart growth, the new urbanism, traditional neighborhood development, and transit-oriented development. Each promotes a compact urban form, walkability, and improved access to transit. Finally, issues of social justice cannot be ignored in the theorization of livability, as uneven distributions of power, capital, and privilege inevitably cloud the question of livability for whom and at the expense of whom (Evans 2002; Harvey 2010).

This article discusses policy and design lessons for Honolulu by examining the integration of rail into the livable urban form of Barcelona. It uses Barcelona’s Eixample district – with its renowned walkability, well-integrated rail transit, and compact urban form – as a model of livability through design, density, land use, and pedestrian-scaled streets. Though their planning and political contexts differ in some ways, this study identifies several significant and transferable form and design lessons from the Eixample, including compact block sizes and height-to-width ratios that provide a sense of enclosure; streetscaping that balances visual complexity and order; mixed land uses; transit station assimilation into the urban fabric; and pedestrian equality within the circulation network. It also identifies potential concerns with affordability, privatization, and displacement, contributing to the livability and accessibility literature as well as to debates around social justice within it (Szibbo 2016).

In the following section, this article introduces the Honolulu context, including its physical and cultural settings, built environment, and transportation system. This includes a history of Hawaiian autocratism and failed rail starts, as well as the current rail transit plans in Honolulu. Next it examines Barcelona’s urban form – particularly Cerdà’s top-down design of the Eixample district – and how it integrates rail transit with supportive pedestrian design and policy. Finally it discusses these findings – drawing several lessons from Barcelona’s urban design, accessibility, and rail transit planning – and critically reflects on their applicability to policy and design in Honolulu.

### Honolulu and Rail Transit

*Figure 1:  
The island of Oahu.  
The Honolulu  
metropolitan area is  
the urbanized region  
along the entire  
southern (bottom)  
portion of the island.  
Source: Google  
Earth.*



Boeing, G.

Honolulu’s transportation system is shaped by the region’s natural, built, and sociodemographic characteristics. Honolulu is the largest city in Hawaii and the most remote major city in the world (Table 1). Located on the southern edge of the island of Oahu, metropolitan Honolulu is a long narrow strip of urban development pinned between the mountains and the sea. To the south is the Pacific Ocean. To the north lie the Ko’olau mountain range and the Wai’anae mountain range, separated by the broad valley of the central Oahu plain between them, as shown in Figure 1. Urban development (and thus the transportation system) is constrained to a linear strip by the ocean and the mountains, although some development snakes its way up hillsides, through canyons, and along the central Oahu plain, as seen in Figure 2. Overall, the island of Oahu contains about 75 percent of Hawaii’s population, 80 percent of which resides in the Honolulu metropolitan area.

**Table 1:**  
*The most remote major cities in the world, by the great circle distance to the nearest city with at least 500,000 residents.*

Rank	City	Nearest Large City	Distance (km)
1	Honolulu, U.S.	San Francisco, U.S.	3,854
2	Auckland, New Zealand	Sydney, Australia	2,156
3	Perth, Australia	Adelaide, Australia	2,131
4	Anchorage, U.S.	Vancouver, Canada	2,129

Due to its pleasant climate (National Weather Service 2014), diverse economy (Advameg 2009), attractive scenery, and relative wealth, Honolulu’s population grew by an order of magnitude during the twentieth century (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Due to its geographical constraints, the urban development to accommodate this influx has necessarily been dense by American standards: Honolulu is the fourth densest large urban area in the U.S. (Table 2) and has the nation’s highest residential densities (Cervero and Duncan 2002). Further, it is a very diverse, white-minority city (U.S. Census Bureau 2010).

**Figure 2:**  
*Honolulu is constrained by the mountains and the sea, and the city forms a linear corridor along Oahu’s south coast. Source: Google Earth.*



## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

The built environment in Honolulu is dense, spatially linear, and modern, with the fourth most high-rises of any U.S. city (Emporis 2014). It is also the most expensive metropolitan area in the country by regional price parity (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2014) and the second most expensive housing rental market (Gomes 2010). Race and class have come to the surface in recent gentrification debates as longtime residents and native Hawaiians are displaced from suddenly trendy districts by newcomers from the mainland and overseas. For instance, the formerly industrial Kakaako neighborhood – near downtown and along the proposed light rail alignment – was re-zoned residential/commercial in 1982 and has since seen a blitz of high-rise development and skyrocketing land values (Kavcic 2014). Issues of affordability, race, class, and social justice now indicate a challenge in critically engaging structures of power and capital in the pursuit of livability. Rising costs in newly thriving neighborhoods have pushed poorer, longtime residents – many of whom are native Hawaiian – toward the now-sprawling urban periphery in search of less expensive housing options.

**Table 2:**  
The top four U.S. urban areas (among those with at least 100,000 people) by population density, according to the 2010 U.S. census. Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Rank	Urban Area	2010 Pop.	Land Area (sq km)	Density (per sq km)
1	Los Angeles	12,150,996	4,496	2,703
2	San Francisco-San Jose	4,945,708	2,098	2,357
3	New York	18,351,295	8,935	2,054
4	Honolulu	802,459	440	1,824

Indeed, despite its overall density, Honolulu’s current transportation system is quite auto-oriented like most other American metropolises. In 2000, Hawaii had approximately 744,000 cars, light trucks, and motorcycles compared to a civilian workforce of only 595,000 persons (Kim 2010). There is scant room available on its roads for all these vehicles, and as mentioned earlier, Honolulu ranked as the most traffic-congested city in the U.S. in 2011. The ensuing time costs, air pollution, pedestrian risks, and degraded urban design all harm livability for the sake of automobility. Honolulu’s bus system – ‘TheBus’ – however has been a bright spot, providing a transit route within 0.8 kilometers of over 95% of the island’s population. In 2010, it had the 6<sup>th</sup> highest ridership per capita in the U.S. and the lowest cost per passenger kilometer (Roman 2010). To complement this bus system, Honolulu officials recently began developing the first modern rail transit system in Hawaii.

### **Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project**

Honolulu is currently the densest urban area in the U.S. that lacks rail transit. Its traffic congestion, population density, topographical constraints, and mild climate have long made it an intriguing candidate for rail. Indeed, its politicians have tried – and failed

Boeing, G.

until now – to build rail transit over the past 50 years. In 1966, Mayor Neil Blaisdell first proposed commuter rail as a solution to crippling workday traffic congestion. Mayor Frank Fasi initiated planning studies in 1977 for a rail project that eventually came to be known as Honolulu Area Rapid Transit and later the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation (HART). However, President Ronald Reagan cut federal mass transit funding in the 1980s, leading to the project’s cancellation in 1981. It was resumed in 1986, only to be permanently terminated by a 1992 city council vote against the tax increase needed to fund it (Epler 2014). Between 1994 and 2004, Mayor Jeremy Harris unsuccessfully pursued a bus rapid transit (BRT) project for the city (Levine 2012). Finally, Mufi Hannemann began the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project shortly after his 2004 election as mayor. Political battles raged in its wake (Genadio and Singh 2010). Detractors called for toll lanes or BRT instead, while proponents cited the democratic obligation to uphold a 2008 vote in favor of rail (Epler 2014). After several years of delays, ballots, petitions, voter referendums, and lawsuits, the rail project finally broke ground on February 22, 2011 (Park 2011).

**Figure 3:**  
Route map of the proposed Honolulu rail transit system.  
Source: Honolulu Rail Transit. Used with permission.



The Honolulu Rail Project today is a 32-kilometer, \$5.2 billion, elevated, driverless, rapid-transit light rail line connecting the western suburb of East Kapolei through Honolulu International Airport to downtown and on to the Ala Moana Center in the southeast. This route, shown in Figure 3, is expected to be completed by 2019. Future extensions are currently planned to also connect the University of Hawaii-Manoa and the posh, touristy Waikiki neighborhood at a later date (Genadio and Singh 2010; Epler 2014). Currently, about 73 percent of the total daily trips on Oahu originate between Kapolei and Waikiki. This corridor covers a significant portion of the city, alone containing over 60 percent of the entire island’s population and 80 percent of its jobs. Nearly 100,000 people are forecast to ride the train daily, and individual trains will each hold over 300 people, departing every three minutes during rush hour (Epler 2014).

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

### *Walkability and Pedestrian Access*

Every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip *from* origins and *to* destinations. Honolulu's pedestrian and cyclist mode shares are currently suppressed by low peripheral housing costs inducing sprawl and a traditionally automobile-centric lifestyle in less urbanized areas. Additional and longer car trips are necessitated by Hawaii having the highest rate of private school attendance in the nation: at 16%, it is double the national average of 8%, and an astonishing 38% of students in Honolulu attend a private school (Wong 2014). Further, large swaths of Honolulu's current pedestrian street-level environment often poorly support livability and Hawaii consistently leads the nation in vehicular fatalities of elderly pedestrians (Wong 2012). The statewide pedestrian master plan highlights several areas of concern for pedestrians in Honolulu (State of Hawaii 2013a). These include sidewalk gaps, intersections without crosswalks, several unsignalized pedestrian crosswalks, intersections with high rates of pedestrian collisions, and districts with high concentrations of vulnerable populations, such as children and the elderly, who cannot drive.

At several intersections in Honolulu, the majority of pedestrian collisions occur while pedestrians are *within* the crosswalk. To improve walkability, the master plan includes a new pedestrian toolbox that recommends pedestrian and driver safety education programs, complete streets design, neighborhood design, maintenance, enforcement, and new physical guidelines for sidewalks, crosswalks, and intersections. Of particular interest, the toolbox addresses pedestrian access to transit through 'best practices for creating a seamless connection between pedestrian and transit modes of transportation' (ibid., p. 80). This covers the following topics: the importance of pedestrian access to transit; accessibility; transit in Hawaii; transit compatible planning and site design; coordination between agencies; transit-oriented development; transit stop locations; pedestrian routes to transit; intersections and crossings near transit; designing and improving transit facilities for good pedestrian access (State of Hawaii 2013b). Further, recent transit-oriented development proposals for Kakaako and Ala Moana – central neighborhoods just southeast of downtown – explicitly incorporate walkability, density, and complete streets into the planning of the light rail transit stations (RTKL Associates et al. 2014; Hawaii Community Development Authority 2015). Recent planning efforts focusing on infill, connectivity, and height and density bonuses are also promising.

These plans and toolbox present an excellent opportunity for Honolulu to improve its livability and pedestrian access to transit. Its current autocentrism poses dangers to pedestrians and promotes automobility at the expense of a more livable and balanced transportation mode split. Nevertheless, Honolulu faces several challenges in integrating its new rail system into the urban fabric. Every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip and its current pedestrian environment is less than ideal. The American Institute

Boeing, G.

of Architects (AIA) argues that the city's new elevated rail will only exacerbate the poor walking environment and harm livability by creating a cluttered and unattractive streetscape (AIA Honolulu 2011). Stakeholders have raised concerns about the aesthetics of the elevated trackway and the noise of passing trains (Camay et al. 2012). Supportive land use and urban design policy could be improved to better knit rail transit into the existing urban form and lifestyle – and to this end, we next consider how Barcelona integrates its transit system with a pleasant walking environment, supportive land use, and appealing urban design.

### Barcelona: Cerdà's Utopia?

Like Honolulu, Barcelona has a warm temperate climate and a large tourist industry (O'Sullivan 2014). It is similarly constrained by the Serra de Collserola mountain range on one side and the Mediterranean Sea on the other. Its urban area density of 2,356 persons per square kilometer (Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya 2014) would rank as the third densest in the U.S. – recall that Honolulu is currently fourth. Furthermore, Barcelona, like Honolulu, is a wealthy city with high per capita income. Barcelona is widely considered to be one of the world's most livable cities by urban designers, architects, and tourists. Its large Eixample district, designed in the 1850s according to the single-minded vision of planner Ildefons Cerdà, is particularly revelatory for our analysis. 'Barcelona today is unique; no other major European city owes its urban personality to the influence of a single individual... traffic flows better than in other cities of similar size, natural sunlighting, air circulation, and sanitation are better – ultimately, urban development is more rational' (Ordóñez 1996, p. 20).

#### *Planning and Design of the Eixample*

Cerdà designed the Eixample, meaning *extension* or *enlargement* in Catalan, in the 1850s when the medieval city walls around Barcelona's old town were torn down (Fernandez 2008; Casellas 2009). His utopian socialist planning ideology is encapsulated in his *General Theory of Urbanization* (Cerdà 1867). Cerdà theorized urbanism as a potentially equalizing force in a society suffering from inequality, and his key tool wielded toward this end was a rationalist and homogenous redistribution of space. He wanted this new city to be spacious, hygienic, and well-ventilated, with accessible green spaces woven throughout to improve urban livability particularly for the poor (Soria Y Puig 1995). The crowded, unsanitary old town had experienced several cholera epidemics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its population density (900 people per hectare) far exceeded those of London (100 people per hectare) or Paris and Madrid (300 people per hectare) (Serratos 1996). Cerdà's plan spread out the city in a spatially homogenous manner intended to promote livability through social equality and uniformity.

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

**Figure 4:**  
*The Eixample district  
from the air. "Eixam-  
ple desde el avión"  
by alhzeia. Creative  
Commons BY-SA 2.0.  
Available at  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ilak/>.  
Accessed:  
29/01/2016.*



The Eixample is perhaps best characterized by its street pattern, seen in Figure 4. The grid's order and uniformity illustrate Cerdà's utopian theory of spatial redistribution to reduce inequalities (Illas 2012). While the old town comprises a dense, narrow, winding street network, the Eixample's streets are 20 meters wide and form unique octagonal blocks chamfered at each intersection. Each block is fairly compact at 113 x 113 meters and the grid is orthogonal and homogenous, punctuated only by a couple of major cross-cutting diagonal streets. Land use throughout the district is multifunctionalist and the building form is very consistent, characterized by perimeter blocks of approximately six-story buildings, about 20 meters in height, surrounding interior courtyards (Julia i Torne 1996). Though Cerdà sought a low-density urban form to reduce crowding, today's Eixample is considerably higher density due to ensuing and ongoing political and market pressures to build up (Cabre et al. 1996).

Cerdà was an early pioneer of both multimodal and intermodal transportation (Neuman 2009). His streets would explicitly accommodate casually strolling pedestrians, pedestrians carrying loads of goods, horse-drawn carriages, and a (never-realized) steam rail system (Magrinya 1996b). He assigned equal importance to traffic along the streets and to traffic entering and exiting buildings because he believed that 'mobility is only justified if it has a point of departure and a destination' (Serratosa 1996, p. 53). This early stance on the modern-day mobility versus accessibility debate (e.g., Levine et al. 2012) underscores the value Cerdà placed on pedestrian access in the Eixample. He also improved the pedestrian experience in the Eixample by concealing service networks such as water, sanitation, electricity, telegraph lines, and railways. In many cities, the street scene is visually cluttered with a mess of wires, poles, and towers. Cerdà deliberately concealed these service networks to create a more pleasant visual atmosphere for people spending time along his district's streets (Magrinya 1996a). The present-day undergrounded metro also circumvents the visual blight of overhead electricity wires or elevated tracks. Furthermore, the flexibility of Cerdà's scheme has been crucial as the Eixample has evolved in density

Boeing, G.

and transportation technology, accommodating rail transit and automobiles over time as each subsequent mode was invented and then popularized (Perez et al. 2009; Guardia et al. 2010).

### *The Eixample Today*

The Eixample provides a valuable lesson in integrating transit with pedestrian access. Its relatively high density is conducive to ridership for rail transit and its thoughtful urban design and streetscaping make for pleasant walking trips between origins, public transit, and destinations. Specific supportive urban design features include wide sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly octagonal intersections. The streetscape includes mature street trees with broad canopies, ground floor retail, and consistent architectural quality with a high degree of visual complexity. Public furniture, public art, and elemental structures that protect residents from noise and pollution are ubiquitous parts of this highly livable pedestrian environment (Broto 2010).

Urban design scholar Allan Jacobs (1995) praises the livability of the Passeig de Gràcia, a major north-south boulevard running through the center of the Eixample in his book *Great Streets*. He specifically cites the 11-meter wide sidewalks and double row plantings of large plane trees, four to five stories tall, on either side of the roadway. The sidewalks are well-shaded by the massive, continuous tree canopy and they are paved with beautifully-detailed, Gaudí-designed tiles. These pedestrian areas are well-lit at night with attractive wrought-iron street lights. There are many Gaudí benches, positioned to face the public walkway. The buildings present a consistent yet diverse face to the public and feature many small stores with large windows to integrate them into the public realm. Shop entrances are typically less than 8 meters apart. In other words, the Passeig de Gràcia was well-designed for people to walk, and perhaps most germane to this discussion, it is well-integrated with rail transit: a metro line runs directly beneath this boulevard.

Metro construction in Barcelona began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Busquets 2005). Today the city has three tram systems plus the metro system which consists of 163 stations and 11 lines that run underground in the central district but above ground in the suburbs. In the Eixample, transit stations are well-integrated into their block's context. They do not interrupt the urban form with parking lots, barren plazas, or elevated tracks but are rather tucked discretely right into the midst of numerous origin and destination points. Furthermore, the rail lines do not follow rights of way chosen only because they posed a path of least resistance to engineers. Rather, they traverse dense, high-amenity areas like the Passeig de Gràcia to knit the city together. Pedestrian access is also supported by a mixture of land uses across the district: residences, retail, professional offices, and cultural landmarks are distributed throughout the Eixample. Today, Barcelona has a transit mode share of 35 percent – very high for a wealthy Western city (Newman et al. 2009).

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

Much of the Eixample's urban form, functionality, and livability today can be attributed to the seeds sown by Cerdà 150 years ago, but his original plans were neither wholly without flaw nor wholly successful. Although today's post-industrial Barcelona is noted for its multifunctionality, the Eixample originally developed during the industrial era and Cerdà (e.g. 1867) did not set aside land for industry. Instead, factories located at the outskirts, drawing the working-class toward the periphery and hindering his socially egalitarian motives. Ealham (2014) argues that Cerdà's utopianism manifested itself as bourgeois urbanism, entrusting too much to market forces and allowing landowners to undermine the original egalitarian goal of the Eixample. Despite its utopian socialist underpinnings, Cerdà's theory of urbanism sidestepped class conflict by focusing on the redistribution of space, while ignoring wealth and the contradictions of capitalism (Epps 2001, Harvey 2010). His plan, rather, hinged on persuading 'government officials and property owners to invest in urbanization while maintaining their status quo' (Illas 2012, p. 137). An egalitarian pursuit of livability was undermined by power and wealth, and the development of the Eixample succumbed to the pressures of politics and capital. Cerdà's blocks were originally planned to be lower density and bounded on only three sides, with public green space filling the center and open to the street. Over time, however, developers loosened these land use controls and doubled the heights of these blocks while sealing them with buildings on all sides, thus privatizing the now-enclosed central green spaces (Doerr 2014). Many of these green spaces were further converted to private parking lots in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the considerable width of certain streets in the district – originally intended to improve the flow of sunlight and air – sometimes feels too well-suited to the automobile today.

Yet all in all, the Eixample has fared well over time. Despite critiques, it has maintained considerable social diversity with a working and middle class while avoiding the gentrified banality of other successful cities. Barcelona's urban form has a strong, coherent identity and is highly legible and comprehensible (Bohigas 2004). The district features tree-lined streets with high-quality architecture and pedestrian-scaled visual complexity to make the whole trip from origin to station to destination enjoyable. The Eixample has fairly short blocks, its streets are 20 meters wide, and its buildings tend to be about 20 meters tall – creating an approximately 1:1 height-to-width ratio. Lastly, its service networks of wires, pipes, and rails are concealed to reduce unpleasant visual clutter. Compactness, density, walkability, mass transit, and sustainability have long been integral to Barcelona's development (McDonough 2011). The Eixample integrates rail transit with pedestrian access by assimilating stations into the urban fabric and mixing land uses so that origins and destinations are near each other to foster walkability, and near rail stations to foster transit accessibility.

Boeing, G.

### Lessons in Linking Form, Design, and Transportation

Travel is a derived demand: outside of occasional joyrides and leisure strolls, people generally do not take a trip across town for the inherent sake of the trip itself. Rather, it is *access to things* that matters. Furthermore, every transit trip requires walking trips from the origin and to the destination. If these trips are unpleasant or poorly supported by urban design and policy, then transit ridership may diminish accordingly as travelers seek more agreeable routes and modes (Cervero 2013). While Honolulu's density, traffic congestion, topographical constraints, and climate make it a seemingly good candidate for rail transit, there are some points of concern.

First, Honolulu and Hawaii generally have a longstanding culture of automobility. Shifting modes to rail transit will require some degree of adaptation on the part of the residents. Cars provide the obvious benefits of privacy, speed (at least on uncongested roads), and flexibility in origin and destination. It can be challenging to lure drivers away from their vehicles, at a minimum because ingrained lifestyles and cultural connotations are difficult to change. Second, despite its overall density, Honolulu's built form has witnessed the same sprawling development patterns as the rest of the U.S. in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The benefits of its overall density will be diminished if walking trips to rail stations must be routed circuitously through a disconnected street network and faceless or even unpleasant urban design. Large, sprawling suburban areas such as Ewa, Mililani, and Hawaii Kai impose dependence on the private automobile and complicate regional public transportation patterns.

Third, the current rail plan is fairly expensive and may create an eyesore. Some critics have questioned the project's capital costs in light of its proposed ridership and capacity limits (O'Toole 2014). Its high costs could require high fares to recapture the investment, and high fares could hurt ridership. Its elevated route through the dense downtown could create visual blight, divide neighborhoods, and foster an unpleasant 'concrete jungle' pedestrian environment. Fourth and finally, due to the first three points, walkability along parts of the new rail corridor could be less than ideal. All of these concerns have significant impacts for livability and maximum adoption of this enormous investment into rail transit. Honolulu's new pedestrian master plan and toolbox are good starting points to address these issues, but it is useful to compare other cities as well. While light rail in places such as Portland and Seattle have already been examined by Honolulu planners, it is also useful to consider an international context: Barcelona offers longstanding, invaluable lessons in integrating rail transit, pedestrian access, and livability. It serves as a representative case of the urban form and pedestrian experience that supports access to transit.

Reflecting on these two cities abstractly, any lessons must first acknowledge that the development of Honolulu and Barcelona exist in different sociopolitical contexts and

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

planning eras. Cerdà's top-down socialist utopian theory and methodology have no corollary in Hawaiian planning practice today, and a new city cannot be cut from whole cloth. The Eixample was a 19<sup>th</sup> century utopian response to the social and physical ills of an overcrowded industrial era city. By contrast, Honolulu is a sprawling postindustrial city whose form is largely dictated by the automobile. There are considerable cultural differences between European urbanism and American suburbanism, including preferences for automobility. Honolulu's population is smaller, but like Barcelona, it anchors the major urban center in its region (Table 3). Its metropolitan density and wealth are fairly comparable to Barcelona's. Both cities have a similar warm but temperate climate with abundant sunshine. This type of climate both attracts tourists and fosters pleasant public spaces and walking trips – when the built environment cooperates to support them. Finally, both cities share a similar topography, constrained by mountains and the sea, which produces a fairly linear urban form conducive to rail transit and pedestrianism.

**Table 3:**  
A comparative summary of Honolulu's and Barcelona's urban area population and density, metro GDP, and climate. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya, World Meteorological Organization

	Urban Area Population	Density (per sq km)	Metro GDP per capita	January High/Low Temperature (C)	August High/Low Temperature (C)
Honolulu	802,459	1,824	\$59,968	26° / 18°	31° / 24°
Barcelona	4,702,008	2,356	\$34,821	14° / 5°	29° / 21°

To make its new rail system succeed, Honolulu will need to lure its residents out of their cars. In Hawaii as much as anywhere else, a coordinated and integrated approach is necessary. First, drivers should pay the full cost of their behavior. This means reducing the negative externalities from air pollution, congestion, and bundled and underpriced parking: only with a fair accounting of the full costs and benefits can mass transit compete against the automobile. Second, people switching to rail transit must enjoy their ride through the provision of comfortable, high quality train cars, stations, and service. Third, and the focus of this study, rail stations need to be accessible to pedestrians. Some rail systems in the U.S. attempt to balance the nature of rail stations as both a *node* in a transportation network as well as a *place* in and of themselves. As *nodes* in a larger intermodal network, stations may be surrounded by large park-and-ride lots to integrate with the predominately auto-focused transportation system. However, as *places* they need to be knit into the neighborhood, provide access to nearby amenities, and feature pleasant human-scaled design to attract pedestrians. Honolulu's density, climate, and traffic congestion would argue for more emphasis on this *place* paradigm to support livability – and recent local planning and TOD efforts seem to be moving in this direction.

Accordingly, Barcelona offers many urban form lessons as the Eixample integrates rail transit with pedestrian access in several ways. Its multifunctional mix of land uses

## Boeing, G.

ensures origins and destinations are near one another both for livability and for transit accessibility. A recent survey found that 79 percent of Americans believe they should walk more, but 40 percent do not do so because their neighborhoods lack nearby services, shops, schools, and workplaces (Kaiser Permanente 2013). Some of Honolulu's monolithic single-use residential sprawl could be improved by generating a greater diversity of uses and schedules, particularly around proposed rail stations. These stations should be well-integrated into the urban fabric, as they are in Barcelona, being neither an intrusive eyesore nor out-of-the-way and inconvenient. This observation lends credence to the AIA's argument that the elevated rail line through downtown Honolulu could create a visual disamenity. On one hand, elevated rail allows for rapid transit at a lower cost than an underground metro and at faster speeds than at-grade light rail. On the other hand, it creates something of an intrusive blemish that adds to the feeling of walking through a 'concrete jungle.'

Elevated rail is not necessarily ideal. This is especially true of the downtown, where underground rail might make more sense for short stretches (though Honolulu's soft alluvial soils and underground aquifers make it very expensive to build), or even at-grade segments that might be knit pleasantly into the surrounding streetscape (though this forfeits the speed benefits of grade separation). It is also unclear if light rail itself is necessarily the right choice. Barcelona underscores the importance of mass and density to generate a sufficient ridership base for rail. In an urban area of 802,000 persons, the flexibility and low cost of BRT might make even more sense to connect Honolulu's sprawling suburbs to its downtown. Already, the Honolulu bus system is planning for changes following new rail transit. According to TheBus's general manager Roger Morton, 'In areas the rail system will serve, what we will end up doing much more so than now is provide services to and from rail stations rather than provide long-haul services... we will provide a finer grain and a better level of service to all of the communities with more frequency, access and coverage' (Roman 2010).

Although it is less expensive than heavy rail or underground tunneling, light rail is still relatively expensive to build, especially when compared to BRT or otherwise expanded bus service. The first five U.S. cities to build light rail in the 1980s – Portland, San Diego, Sacramento, San Jose, and Buffalo – have had only mixed success. None of these cities today has a drastically higher transit mode share or a significantly larger center city share of total urban area population (Freemark 2014). However, each of these regions also built freeways in the past 30 years, largely failed to develop densely around transit, and did not charge local drivers the full cost of their automobility. As noted by Kim (2010) and Preston (2012), coordinated policy and integration are essential.

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

Regardless, rail development is already underway in Honolulu. To integrate it with pedestrian access, the city should look to the Eixample's high quality urban design. Its public furniture, interesting architecture, concealed service networks, and human-scaled visual complexity make walking from origins to stations to destinations pleasant. Shady tree-lined streets would also improve the hot and sunny pedestrian environment in Honolulu, and Cerdà's utopian plan progressively placed travelers of all types as equals in his streets. Autocentric Honolulu could improve livability and reduce pedestrian collisions by following similar principles of shared space and pedestrian equality.

The physical dimensions of the Eixample's urban form are also noteworthy. The blocks are not too long at 113 meters. The street widths and building heights are both 20 meters, creating an approximately 1:1 height-to-width ratio and a pleasant sense of enclosure for pedestrians. Cerdà's octagonal blocks create views and sightlines at intersections while also accommodating sunshine and airflow. Honolulu could improve the pedestrian experience in its denser districts by following this model. A city certainly cannot alter its urban form overnight, but incremental retrofitting and inevitable redevelopment can adhere to such design guidelines to improve the pedestrian experience and focus growth and density along the rail corridor. Finally, Honolulu can improve upon what Cerdà's vision failed to realize: first by protecting public space from enclosure and privatization, and second by acknowledging the roles of capital and power in urbanization and their repercussions on egalitarianism.

### Conclusion

This study explored the proposed rail transit system in Honolulu through the lens of Barcelona's Eixample district, and uncovered lessons for integrating rail transit with supportive pedestrian design and policy. It argued that the Eixample is a model of livability through design, density, land use, and pedestrian-scaled streets. Rail transit planning must account for pedestrian safety, comfort, and accessibility because every transit trip begins and ends with a walking trip. This study thus identified several significant form and design lessons from the Eixample, including compact block sizes and height-to-width ratios that provide a sense of enclosure; streetscaping that balances visual complexity and order; mixed land uses; transit station assimilation into the urban fabric; and pedestrian equality within the circulation network. Honolulu's climate and density make it a good city for walkability policies that support its rail investment, while topographical and natural resource constraints make it imperative to develop a sustainable transportation system integrated with a supportive urban form.

These findings contribute concrete examples of successful and supportive urban form in Barcelona to the livability and accessibility literature. They also identify potential

Boeing, G.

concerns with privatization and displacement, arguing for a focus on social justice in the pursuit of livability. Sprawling, auto-dependent cities might benefit those families that can afford to live anywhere and purchase multiple vehicles, but it punishes everyone else through negative externalities, reduced accessibility, and degraded pedestrian environments. Incrementally embracing some of the Eixample's best urban form characteristics can democratize livability by encouraging transit adoption and improving the public realm. Cerdà's utopian theory and physical planning produced an urban form that is still considered highly livable today. However by ignoring crucial dynamics of power, privilege, and wealth, it may not be the success that it could have been. Today in Honolulu, gentrification around new rail investment sites threatens to create highly livable environments for a wealthy new urban elite at the expense of a displaced underclass. In many ways, today's smart growth and new urbanist paradigms represent a new urban utopianism that must critically engage with issues of wealth and power to become something more than mere spaces of displacement and gentrification. Thus this article argued that public planners must ensure that rail transit planning and investments in pedestrian-centric urban design produce livability for all citizens – not just a privileged few – by learning from Cerdà's successes as well as his mistakes.

This study focused on physical design and transportation planning, but future research could further explore questions of politics, praxis, and social justice. In the U.S., planners must be sensitive to how unwalkable many of its cities are. Americans have ingrained cultural preferences for automobility and sprawling residential communities: luring them out of their automobiles requires an attractive and efficient alternative mode of travel. Barcelona's lessons in density, urban design, and connecting rail with enjoyable pedestrian experiences are invaluable to Honolulu's livable and sustainable transportation future.

## References

- › Advameg. (2009). Honolulu: Economy - Major Industries and Commercial Activity. Retrieved April 24, 2014, from <http://www.city-data.com/us-cities/The-West/Honolulu-Economy.html>
- › AIA Honolulu. (2011). AIA Speaks Out on Transit. Retrieved April 24, 2014, from <http://www.aiahonolulu.org/?261>
- › Boeing, G., Church, D., Hubbard, H., Mickens, J., & Rudis, L. (2014). LEED-ND and Livability Revisited. *Berkeley Planning Journal*, 27(1), 31–55.
- › Bohigas, O. (2004). Ten Points for an Urban Methodology. In T. Marshall (Ed.), *Transforming Barcelona* (pp. 91–96). London: Routledge.

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

- › Bosselmann, P. (2008). *Urban Transformation: Understanding City Design and Form*. Washington: Island Press.
- › Broto, C. (2010). *City Embellishment: Barcelona*. Barcelona: Links International.
- › Busquets, J. (2005). *Barcelona: The Urban Evolution of a Compact City*. Rovereto: Nicolodi.
- › Cabre, A. M., & Munoz, F. M. (1996). Ildefons Cerdà and the Unbearable Density of Cities. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 37–46). Barcelona: Electa.
- › Camay, S., Brown, L., & Makoid, M. (2012). Role of Social Media in Environmental Review Process of National Environmental Policy Act. *Transportation Research Record*, 2307, 99–107.
- › Casellas, A. (2009). Barcelona's Urban Landscape: The Historical Making of a Tourist Product. *Journal of Urban History*, 35(6), 815–832.
- › Cerdà, I. (1867). *Teoría General De La Urbanización* (2012 edition). Charleston: Nabu Press.
- › Cervero, R. (1998). *The Transit Metropolis: A Global Inquiry*. Washington: Island Press.
- › Cervero, R. B. (2013). Linking Urban Transport and Land Use in Developing Countries. *Journal of Transport and Land Use*, 6(1), 7–24.
- › Cervero, R., & Duncan, M. (2002). Land value impacts of rail transit services in Los Angeles County. Report for the National Association of Realtors Urban Land Institute. Retrieved January 15, 2014, from <https://drcog.org/documents/TODvalueLosangeles.pdf>
- › Doerr, A. (2014). Behind Four Walls: Barcelona's Lost Utopia. Retrieved January 15, 2014, from <http://www.failedarchitecture.com/behind-four-walls-barcelonas-lost-utopia/>
- › Downs, A. (2004). *Still Stuck in Traffic: Coping with Peak-Hour Traffic Congestion*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- › Ealham, C. (2014). *Class, Culture and Conflict in Barcelona, 1898-1937*. London: Routledge.
- › Emporis. (2014). Building data and construction projects worldwide. Retrieved April 24, 2014, from <http://www.emporis.com/>
- › Epler, P. (2014). Honolulu Rail Project. Honolulu Civil Beat. Honolulu. Retrieved March 10, 2015, from <http://www.civilbeat.com/topics/honolulu-rail-project/>
- › Epps, B. (2001). Modern Spaces: Building Barcelona. In J. R. Resina (Ed.), *Iberian Cities* (pp. 148–197). New York: Routledge.
- › Evans, P. (2002). *Livable Cities: Urban Struggles for Livelihood and Sustainability*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- › Fernandez, V. A. (2008). *Cerdà and Barcelona: Research and Plan*. MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- › Freemark, Y. (2014). Have U.S. Light Rail Systems Been Worth the Investment? Retrieved April 10, 2014, from <http://www.citylab.com/commute/2014/04/have-us-light-rail-systems-been-worth-investment/8838/>

## Boeing, G.

- › Genadio, F., & Singh, A. (2010). A Rough Ride on the O'ahu Rail Transit Project. *Leadership and Management in Engineering*, 10(1), 21–31.
- › Gomes, A. (2010). Honolulu Rents Still 2nd Priciest in U.S. *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Honolulu. Retrieved March 24, 2010 from <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/>
- › Guardia, M., Garcia-Fuentes, J.-M., & Fava, N. (2010). The Construction of the Eixample in the Transformation of Contemporary Barcelona. In *Urban Transformation: Controversies, Contrasts, and Challenges: Proceedings of the 14th IPHS Conference* (pp. 473–487). Istanbul.
- › Harvey, D. (2010). *Social Justice and the City*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- › Hawaii Community Development Authority. (2015). Kakaako Community Transit Oriented Development Environmental Impact Statement. Honolulu. Retrieved March 20, 2015, from <http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/kakaako-community-transit-oriented-development-draft-eis/>
- › Hawaii Department of Transportation. (2013a). Hawaii Pedestrian Toolbox. State of Hawaii: State of Hawaii Department of Transportation Highways Division.
- › Hawaii Department of Transportation. (2013b). Statewide Pedestrian Master Plan. State of Hawaii: State of Hawaii Department of Transportation Highways Division.
- › Illas, E. (2012). *Thinking Barcelona: Ideologies of a Global City*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- › INRIX. (2012). National Traffic Scorecard Annual Report. Retrieved May 24, 2012, from <http://www.inrix.com/scorecard/>
- › Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya. (2014). Idescat. Retrieved April 27, 2014, from <http://www.idescat.cat/>
- › Jacobs, A. B. (1995). *Great Streets*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- › Julia i Torne, M. (1996). Barcelona's Municipal Building Ordinances and their Impact on the Eixample. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 61–66). Barcelona: Electa.
- › Kaiser Permanente. (2013). Americans View Walking as Good for Health but Many Aren't Walking Enough to Realize Health Benefits. Retrieved March 10, 2015, from <http://share.kaiserpermanente.org/article/americans-view-walking-as-good-for-health-but-many-arent-walking-enough-to-realize-health-benefits-survey/>
- › Kavcic, S. (2014). Kakaako Community for Seniors with Alzheimer's. University of Hawaii School of Architecture, Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii.
- › Kim, K. (2010). Transportation. In C. Howes & J. Osorio (Eds.), *The Value of Hawaii: Knowing the Past, Shaping the Future* (pp. 69–76). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- › Levine, J., Grengs, J., Shen, Q., & Shen, Q. (2012). Does Accessibility Require Density or Speed? *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 78(2), 157–172.

## HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT: INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM BARCELONA IN LINKING URBAN FORM, DESIGN, AND TRANSPORTATION

- › Levine, M. (2012). Cayetano's Transit Plan Mirrors Harris' in 2000. *Honolulu Civil Beat*. Honolulu. Retrieved March 21, 2012, from <http://www.civilbeat.com/articles/2012/03/21/15269-cayetano-transit-plan-mirrors-harris-in-2000/>
- › Lo, H. K., Tang, S., & Wang, D. Z. W. (2008). Managing the Accessibility on Mass Public Transit: The Case of Hong Kong. *Journal of Transport and Land Use*, 1(2), 23–49.
- › Macdonald, E. (2005). Street-facing Dwelling Units and Livability: The Impacts of Emerging Building Types in Vancouver's New High-Density Residential Neighbourhoods. *Journal of Urban Design*, 10(1), 13–38.
- › Magrinya, F. (1996a). Service Infrastructures in Cerdà's Urban Planning Proposals. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 189–204). Barcelona: Electa.
- › Magrinya, F. (1996b). Way-Interways: A New Concept Proposed by Cerdà. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 205–224). Barcelona: Electa.
- › McDonogh, G. W. (2011). Learning from Barcelona: Discourse, Power and Praxis in the Sustainable City. *City & Society*, 23(2), 135–153.
- › National Weather Service. (2014). National Weather Service Forecast Office, Honolulu, HI. Retrieved April 24, 2014, from <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/climate/xmacis.php?wfo=hnl>
- › Neuman, M. (2011). Ildefons Cerdà and the future of spatial planning: The network urbanism of a city planning pioneer. *Town Planning Review*, 82(2), 117–144.
- › Newman, P., Beatley, T., & Boyer, H. (2009). *Resilient Cities: Responding to Peak Oil and Climate Change*. Washington: Island Press.
- › Ordonez, J. A. F. (1996). Cerdà - Utopia and Pragmatism. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 19–22). Barcelona: Electa.
- › O'Sullivan, F. (2014). Is Tourism Ruining Barcelona? Retrieved April 21, 2014, from <http://www.citylab.com/work/2014/04/tourism-ruining-barcelona/8918/>
- › O'Toole, R. (2014). The Worst of Both: The Rise of High-Cost, Low-Capacity Rail Transit (Policy Analysis No. 750). Washington, D.C: Cato Institute.
- › Park, G. (2011). It's a Go! *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. Honolulu. Retrieved February 23, 2011, from <http://www.staradvertiser.com/>
- › Perez, L., Medina-Ramon, M., Kunzli, N., Alastuey, A., Pey, J., Perez, N., ... Sunyer, J. (2009). Size Fractionate Particulate Matter, Vehicle Traffic, and Case-Specific Daily Mortality in Barcelona, Spain. *Environmental Science Technology*, 43, 4707–4714.
- › Preston, J. (2012). Integration for Seamless Transport. Presented at the Summit of the International Transport Forum in Leipzig, Germany: International Transport Forum Discussion Paper.
- › Roman, A. (2010). Oahu Transit: Delivering Friendly Customer Service on the Island. *Metro*, 22–26.
- › RTKL Associates, Belt Collins Hawaii, Fehr & Peers, & Keyser Marston Associates. (2014). Ala Moana Neighborhood Transit-Oriented Development Plan. Honolulu: City & County of Honolulu.

## Boeing, G.

- › Serratos, A. (1996). The Value of Cerdà's Extension Today. In *Cerdà: Urbs i Territori: Planning Beyond the Urban* (pp. 47–60). Barcelona: Electa.
- › Simpson, M., & Brizdle, J. (2000). *Streetcar Days in Honolulu*. Honolulu: JLB Press.
- › Soria Y Puig, A. (1995). Ildefonso Cerdà's General Theory of "Urbanización." *Town Planning Review*, 66(1), 15–39.
- › Szibbo, N. (2016). Lessons for LEED for Neighborhood Development, Social Equity, and Affordable Housing. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 82(1), 37–49.
- › U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2014). Real Personal Income for States and Metropolitan Areas, 2008-2012 (BEA 14-16) (pp. 1–9). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce.
- › U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). American FactFinder. Retrieved April 23, 2014, from <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>
- › Wong, A. (2012). Don't Walk: Hawaii Pedestrians, Especially Elderly, Die at High Rate. *Honolulu Civil Beat*. Honolulu. Retrieved September 4, 2012, from <http://www.civilbeat.com/articles/2012/09/04/17004-dont-walk-hawaii-pedestrians-especially-elderly-die-at-high-rate/>
- › Wong, A. (2014). Living Hawaii: Many Families Sacrifice to Put Kids in Private Schools. *Honolulu Civil Beat*. Honolulu. Retrieved March 17, 2014, from <http://www.civilbeat.com/2014/03/21502-living-hawaii-many-families-sacrifice-to-put-kids-in-private-schools/>

# THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

Annelies Van de Ven

University of Melbourne, Australia

This article explores the significance of open space to the formation of local culture and identity. Rejecting any absolute categorisation of open-public and closed-private space, the essay attempts to redefine open space, in order to make it more suitable to specific case studies outside the western democratic discourse within which it is often used. Space is a process, shaping the world around it as much as it is shaped by its own circumstances. This also implies that the experience of space is highly pluralistic, a notion made exceedingly clear in the changing structure and meaning of space throughout Baghdad's history. In light of recent crises in Baghdad the discussion of its spaces has become critical. By analysing the evolution of Baghdad from a spatial perspective, I will explore how embodied experiences interact with the cognitive readings of space within the case of Baghdad. I aim to show the significance of open space to the self-identification of an urban population. This to suggest its immense value to the improvement of cultural heritage management, especially in conflict areas.

*Keywords:* Baghdad, Open Space, Urban Planning, Heritage, Urban History

Please cite this article as: Van de Ven, A., The Spatialisation Struggle: The Heritage of Open Spaces in Baghdad *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.4vol.02>

Van de Ven, A.

## Introduction

*In the sky  
The poles bow,  
searching for what deserves illumination,  
But the streets are overcrowded  
With void.*

Sinan Antoon (1989, cited in Snir 2013, p.304)

Not just events, people and discourses define the understanding we have of an era and a place, but also its architecture and monumental art. This is especially the case in urban environments, spaces that easily become focal points of national and international politics, economy and culture. For example, Rome, the eternal city, studied by artists, antiquarians and archaeologists for centuries, is not just the city of emperors, but also of their palaces, it is a city of gladiators, but also that of the Colosseum. Paris is as much defined by the Revolution as by the Eiffel Tower in popular thought. Built space dominates the historical narratives of these cities. The structures of cities come to synecdochically represent their identities, characters and developments. While these features remain the focus of archaeological investigation and heritage management, they form the foundations for our characterisation of the past and its impact on present identity.

Useful as such elements are, their hegemony over our interpretive capacity has developed at the expense of other forms of evidence requiring different processes of investigation. While architects construct and arrange these monuments, they also design the spaces in and around which they are constructed. Urban theory now includes a strong body of literature on the importance of public spaces, not just buildings or artworks, as defining areas within a city scape (Carr *et al.*, 1992; Low & Smith, 2013). Places like Tiananmen Square, Constantinople's hippodrome or Constitution Avenue, for example are the locations for some of history's most memorable moments. However, the term public space implies the opposite of private space, a division that incorporates notions of accessibility and a particular social function in defining public authority. A number of spaces that are part of the urban realm do not necessarily adhere to such definitions, these are open spaces. This concept includes subtle spaces, such as spaces between houses, courtyards, intersections and everyday walkways. Such "in-between spaces" have long been regarded as blank spaces. However, together they form part of the urban fabric and thus have the potential to alter the lived experience of the city.

Analysing these spaces and the process by which they are made into places of meaning and action is something that is essential to understanding how a particular city functions and how it compares to other urban environments. This understanding is essential to how we

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

implement conservation and development strategies, and how we perceive urban heritage. If open spaces can become places of identity, then they equally need to be considered within heritage planning. The method of isolating buildings and areas to be demolished or preserved is no longer appropriate. In order to ensure the life of these structures and spaces they must remain part of their surroundings and included in the activities of the people living within them. This inclusion must occur in a way that acknowledges their dynamism as potential areas of passage and movement.

This paper will draw on the case study of Baghdad to demonstrate the significance of open space within the historical fabric of the city and the self-identification of its population through heritage and narrative. Baghdad's case is particularly acute due to its long history of politically oriented restructuring of space, in particular its recent history of political unrest and spatial upheaval (Marozzi, 2014). Until October 2015 Baghdad was still divided into green and red zones, cutting lines of conflict into the cityscape (Chandrasekaran, 2006). While not entirely unique in urban history, just think of the Berlin wall of the later twentieth century or the Parisian barricades of the French revolution, the current conflict has introduced novel elements. The violent targeting of heritage sites and the looting of cultural materials does make a heritage plan for the city more pressing. By analysing the long history of urban development in Baghdad through open space, and comparing it to other examples, this study explores the potential of open spaces to engender both feelings of exclusion and belonging, movement and confinement, thereby contributing to an under-researched area in heritage planning.

### The Founding of Baghdad

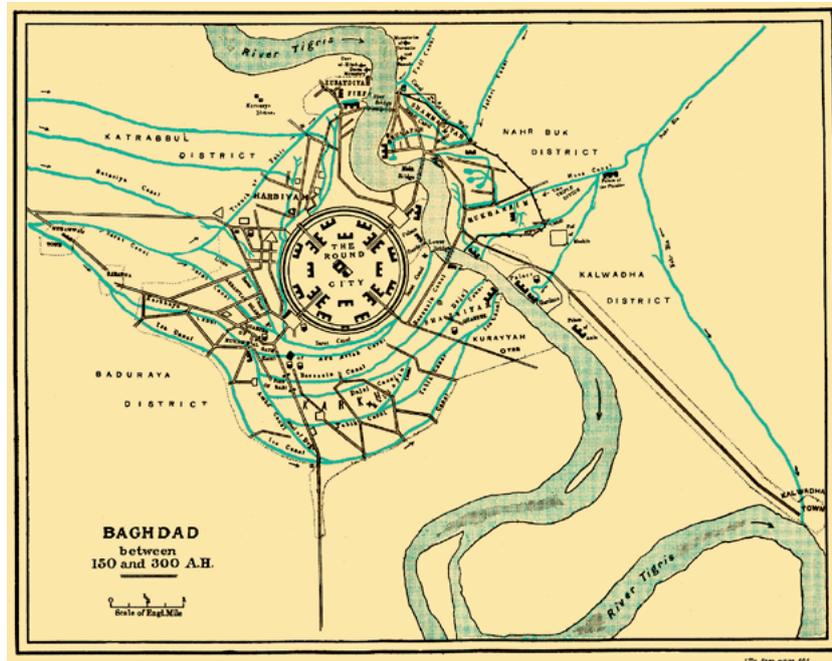
The spatial history of Baghdad is a difficult one to write. Archaeological evidence for early inhabitation of the site is scanty at best and cannot aid this interpretation. The only account of archaeological discovery relating to the early city is of Sir H. Rawlinson uncovering an mudbrick embankment, dating from the time of Nebuchadnezzar II, along the western bank of the Tigris in 1848 (Levy, 2011, p.6). However, no other discoveries have been made in this area. Rapid urban development, environmental change and repeated invasion have led to the destruction of much of Baghdad's early architecture. Even later medieval remains of Baghdad are uncommon, with only the odd mosque or madrasa fragment remaining.<sup>1</sup> Maps of the early city (Figure 1) are reconstructions based on historical narratives of the early city combined with the city's modern appearance and its surrounding topography. The course of the Tigris has also changed since the city's foundation, adding an additional challenge to such reconstruction projects (Ahola & Osti, 2013, p.221).

---

<sup>1</sup> For example, the monumental entranceway to the Mirjaniya Madreassa built in 1357/758.

Van de Ven, A.

**Figure 1:**  
The Round City of Baghdad soon after its founding.  
Source: William Muir (1883). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-old-100)).



**Figure 2:**  
Medieval Baghdad.  
Source: Created in the 16th Century by Matrakçi Nasuh. Bilkent University. Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-Turkey)).



## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

Most of the information available is cobbled together from a series of local histories, poetry, illuminations, stylised maps (Figure 2), collections of folk tales and later travel writing. The difficulty of interpreting these sources is shown in the comparison of the work of early twentieth century scholars Louis Massignon (1910) and Guy LeStrange (1900). Both attempted to recreate the conditions of early Baghdad based on local literary accounts and both developed very different interpretations of its development and layout (Lassner, 1966). The history of Baghdad is one that has been written time and time again by a wide assortment of people writing in different periods with various motives, so unsurprisingly each account focuses on different elements. A number of these accounts feature stories about the founding of the Round City, the legendary capital of the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mansur. While these early histories were clearly poeticised, written with the flair of classical panegyrics or Arabic *fada'is*, they cannot simply be dismissed. They contain elements of truth that can give indications of early urban planning methods; one example of this is Al-Tabari's telling of the origins of Baghdad in the year of its construction 762 CE (Al-Tabari, 1989-1999, XXVIII, 276) (Figure 1).

His story is centred on the character of the Abbasid caliph Al-Mansur and his intimate involvement in the planning of the original Round City or City of Peace on the West bank of the Tigris River (Antrim, 2012, pp.33-60). He describes Al-Mansur obtaining divine approval for the location of his new city and its structures, a custom with a long tradition in the region that can be traced back to the foundation inscriptions of pre-Islamic rulers.<sup>2</sup> Unless the city and its various divisions and structures were approved by a deity, they could not be assured protection. Al-Mansur then commanded that an outline of his new city be drawn in ashes so he could walk through it and assess its design. Next he ordered that cotton seed be placed along the outline, covered in oil and lit on fire, so he could have a better impression of the arrangement of the city's walls. The tale is a popular trope among writers and may indicate something of the power and influence of the city. While these early histories often focussed less on urban development and more on the glorification of singular historical figures, political or religious rulers, and their great deeds, they still contain interesting details about life in early Islamic Baghdad (Zahm, 1922, p.411).<sup>3</sup> The history of Al-Tabari in particular indicated what urban planning ideals were at the time – the importance of circularity, order and clarity – while also indicating the real-world effects that this new establishment had upon the wider realm.

---

<sup>2</sup> For an example of this see the Ashurbanipal and Cyrus Cylinder found in Babylon or Arrian's account of Alexander's founding of Alexandria.

<sup>3</sup> There are scholars who would disagree with this. For example, Lassner (1968) argued for a more intimate involvement of the Caliph in the planning of the city, making him the head draftsman of the project.

Van de Ven, A.

This narrative shows that from its very beginnings Baghdad was conceived as a city of controlled spaces and as a new settlement on virgin ground, ‘an artificial construct’ (Ager & Faber, 2013, p.167). Though it is no longer assumed that the city was a complete new foundation, as archaeological finds have been excavated from an earlier settlement, Baghdad does not fit the general trend of an Islamic city evolving from a temporary military camp to a permanent urban centre (Lassner, 1968, p.24). It was conceptualised as a circle mirroring a long tradition of ideal cities, including those of Aristotle and Vitruvius (Figure 3), their circularity suggesting ideas of equidistance, unity, purity and eternity. In the specific case of Baghdad, it is influenced by pre-Islamic practice cosmology through its resemblance to Assyrian military camps, Sasanian royal cities and central Asian nomadic settlements, as well as to Islamic cosmology in its reference to God’s creation of the world, and the paradise of the afterlife (Negoita, 2011, p.113). The city as described was a microcosm of the Abbasid Empire, a vision of its social ideals, ideals that include the absolute authority of the Caliph. This is displayed not only by the prominence of the Caliph’s palace and the grand mosque in the centre of the city, but also its equidistance from all sections of the round city (Al-Bagdadi, 1904, p.104). The sectors, divided according to ethnic groups, could thus be centrally supervised. The strict policing of the streets, the removal of market areas from the *rabah* or public square, and the privatisation of much of the central plaza ensured that people understood the city’s social hierarchy.

Figure 3:  
Vitruvius’ Design  
of a City  
Source: Cesare di  
Lorenzo Cesariano  
(1521). Creative  
Commons. (Mark 1.0  
(PD-old-70)).



## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

These elements are all reminiscent of Arrian's account of Alexander's design of Alexandria (Arrian, 2004, III, 3, 1-5). Alexandria was also a city predated by other settlements, most prominently Rhakotis, though the new city, like Baghdad was a new foundation. Arrian describes Alexander laying out the city walls with grain in a typical Hypocratean grid plan. A layout that was ordered with space being made for Alexander's own royal housing as well as religious structures and quarters for various ethno-religious groups. It was also a highly prosperous city, functioning as an economic, cultural and political hub. Much like Baghdad it was built along various trade routes in an area with access to water and a good climate. In contrast to Baghdad however, history has left us with some archaeological remains of the city, in the harbour area, though the rest of the urban centre is superseded by the modern city. The similarities between the two foundation stories show the significance throughout history of not just political but also spatial manifestations of rule, and what better to show a ruler's power than the radical alteration of a landscape through the foundation of an elaborately planned capital city.

### From Medieval to Modern Baghdad

The foundation stories show that Baghdad was not just another Arab camp that gradually became more permanent as the Islamic conquest fell to the past. However, such a strictly planned and conscribed capital was not able to support a rapidly expanding population and trade network (Bosworth, 2007, p.33). Beyond its foundation, accounts of Baghdad's spatial development are drawn from a variety of sources including poetry, histories, biographical dictionaries, government manuals, religious accounts and iconographic references.<sup>4</sup> The medieval periods still feature most strongly in most modern imaginings of the city. This has much to do with the prominence of the 'Tales of the One Thousand and One Nights' (Burton, 1885) in public imagination (Roose, 2009, p.13). Despite its prominence in our own views of Baghdad, the nights are questionable as a primary account, not least because our own compilation was created by a French translator: Antoine Galland, in the eighteenth century. The stories are also highly romanticised and have uncertain temporal and authorial origins. Many of the tales described are probably fanciful fabrications or adaptations of stories belonging to other mythical and historical figures (Marzolph, 2006, p.69). This being said, the tales of the nights are clearly urban ones that require a very particular social and physical navigation by its inhabitants (Al-Musawi, 2009, pp.127-31). The impression given is one of a loud and colourful sprawling city, a city of common people disconnected from the spaces of court and palace life (Irwin, 2003, p.121). A similar but perhaps more reliable source is the 'Maqamat' stories. Like 'the

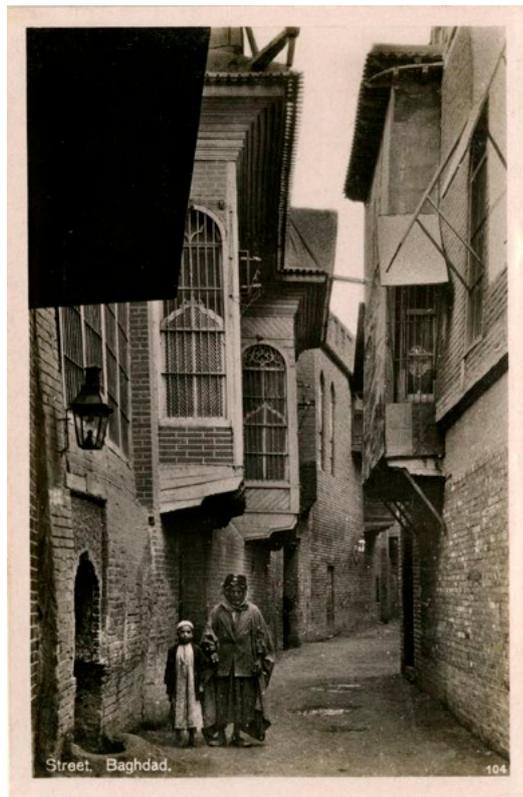
---

<sup>4</sup> Concurrent sources such as Mas'udi's 'Meadows of Gold' add to this mosaic of spaces and characters featured in medieval Baghdad. See also the articles by Massignon & Blanchere, Sourdel, Canard and Cahen in the 1962 special edition of *Arabica* for an extensive description of Baghdad in the Medieval period.

Van de Ven, A.

nights' they are a compilation of narrated episodes giving a 'street level view' of the city, however with the case of the Maqamat the authors are known making it easier to frame the texts they created (Prendergast, 1915). The image created by these tales is one of a tangle of narrow streets and covered souks, looking like much of the old quarter would today (Figure 4).

*Figure 4:  
Traditional  
Baghdadi street in  
the 1920s/30s.  
Source: Published  
online in 2013 by  
The British Museum.  
Used with  
Permission.*



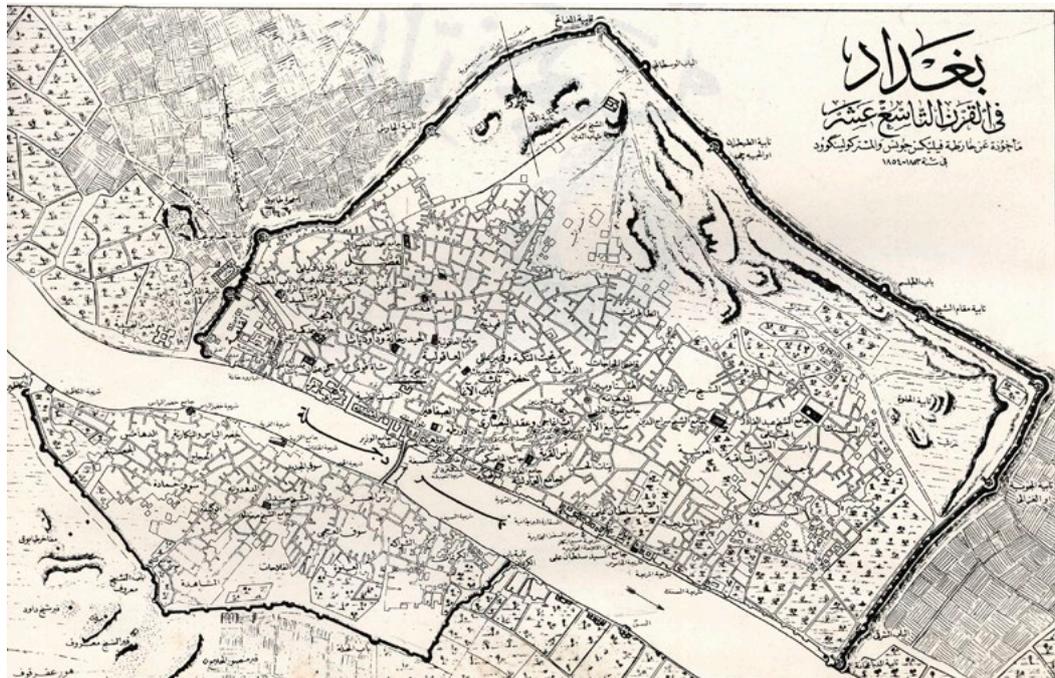
Though highly idealised and subjective, poetic tales serve as an irreplaceable source of information for the changing public perception of the urban landscape.<sup>5</sup> The authors of these tales reveal an early air of wealth: a city of canals, palaces and gardens, a jewel of the Arab world. The early expansion of Baghdad and its rise to intellectual and economic predominance in the region heralded the golden age of Islam. After the civil war and a series of natural disasters, there was a switch in this poetic atmosphere. Such devastation had a negative effect on the upkeep of urban infrastructure and the city lost much of its splendour (Kennedy, 2004). Ibn Jubayr mourns this decline within his travel writings, ascribing it to the arrogance of the people, and their moral debasement (Nassar, 1992, p.267).

<sup>5</sup> For an example of this see Muti' ibn Iyas 'Raindrops of Dust', Abd Allah ibn Al-Mubarak before The Pious Ascetic in Baghdad' and Amr ibn Abd Al-Malik Al-Warraaq 'An Evil Eye', all translated in Snir (2013).

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

Despite the loss of its economic and political hegemony within the Islamic world, we know that Baghdad retained some of its urban dynamism throughout the fourteenth century through the tales of travel writers. Ibn Battuta, a travel writer who visited Baghdad in 1327, described the state of the city almost a century after its destruction by the Mongol army in 1258. He deplors the state of the western city, but also notes liveliness of the eastern part of the city, its markets and mosques (Ibn Battuta, 1982, I, 361-370). German traveller Leonhard Rauwolff gives us a glum impression of the city. He describes the slum-like streets, the ruined buildings and the lack of western defences (Dannenfeldt, 1968, p.115-116). This is supported by a variety of alternate reports from the same period. The poverty of the city in relation to its early greatness is reiterated by European diplomat Tavernier (1677) and its broken defences described at length by Ottoman courtier Evliya Celebi (1988). After a long period of instability and maladministration, the Mamluk governors began to rebuild the city, most notably the walls around the neighbourhoods and gardens on the west bank of the Tigris River, predominantly the Al-Karkh district (Dumper & Stanley, 2007, p.59) (Figure 5). Based on the accounts written by travellers and foreign officials and their accompanying maps we can trace the changes to the urban fabric that occurred over the following centuries, stagnating until the drastic series of reforms enacted upon Baghdad's urban fabric in the late nineteenth to twentieth centuries (Susa, 1952).

**Figure 5:**  
Plan of Baghdad in the 19th century.  
Source: Felix Jones (1854) (accessed via Encyclopedia Britannica). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-Britannica)).



By this point the city had become a 'vast, rambling, unplanned metropolis' (Kennedy, 2004), with the only truly private spaces being within the confines of the courtyard

Van de Ven, A.

houses. The narrow thoroughfares of the city, with its network of winding streets, created a strong sense of local allegiance with limited movement throughout the wider urban sprawl. Though seemingly more constrained in terms of spatial mobility, the argument has been made that the space was more open in terms of accessibility. Rather than being centralised around the government, the new city had various nodes: mosques and markets became the beating hearts of the city, as well as being spaces for political contestation. Issues of sectarianism becoming violent in the streets and squares of the city are attested in official historical writings of Islamic scholars (Khalidi, 1994, p.40). This is especially prominent in histories connected to the biographies of important religious figures like that of Al-Baghdadi (1904). Significant within these accounts is the idea that such events are transgressions of urban order, one regulated by strict laws and government supervision. Urban order was upheld through rules of conduct like the *hisbah*<sup>6</sup> manuals. These set the moral and legal guidelines for city inhabitants, determining their range of movement. The definition of private space emphasised in these sources is not delineated by an opposition with publically accessible space, but rather a space out of earshot of the street (ibid, pp.33-34). This is connected to notions of privacy, rather than democratic capitalist conceptions based on ownership.

The late Ottoman period marked a series of social and urban changes (Mantran, 1962). The city walls were demolished in 1870, the first step away from the fortified medieval city as a bounded defensible space to a city based around centres of production and consumption, and networks of transportation and communication. From the early 20th century, plans were put into action to make the city more open and accessible, more appropriate to the 'modern' world. Transportation systems were elaborated, bridges were built, public squares were incorporated into the urban fabric and streets were widened. One of these projects was Al-Rashid Street opened to the public in 1915 by Khalil Pasha (Figure 6). Houses were demolished for a stretch of three kilometres to make room for a new paved two-lane carriageway. On either side of the street they erected neo-classical facades with arcades and shop-fronts (Abbas & Al-Dujaili 2013, p.1078). After numerous reconstructions, Al-Rashid Street remains one of the main thoroughfares through the city.

The Ottoman initiative is comparable to Haussmann's project in Paris in the mid nineteenth century though on a smaller scale. As early as 1869, Midhat Pasha's municipal council issues orders to clear the streets providing better cleaning, drainage and lighting (Elsheshtawy, 2004, p.64). The development of photography around this period means that we have evidence of the changes being made to the city. These are especially striking

---

<sup>6</sup> The word *hisbah* is defined by Yaacobi (1996, p.14) as the denouncement of the incorrect behaviour of others. The *hisbah* manuals were a number of written works indicating the appropriate moral code for the urban population to be enforced by the *muhtasib*, the examiner of conduct (ibid, p.18).

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

**Figure 6:**  
*Al Rasheed Street in  
1932*  
Source: Published  
1932 by Library of  
Congress. Creative  
Commons. (Mark 1.0  
(PD-Matson)).



when compared to photos of areas that did not undergo the same process of renovation. The redevelopments and their documentation become both symbols and instruments of modernisation. The project included the definition of networks of transportation, the broadening of streets, the segregation of classes and the introduction of plazas, all meant to better the hygiene, loyalty and morality of those living in the city (Yamada, 1985). This connection between spatial order and behaviour is one that has continued to be prominent within urban planning. Spaces that are open, well-lit and well-monitored are meant to ensure the smooth governance of the city. However, as the barricades proved in Paris, even the most well thought out spaces can be re-appropriated for resistance, whether violent or subtle. In Baghdad, this resistance took on the form of vendors selling their wares in uncertified makeshift shops within the pedestrian porticoes of Al-Rashid Street and in 1948 it served as a key site in the demonstrations against the Anglo-Iraqi Oil Treaty (Powers, 2012, p.266). Thus, a space that was meant to function as a modernised stately thoroughfare was able to retain some of its historically local and popular quality.

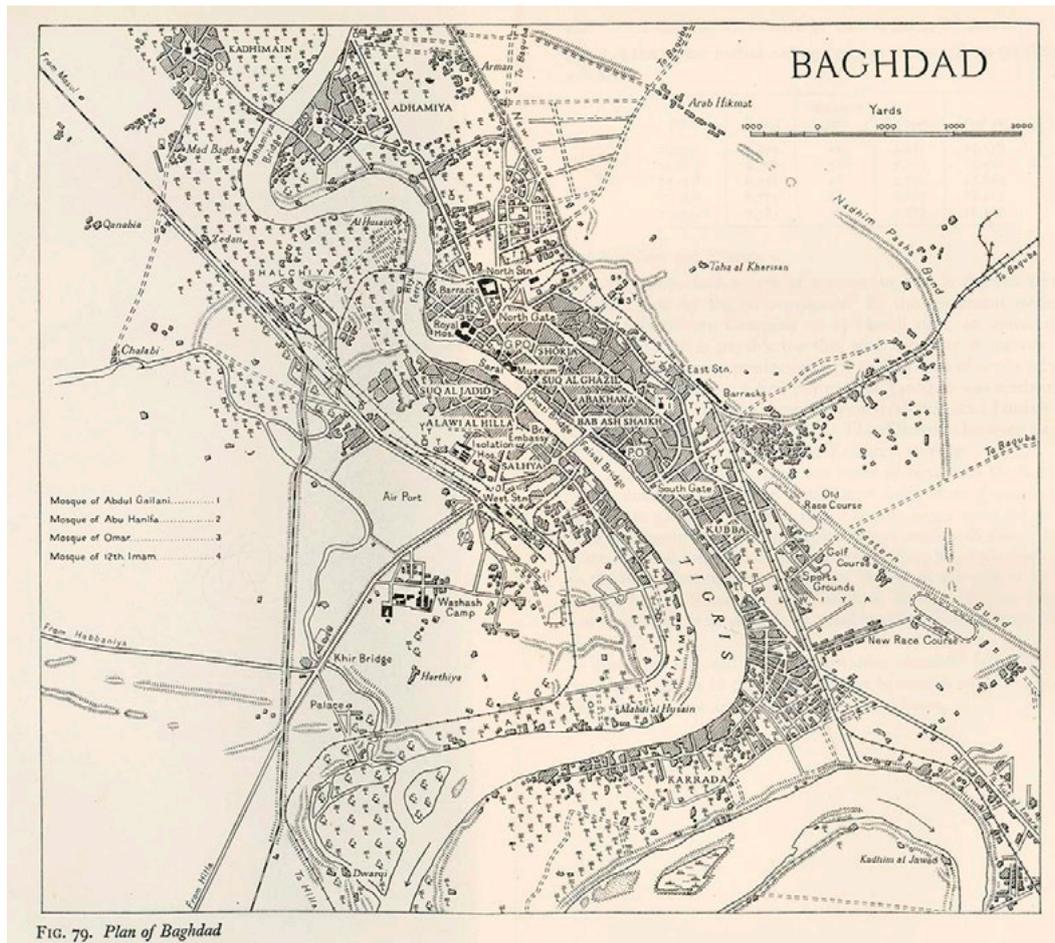
### **Spatialising Modernity**

These early attempts at modernisation fell short of their ultimate aims, both due to financial and political limitations. By the early-twentieth century there was a practical need to integrate the city, at that time defined by nodes of activity, into one unified provincial capital (Kiet, 2011, pp.41-42). Integral to this is the opening of space, funnelling people from constricted local environments to extended communal spaces, allowing mobility from one area into another. What began with the widening of a few key thoroughfares in the late nineteenth century soon turned into plans for the complete redevelopment of the

Van de Ven, A.

city, plans that would uproot entire communities (Ghaidan, 2008, pp.86-87) (Figure 7). Far from being a method for democratising space, such projects were meant to homogenise, to break down localised power structures and bring greater control over the people. This involved not only the introduction of new squares, but also the reorganisation of urban circulation and the spacing of private living. These attempts to control the populace through the creation and maintenance of open space however also have the potential to backfire, as they can give space and opportunity to the presentation of difference. Difference is seen to threaten social order, a threat that is mediated by forcing those not following the government line to either be absorbed by the hegemonic power or marginalised and excluded (Lefebvre, 1991, p.373). Lefebvre (1991) in his neo-Marxist urban theory calls this the conflation of ‘absolutist and abstract space’ (pp.285-91).

**Figure 7:**  
Baghdad during the Monarchy.  
Source: Published in 1944 by the British Naval Intelligence Division (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Creative Commons (Mark 1.0 (PD-UK-Gov)).



## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

Over the next few decades, population levels grew exponentially, putting pressure on the urban landscape. This required plans for expansion and planning beyond the initial isolated development of single areas and streets. The Hashemite monarchy capitalised on this prospect by commissioning a plan for the redevelopment of Baghdad (Mattar, 2004, p.361). Their modernisation scheme would include a number of Western architects and planners.<sup>7</sup> New networks were cut into the ancient fabric of the city creating an artificial order unknown to the city since its mythical founding. The project's scale was enormous as it was meant to completely reform the traditional urban landscape, demolishing the remnants of old Baghdad. It may have been implemented had it not been for the violent and public overthrow of the Monarchy in 1958 (Levine, 2015). However, their interests in 'orderly expansion', 'visual order, uniformity and regularity', continued in the plans of later regimes (Pyla, 2008, p.10).

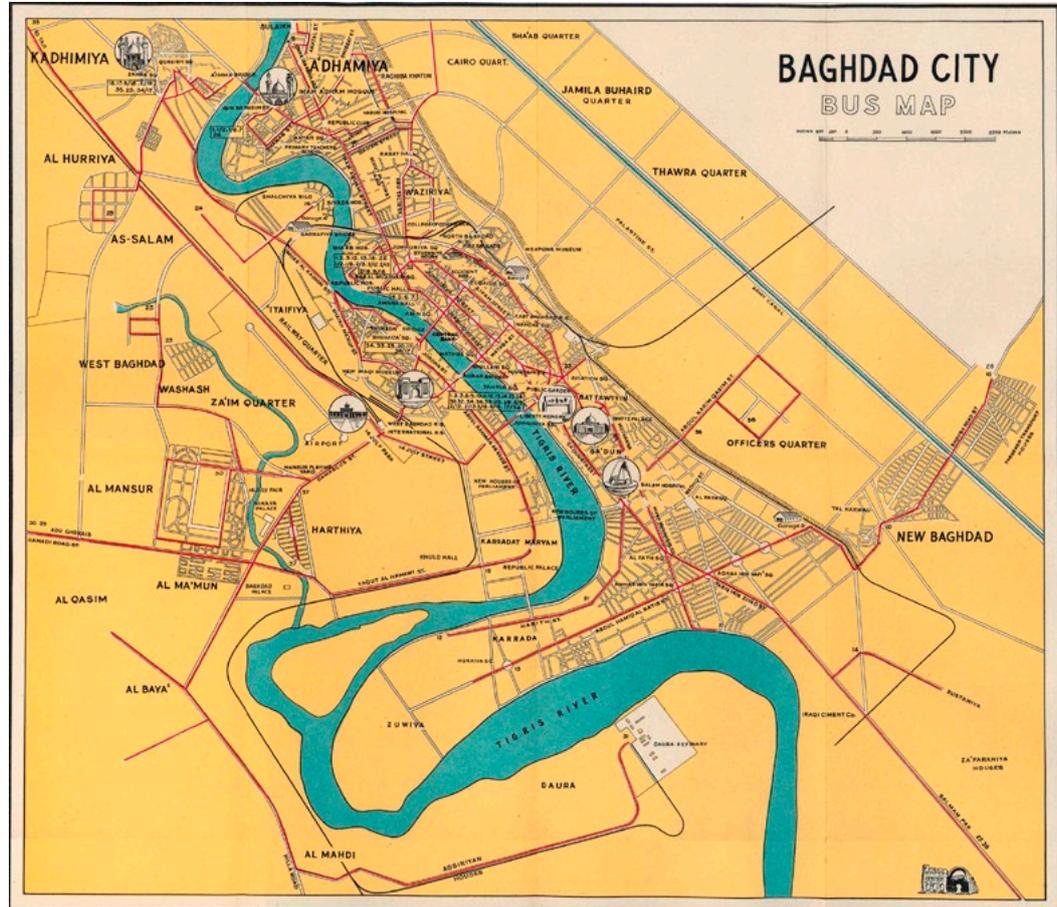
These highly choreographed renovation plans continued under the revolutionary government under General Abd Al-Karim Qassim. Specific areas in the city were targeted for modernisation: main thoroughfares, places of historical significance and prominent religious centres. Changes were often informed by politico-ideological goals, like the development of squares and streets as focal points of political propaganda and control (Shabout, 2014) (Figure 8). The Ba'th government and especially the government under Saddam Hussein were quick to jump onto the modernisation bandwagon, completely reforming the cityscape with the help of some newly acquired oil money. Shopping centres, parks, a metro network, even a zoo were incorporated into the new city plan. Again a master plan was developed to modernise the area of Greater Baghdad in 1973 (PolSERVICE, 1973), one that was designed to be more integrated into the existing infrastructure than its predecessors in the fifties (Al-Akkam, 2013, p.43). The plan focussed on decentralisation and a development of an internationally-inspired local design. However, in such master plans local elements are often limited and they rely on an orientalist reading of the city obtained through a foreign education. Thus while decorative and design elements of traditional housing can be incorporated, the motivations behind using these elements are often ignored. Regardless of the measures taken to ensure continuity in style, the plans completely altered notions of local spatialisation. As policies and priorities were only controlled through the central government, the ideologies of the ruling party could be homogeneously mirrored in the new urban plans (Elsheshtawy, 2004, p.68). Though only a few of these plans were ever executed due to the pressures of war and international embargoes, their plans provide a record of the image of Iraq that the regime had envisioned.

---

<sup>7</sup> During the monarchy there were multiple contenders including most prominently the architects and urban planners Anthony Minoprio, Hugh Spencely, P.W. Macfarlane, and Constantinos Apostolou Doxiades.

Van de Ven, A.

**Figure 8:** Bus map showing the redevelopment of Baghdad under Qassim. Source: Published in 1961 by the Institut Graphique Egyptien (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Creative Commons. (Mark 1.0 (PD-United Arab Emirates)).



In 1979 a rushed urban redevelopment programme was inaugurated as a display of the regime's ability to modernise the nation. This mainly focused around commercial and residential districts both on the eastern medieval vestiges and the more recently renovated western bank of the Tigris. The main areas included, as described in Makiya (1991), where Khulafa Street, the Bab Al-Sheikh area, the Al-Kadhimiyya shrine, the Al-Karkh area, Abu Nuwas Street and Haifa Street (p.22). However, the war and the international embargo against Iraq drained national resources, meaning these large scale renovations were abandoned in favour of projects on a smaller scale. The Victory Monument, the Shaheed Monument and a new Tomb to the Unknown Soldier stem from this period (Figure 9). All three feature a large open space, spaces that seem communal, but are actually rarely accessible to the public. Rather than being spaces of lived experience, these modernist-kitch monuments and their surroundings symbolise the promise of a unified Islamic and imperial Iraqi nation, but one that was never truly enacted. The Grand Festival Square for example is flanked by two giant victory arches each modelled after Saddam's own arms holding swords. Rather than marking empowered spaces, they give the impression of an

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

uninviting space, one only open to a select elite for festive celebrations of the divinised ruler.<sup>8</sup> These structures, advocating a particular Ba’thist brand of nationalism, pan-Arabism and anti-imperialist have in recent years been systematically eradicated by foreign and local forces alike in an attempt to suppress the trauma of history (Isakhan, 2011).<sup>9</sup> This has once again changed the face of Baghdad, leaving scars within its urban fabric, many of which have remained untended due to continuous warfare in the region.



**Figure 9:**  
Map of Baghdad in 2003.  
Source: Published in 2003 by the National Imagery and Mapping Agency of the United States Government (accessed via The University of Texas Libraries). Licenced under TITLE 17 U.S.C. Section 107 (PD-USGov).

This is not unique to Baghdad, and a parallel can be drawn between these attempts at control and the Stalinist and modernist reforms of the Soviet Union. The early five year plans for economic development along communist lines designed by the Soviet government from 1928 were heavily focussed on collectivisation and industrial

<sup>8</sup> For a comparable example see Rappaport's (1999, p. 201) description of the winning plans for the Palace of the Soviets designed by Boris Iofan, Vladimir Gafraikh and Vladimir Shchuko in the 1930s. This new structure replacing the recently demolished Cathedral of Christ the Savior featured a statue of Lenin elevated more than 400 meters above the city of Moscow.

<sup>9</sup> For examples of this see the famous case of the Firdows Square statue of Saddam torn down in 2003 and the unfulfilled proposal of the international committee for reviewing monuments to demolish the Victory Arch in 2007. This rejected proposal and the revised plans to restore the Victory arch years later is discussed in Myers (2011).

Van de Ven, A.

development, leading to a need for new urban infrastructure (Rappaport, 1999, p.43). Much like Ba'athist Iraq, these political and economic developments also manifested in a new ideological focus and the exponential growth in urban population. In the Soviet Union, the 'social realist' style was developed as an integration of this new ideology, industrial needs and architectural aesthetics (Balina & Dobrenko, 2011, p.191). Neo-classical, utopian civic buildings were constructed, colossal statues of government leaders were erected and wide, straight roads were planned with dramatic viewpoints and streamlined facades.<sup>10</sup> While these new government structures became more ornate and monumental, creating a larger-than-life almost divinised effect, housing was modern and modular, moving away from the landed housing of previous decades. This new spatial allocation was meant to 'inculcate socialist values, to affect how people thought and acted and thus help to produce a new man' (Lodder *et al.*, 2013, p.173). The ultimate alienating effect of this urban reorganisation and its association with the absolutist regime can be traced in their swift removal and alteration after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. An example of this is the re-painting of Soviet-era buildings in the Albanian town of Tirana (Pusca, 2008). Along with the Iraqi example, the Soviet attempt at spatial reorganisation reflects what Lefebvre (1968) refers to when he discusses the concept of spatial justice. In his view the organisation of space reflects and impacts on social relations. While the plans were made with specific, some might say utopic, social outcomes – unity and loyalty – in mind, their outcomes reflected a history of spatial injustice based in oppression and inequity.

### Ordering the City

While the history of Baghdad's spatial development clearly shows a number of changes and interventions into the urban landscape, there are a number of concepts that remain present throughout the various periods. Notions of order, authority, tradition, modernity, flexibility, resistance and the public are key to the planning and experience of open space in Baghdad. These are also the concepts that need to be considered in any heritage initiatives that take place within the city. Conservation is after all not just a matter of keeping things the way they are. It should be a process of interpretation and adaptation, one that takes into account the past, present and future of the object, structure or space being conserved. Therefore, heritage planning must include the associations accrued by the material as well as its place within current configurations – economic, political, cultural and social – and how its future relevance can be ensured.

---

<sup>10</sup> For examples of these see the standardised facades of the new Kalinin Prospect, the monumental architecture of the Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) and the planned Palace of the Soviets in Lang (2005). Many of these ideas were also included in the Moscow Master Plan of 1935.

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

As an element of urban planning, open space is necessarily connected to the concept of order. This includes the creation of categorisation, a logical model with clear divisions between various groups, and a sense of what is right and what is wrong. This notion of order is embedded even within the foundation narrative of the city. Al-Jahiz describes the round city as so perfect 'as if it were poured into a mould and cast' (Hourani & Stern, 1970, p.103). Space was structured and controlled, radial streets were laid out and movement through the city was guided. The open spaces remained controlled by the government and administration rather than being truly open to the people. This sense of order and control returns with the nineteenth and twentieth century attempts to transform the city into a modern entity. These initiatives clearly show the utopics of modernisation within Iraq (Widmer, 2014). If utopia was conceived of as a placeless space of modernity, order, obedience and homogeneity, these plans were an attempt to imbue real space with those qualities. Not only would space reflect a modern state, it would create the conditions for one. In Lefebvrian terms these theorisations account for physical space as perceived and mapped, cognitive representation of space in its existence as an idea or ideal, as a plan rather than a lived reality, and a representational space that is symbolic and can be appropriated, re-ordered through its use (Lefebvre, 1991, p.39).

What such projects ultimately fail to account for is that people do not live in a homogenous empty space that can be transformed towards specific aims (Foucault, 1984, p.47; Bachelard, 2010). Open space has the potential to take on meanings and behaviours not intended by its planners through the interactions occurring with and within it. Within Baghdad public space had to be carved out, often violently, for any opposition to be made apparent. An example of this is the various coups that took place in Baghdad from the late fifties to the seventies. These were not just sectarian spats, but full blown revolutions, reversing the homogenising utopics of open space to divisive heterotopias. However, these heterotopias needed to be made hegemonous upon the establishment of new power in order to avoid any repeated occurrence of public uprising, a feat that no one movement was fully able to achieve, though within independent Iraq Saddam's reign surely held on longest. Under Saddam architectural critic Nicolai Ouroussof (2003) describes this as a war against the public realm. Saddam's policy of using open space for the manifestation of authoritarian rule was not unique within Iraqi history. However, as his rule far outlasted that of his immediate predecessors, his own spatial policy was able to develop further, integrating the open spaces of the urban sphere into ideological performances buttressing his own power. In this way he was able to neutralise any opposition, making 'the spectacle of the public dissolve into public spectacle' (Mitchell, 1995, p.123). In fact, the open spaces he created became spectacles in and of themselves. The subsequent government regarded his so-called 'gifts to the city', including the Victory Arch, Monument to the Unknown

Van de Ven, A.

Soldier, Martyr Monument and his palace, as 'black holes in the city's fabric' (Ouroussoff, 2003). They were called public spaces, but a large proportion of the public was unable to access them bar with explicit invitation or with military escort. The restriction of space expresses the monopoly of the government in defining what it means to be part of the Iraqi nation. Rather than the expressive performance of individual identity, Saddam's nation was defined by its homogeneity in compliance, most clearly marked through its conformity to the rules of open space (Isakhan, 2011, p.258). This displays the inherent flaw in ascribing blanket definitions to public space (Marston, 1990, p.457).

From a purely democratic point of view, public spaces are meant to be spaces of construction and representation, where citizens are able to equally imagine and perform their identities in relation to each other and to the politics of the state. In totalitarian political reality, however, public spaces are rarely planned as sites of engagement, but rather function as 'platforms of display' (Shabout, 2014, p.163), whether that be the space of the market where 'bodies, words, actions and produce are on mutual display' (Hartley, 1992, pp.29-30), or the display of political propaganda. Especially in the latter case, open spaces become detached stage sets where public interaction with one another and the state is mediated through institutions and activities (Howell, 1993). The 'public activities' that occur within such spaces are inherently constricted to account for state interest in security. Like the liminal spaces defined by Turner (1969) in his rites of passage, the organisers recognise an imminent threat of diversity in the urban crowd. In the case of Baghdad social plurality was repeatedly discouraged, by the Ottomans, the British occupation, the monarchy, the republican government and the various installations of pan-Arab totalitarianism (Makiya, 1998). As Young (1990) would put it, the public here is a 'normative ideal', not an 'empirical description' (p.119). In such a theory public space is not a readily present space, it is one that must be materially constituted through appropriation; 'political movements must create the space in which they can be represented' (Mitchell, 1995, p.124). This then not only applies to the political bodies building these spaces, but also those groups who wish to oppose the government's propagated ideology.

If public space is truly a space for action, one 'created and maintained through an ongoing opposition of visions' (Mitchell, 1995, p.115), it needs to enable unmediated interaction, and access to the structures of power within a society. It is for this reason that Mitchell claims that public space is dying, its direct democratic role being curbed by constricting orderings of space, deliberately shaping the public realm into a theatre (Crilly, 1993, p.153). If we adhere to this theory then open space and public space are far from synonymous. Open space becomes a subaltern discursive arena where oppositional representations can thrive. This requires 'transformation from a monumental and official space into a genuine place of political discourse' (Calhoun, 1989, p.57). Open space can now be seen in broader terms as a complex but materially present layer of experience within a city,

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

one that is culturally diverse; one to which we respond and with which we interact. This is especially significant when discussing the development of urban areas in the Islamic world. Here the classificatory system often used for urban features, the division between public and private, open and closed, doesn't seem appropriate. In his chapter on the 'Construction of the Public Sphere in the Middle Eastern Medina', Anton Escher states that much urban space does not fit within these traditional categories of thought, but rather that it falls within a 'zone of transition', where the opposing forms of public and private are constantly intersecting (Nielsen & Skovgaard-Petersen, 2001, p.164).

### Conserving the Heritage of Baghdad

How then can we create a heritage plan that is flexible enough to allow for ideology and resistance, traditional ways of life and modern needs? In light of the current heritage crisis, the looting of artefacts and destruction of monuments within Iraq, most heritage plans focus on retrieving stolen antiquities and protecting the major listed sites such as Babylon or Ashur (ex. Global Heritage Fund). Though many plans include conservation efforts within Baghdad their focus has been limited to the museums, libraries and major historical buildings, and quite disconnected from wider urban restructuring plans (ex. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs; Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, 2011; UNESCO, 2003). While these priorities are understandable in the current crisis, experience in urban sites like Beirut show that integrated urban heritage projects are necessary to avoid the stalemate that ensues from contradictory plans for developers and conservationists (ex. Kullab, 2014). Beirut is another city with a long history of settlement and has also suffered a number of wars and invasions. After the 1975-1990 wars the city underwent a blitz archaeological assessment and a series of redevelopment plans. The city was in desperate need of new infrastructure and development companies were lining up to 'create a new city', but there was also a local movement to claim their own homes and heritage (Gebhardt, 2008). Edward Randall (2014) labels Beirut as a city of 'hybrid sovereignties' (p.5) a term borrowed from Sara Fregonese (2012), with projects being developed by various powerful interest groups with little cooperation and exchange, turning the urban landscape into another ideological battlefield. This title could also be ascribed to Baghdad, a city where ideology driven master plans followed one another in short succession in accordance with changing political and economic interests.

In discussing the recent sleuth of master plans developed for Baghdad, Yana Golubeva (2011) calls for an 'evolutionary approach'. The typical top down blanket-approach simplifies the urban setting to a series of modules ignoring the reality of the city as a process (Swyngedouw & Kaika, 2000, p.577). Just look at Al-Rashid Street, planned to stop the dense crowding of streets and disorderly conduct, its arcades were re-appropriated by the population to create narrow souk-like market atmospheres. Analysing such spaces in both their original design and their various alternate uses exemplifies the dynamism of

Van de Ven, A.

urban life, a dynamism that opposes the inflexibility of a master plan. These alternative uses mark change not only in its spatial configuration, but also government ideologies and to what extent the identities of the population actually coincide with these visions. In taking on the notion of open space through its lived experience, as a place, rather than just as a lifeless abstract category, it becomes clear that such spaces do indeed contribute to the heritage of the city. Al-Rashid Street for example contributes not only as a thoroughfare, but also as a market, a meeting place, and a place of resistance and of celebration of local culture.

According to UNESCO's *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* 'the urban area is understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or 'ensemble' to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting' (UNESCO, 2011, article 8). This broader urban context includes the open spaces of the city, these alternate nodes of resistance. In a city of 'hybrid sovereignties' the need for an integrated heritage plan in order to preserve such in-between spaces becomes more apparent. The existing plans for heritage conservation feature tools that could be repurposed to fit a more integrated plan. The use of GIS, or geographical mapping for example, allows for collaborative documentation with various layers coinciding with different urban conservation and development plans (ex. Agnew, Myers & Palumbo 2009; Global Heritage Fund; UNESCO, 2003). The necessity of public input is also one that can be transposed across both types of conservation. Many of the traditional archaeology-focused heritage plans incorporate initiatives for training local communities in conservation (ex. Agnew, Myers & Palumbo 2009; Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs; Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, 2011; Global Heritage Fund; UNESCO, 2003). This gives local populations additional skills, but also a forum in which to voice their expertise and to determine how spaces can be usefully and effectively reused. By allowing for dynamic use of space within heritage planning you empower people to give their own identity to their city, something that will become increasingly important in the future rebuilding of Baghdad.

### Conclusion

However modern Baghdad may have become, especially in the past century, it is important to note its political trajectory in order to understand its spatial development. The history of Baghdad reveals a number of influences on the structuring of the city, both formative and destructive. The notion of order as something imposed by an authority over a public, recurs throughout the history of Baghdad, as do tales of resistance to this order. Both these forces have come to shape the identity of the city that exists today, enhancing or concealing divisions that exist within its fabric and among its people. Already before the war space had become fragmented, the hurried modernisation affecting the meanings and types of spaces in the city. The resulting open spaces have no clear identity, as Al-Hasani (2012) argues

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

they have lost their references in the confusion of various spatial languages (p.84). This provides problems for heritage management, as there is no longer a coherent urban space to preserve, but rather a scattered array of urban patterns that, due to their brash construction, have not yet developed into a strong relationship between the people and their living space (Hillier 2007, p.20). This has meant that habits and values have not developed analogous to the alteration of physical space. The solution to this within heritage management has often been the preservation of what is perceived as traditional, historic space, while labelling any modern spatial alterations as invasive and not worth protecting (Al-Salam, 1998; Bakare, 2011). Though it can be argued that much of the modern open spaces of the city were constructed after the demolition of much of the historic centre, it is still an important part of Baghdad's urban history and of the morphology of spatial function. Therefore rather than rejecting modern alterations as invalid, efforts should be made to reconcile the spaces, and integrate existing social processes and spatial needs. This will help to reorient the use of open space, recognising its formative qualities, while simultaneously subverting the negative encounter with recent urban transformations. In light of recent developments in Iraq, including the 2003 Iraq War, sectarian violence, the new Iraqi government, the continued instability in the current conflict with ISIS, and the associated destruction of urban landscapes, heritage management has become even more central to post-conflict rehabilitation in Iraq. In order to conserve the heritage of an area that has undergone acute redevelopment, it is necessary to have an in depth understanding of the conditions within which these changes occurred in the past, and continue to occur in the present. This does not only apply to the life cycle of built structures, but also to open spaces. The description of Baghdad provided herein integrates this need to analyse urban planning, historiography and local experience to facilitate a management plan that reconciles a series of diverse functions and forms of space and spatialisation.

Baghdad offers a further incentive as it challenges commonly held notions of public and open space. The dominant tendency to conflate the two has led to an urban analysis that is deterministic, applying a rigid structure to incommensurable urban forms. More suitable is a definition that allows for variation in spatial relations across cultures, genders, classes and the like. In cities like Baghdad – where urban reform has tended to originate in totalitarian, rather than democratic, decision making – there has been a need to reconsider the traditional categorisation of space. Open space, without necessarily functioning as public space, has the power to influence and transform both local identities and the city within which it operates, recognising open space as an essential and integral part of the urban fabric is therefore critical for both informing and guiding cultural heritage management.

Van de Ven, A.

## References

- › Abbas, S.S. & Al-Dujaili, S.H.A. (2013). Historical Paths and the Growth of Baghdad Old Centre. *Journal of Engineering*. 19(9): 1073-1093.
- › Ager, S.L. & Faber, R. (2013). *Belonging and isolation in the Hellenistic world*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
- › Agnew, N., Myers, D. & Palumbo, G. (2009). The GCI-WMF Iraq Cultural Heritage Conservation Initiative: Building Professional Capacity for Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management. *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites*. 11(3-4): 340-50.
- › Ahola, J. & Osti, L. (2013). Appendix: Baghdad at the Time of Al-Muqtadir. In van Berkel, M., El Cheikh, N., Kennedy, H. & Osti L. (eds.) *Crisis and continuity and the Abbasid Court*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV.
- › Al-Akkam, A.J.M. (2013). Urban Heritage in Baghdad: Toward a Comprehensive Sustainable Framework. *Journal of Sustainable Development*. 6(2): 39-55.
- › Al-Bagdadi, A.K. (trans. 1904). *L' introduction topographique á l'histoire de Bagdâdh d'Aboû Bakr Ahmad Ibn Thâbit Al-Khatîb al-Bagdâdhî*. Paris: Bouillon.
- › Al-Hasani, M.K. (2012). Urban Space Transformation in Old City of Baghdad. *Megaron*, 7(S1): 79-90.
- › Al-Musawi, M.J. (2009). *The Islamic Context of the Thousand and One Nights*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- › Al-Salam, I.A. (1998). Architectural Characteristics of The Islamic City. *Fountain Magazine*. Iss. 21.
- › Antrim, Z. (2012). *Routes and realms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- › Arrian. (trans. 2004) *Anabasis of Alexander*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- › Bachelard, G. (2010). *The Poetics of Space*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- › Bakare, L. (2011). Architecture – modernism v traditionalism. *The Guardian*. Retrieved October 26, 2015, from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/aug/05/architecture-modernism-vs-traditionalism-olympics>
- › Balina, M. & Dobrenko, E. (2011). *Petrified Utopias: Happiness Soviet Style*. London: Anthem Press.
- › Ibn Battuta. (trans. 1982). *Voyages*. Paris: Maspero.
- › Bosworth, C.E. (2007). *Historic cities of the Islamic world*. Leiden: Brill.
- › Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Iraq Cultural Heritage Initiative. *Cultural Heritage Centre*. Retrieved December 22, 2015, from <http://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/iraq-cultural-heritage-initiative>
- › Burton, R.F. (1885). *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*. London: The Burton Club.
- › Cahen, C. (1962). Baġdâd au Temps de ses Derniers Califes. *Arabica*. 9(3): 289-302.

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

- › Calhoun, C. (1989). Tiananmen, Television and the Public Sphere. *Public Culture*. 2(1): 54-71.
- › Canard, M. (1962). Bağdād au I<sup>ve</sup> Siècle de l'Hégire (Xe siècle de l'ère chrétienne). *Arabica*. 9(3): 267-287.
- › Carr, S., Francis, M., Rivlin, L.G. & Stone, A.M. (1992). *Public Space*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- › Cesariano, C. d. L. (1521). *De Architectura*. Como: Cesariano.
- › Chandrasekaran, R. (2006). *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc.
- › Crilley, D. (1993). Megastructures and Urban Change: Aesthetics, Ideology and Design. In Knox, P. (ed.) *The Restless Urban Landscape*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- › Dannenfeldt, K.H. (1968). *Leonhard Rauwolf*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- › Dumper, M. & Stanley, B.E. (2007). *Cities of the Middle East and North Africa: A Historical Encyclopedia*. Oxford: ABC-CLIO.
- › Elsheshtawy, Y. (2004). *Planning Middle Eastern Cities*. London: Routledge.
- › Embassy of the United States in Baghdad, Iraq (2011). Iraq Cultural Heritage Project. *Cultural Heritage Projects*. Retrieved December 22, 2015, from <http://iraq.usembassy.gov/projects.html>
- › Evliya, C. (trans. 1988). *Evliya Çelebi's book of travels. Volume 4*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- › Foucault, M. (1984). Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias. *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité*. 5: 46-49.
- › Fregonese, S. (2012). Urban Geopolitics 8 Years on: Hybrid Sovereignties, the Everyday, and Geographies of Peace. *Geography Compass*. 6(5): 290-303.
- › Gebhardt, H. (2008). *Urban Governance im Libanon. Studien zu Akteuren und Konflikten in der städtischen Entwicklung nach dem Bürgerkrieg*. Heidelberg: Heidelberger Geographische Studien.
- › Ghaidan, U. (2008). Damage to Iraq's Wider Heritage. In Peter G. Stone and Joanne F. Bajjaly (eds.) *The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd.
- › Global Heritage Fund. The Iraq Heritage Program – Saving Our Cradles of Civilization. *Open Context*. Retrieved December 22, 2015, from <http://opencontext.org/projects/GHF1PRJ0000000025>
- › Golubeva, Y. (2011). Evolutionary approach towards redevelopment of historical sites versus complete erasure. Case study Kadhimiya historical centre, Baghdad, Iraq, *47th International Society of City and Regional Planners Congress*.
- › Gordon, D. (2006). *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*. London: Routledge.
- › Hartley, J. (1992). *The Politics of Pictures*. London: Routledge.
- › Hillier, B. (2007). *Space is the Machine*. London: Space Syntax.
- › Hourani, A.H. & Stern, S.M. (1970). *The Islamic City*. Oxford: Cassirer.

Van de Ven, A.

- › Howell, P. (1993). Public Space and the Public Sphere. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 11: 303-322.
- › Irwin, R. (2003). *The Arabian Nights: A Companion*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- › Isakhan, B. (2011). Targeting the Symbolic Dimension of Baathist Iraq: Cultural Destruction, Historical Memory, and National Identity. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. 4(3): 257-281.
- › Jones, J. F., & Collingwood, W. (1854). *Ground plan of the enceinte of Baghdad: The capital of Irak-Mesopotamia, called also Dar-es-Selam and Medinet-al-Kholafa in Arab M.S.S.* Bombay: Government at the Bombay Education Society's Press.
- › Kennedy, H. (2004). The True Caliph of the Arabian Nights. *History Today*. 54(9). Retrieved April 25, 2015, from <http://www.historytoday.com/hugh-kennedy/true-caliph-arabian-nights>
- › Khalidi, T. (1994). *Arabic historical thought in the classical period*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- › Kiet, A. (2011). Arab Culture and Urban Form. *Focus*. 8(1): 36-45.
- › Kullab, S. (2014). Fight builds for Beirut's cultural heritage. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved December 22, 2015, from <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/lebanon-beirut-cultural-heritage-roadway-201491212562380961.html>
- › Lang, J. (2005). *Urban Design: A Typology of Procedures and Products*. Burlington, MA: Elsevier/Architectural Press
- › Lassner, J. (1966). Massignon and Baghdad. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*. 9(1/2): 1-27.
- › Lassner, J. (1968). The Caliph's Personal Domain. *Kunst des Orients*. 5(1): 24-36.
- › Lefebvre, H. (1968). *Le Droit à la Ville*. Paris: Anthropos.
- › Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- › LeStrange, G. (1900 [1983]). *Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- › Levine, N. (2015). Plan for the Expansion of Baghdad Anchored by a Cultural Center, 1957. In *The Urbanism of Frank Lloyd Wright*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- › Levy, R. (2011). *A Baghdad Chronicle*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- › Lodder, C., Kokkori, M. & Mileeva, M. (2013). *Utopian Reality: Reconstructing Culture in Revolutionary Russia and Beyond*. Leiden: Brill.
- › Low, S. and Smith, N. (eds) (2013) *The Politics of Public Space*. London: Routledge.
- › Makiya, K. (1991). *The Monument*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- › Makiya, K. (1998). *Republic of Fear*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.
- › Mantran, R. (1962). Bagdad à l'Epoque Ottoman. *Arabica*. 9(3): 311-324.
- › Marozzi, J. (2014). Baghdad: the psychological toll of being the world's most attacked city. *The Guardian*. Retrieved December 18, 2015, from <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/jun/20/baghdad-iraq-psychological-toll-worlds-most-attacked-city>

## THE SPATIALISATION STRUGGLE: THE HERITAGE OF OPEN SPACES IN BAGHDAD

- › Marston, S. (1990). Who are “The People”. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*. 8: 449-458.
- › Marzolph, U. (2006). *The Arabian Nights Reader*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- › Massignon, L. (1910). *Mission en Mésopotamie (1907-1908)*. Le Caire: Impr. de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- › Massignon, L. & Blachère, R. (1962). Le Symbolisme Médiéval de la Destinée de Bagdād. *Arabica*. 9(3): 249-250.
- › Mas'udi. (trans. 1989). *The Meadows of Gold*. London: Kegan Paul.
- › Mattar, P. (2004). *Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East & North Africa*. Detroit, MN: Macmillan.
- › Mitchell, D. (1995). The End of Public Space?. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 85(1): 108-133.
- › Muir, W. (1883). *Annals of the Early Caliphate, from original sources*. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
- › Myers, S. L. (2011). Iraq Restores Monument Symbolizing Hussein Era. *New York Times*. Retrieved December 18, 2015, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/world/middleeast/06iraq.html>
- › Nassar, H. (1992). *Rihlat Ibn Jubayr*. Cairo: Maktabat Misr.
- › Negoita, A.M. (2011). The City of Mansure the Builder. *Romanian Review of Political Sciences and International Relations*. 8(2): 111-126.
- › Nielsen, H.C.K., & Skovgaard-Petersen, J. (2001). *Middle Eastern cities, 1900-1950*. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press.
- › Ouroussoff, N. (2003). In Search of Baghdad; Patron of Fear. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved April 23, 2015, from <http://articles.latimes.com/2003/dec/15/entertainment/et-ouroussoff15>
- › Polsevice Consulting Engineers. (1973). *Comprehensive Development Plan for Baghdad 2000*. Warsaw: Polservice Consulting Engineers.
- › Powers, R.S. (2012). *Protest, Power and Change*. London: Routledge.
- › Prendergast, W.J. (1915). *The Maqámát of Badí' Al-Zamán Al-Hamadhání*. London: Luzac & Co.
- › Pusca, A. (2008). The Aesthetic of Change: Exploring Post-Communist Spaces. *Global Society*. 22(3): 369-386.
- › Pyla, P. (2008). Back to the Future: Doxiadis's Plans for Baghdad. *Journal of Planning History*. 7(1): 3-19.
- › Randall, E. (2014). Reconstruction and Fragmentation in Beirut. *Working Papers: Divided Cities/Contested States*. 29.
- › Rappaport, H. (1999). *Joseph Stalin: A Biographical Companion*. Oxford: ABC CLIO.
- › Roose, E. (2009). *The Architectural Representation of Islam: Muslim-commissioned Mosque Design in the Netherlands*. Leiden: Amsterdam University Press.

Van de Ven, A.

- › Said, E.W. (1978 [2014]). *Orientalism*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- › Shabout, N. (2014). Whose Space Is It?. *Roundtable*. 263: 163-165.
- › Snir, R. (2013). *Baghdad: the city in verse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- › Sourdel, D. (1962). Baġdād, Capitale du Nouvel Empire ‘Abbāsīde. *Arabica*. 9(3): 251-265.
- › Susa, A. (1952). *Atlas Baghdad*. Baghdad: Al-Masaha Al-Ama Printing.
- › Swyngedouw, E. & Kaika, M. (2000). The environment of the city or . . . the urbanisation of nature. In G. Bridge and S. Watson (eds.) *Companion to Urban Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell
- › Tabari. (trans. 1989-1999). *The History of Al-Tabari*. Albany, NY: SUNY press.
- › Tavernier, J. (1677). *The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier*. London: Printed by William Godbid.
- › Turner, V.W. (1969). *The Ritual Process*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- › UNESCO (2003). *Call to protect and preserve Iraqi Cultural Heritage*. Retrieved December 23, 2015, from [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/17412/10717613393Brochure\\_Iraq.pdf/Brochure%2BIraq.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/17412/10717613393Brochure_Iraq.pdf/Brochure%2BIraq.pdf).
- › UNESCO (2011). *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*. Retrieved December 23, 2015, from <http://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/638>
- › Widmer, T. (2014) Walter Gropius' Lost Architectural Dream for Iraq. *The Boston Globe*. Retrieved October 26, 2015, from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2014/08/02/walter-gropius-lost-architectural-dream-for-iraq/raRIOjzPUBY1NovMwwYbBN/story.html>
- › Yaacobi, A. (1996). *Development of the theory of the institution of hisbah in medieval Islam*. University of Edinburgh Literatures, Languages, and Cultures PhD thesis collection.
- › Yamada, S. (1985). *Baghdad 1979-83*. Tokyo: Process Architecture Publishing Company.
- › Young, I.M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- › Zahm, J.A. (1922). *From Berlin to Bagdad and Babylon*. New York: D. Appleton and Co.

# PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

Elena Greco

Politecnico di Torino, Italy

The issues of promotion and preservation of urban landscapes are increasingly gaining prominence in international cultural and political debates. These issues can lead to tensions, especially for historical cities, partly because the concept of urban landscape as an element of cultural heritage is still to be acknowledged, particularly on a legislative level. Nevertheless, as the paper highlights, this concept was theorized in Europe for the reconstruction of historical cities in the second post-war period. This paper focuses on the French and Italian debates of the post-World War II decades, because they both elaborated concepts of urban landscape which were particularly advanced for the time. This article attempts to demonstrate their possible influence on the contemporary international debate developed by UNESCO between 2005 and 2011. Furthermore, this paper inspects the origins of the concept of the historic centre, developed particularly in Italy during the 1960s, and examines its relationship with the urban landscape. The reasons for the success of the historic centre are highlighted together with the simultaneous failure of the urban landscape at the legislative level, by inspecting the similarities, the divergences, and the historical connection between the two notions.

*Keywords:* Urban Landscape, Cultural Heritage, Historic Centre.

Please cite this article as: Greco, E., Preserving and Promoting the Urban Landscape. The French and Italian Debates of the Post-World War II Decades *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.5vol.02>

Greco, E.

## Introduction

Over the last decades, the urban landscape has been receiving an increasing attention from researchers, planners and cultural institutions. In this paper, the concept of urban landscape is considered to be a component of urban heritage, an outcome of historical stratification, and it is linked to the city's own identity and perceived image. As the paper highlights, this concept was theorised throughout the second post-war reconstruction decades, when the issue of the relationships between the historical city and modern architecture and urban planning became particularly significant. Nevertheless, the concept was not able to achieve tangible results in protection practices, which even today concerns specific historic urban areas.

Since cities are now facing another important period of change, this issue of harmonisation between modern architecture and historical urban form has returned as a current problem, making the notion of urban landscape particularly relevant. Indeed, from the late 1980s to the present, because of the industrial crisis and the spread of the competitive global market, European cities have faced very intense urban transformations, which have affected their physical fabric. The goal of ensuring competitiveness and attractive prospects for investors has caused the urban landscape to become the object of a very awkward negotiation process between local authorities and private investors. For these reasons, many urban landscapes, even in historical cities, have changed dramatically, trying to conform to the image of global business cities (Appert & Montes, 2015). A massive number of skyscrapers has been built worldwide even close to historic city centres, whose preservation is not provided in relation with the context. London is a prime example: by ensuring the preservation of local heritage only through the protected viewing corridors policy, introduced in 1991, it has deeply changed its own landscape becoming a global city (Appert, 2008).

The reason for the vertical growth of cities is not only attributable to property speculation, but also to the need of municipal authorities to put cities into the competitive global market. As is often the case in periods of crisis or change, architecture 'is called upon to constitute the language for a society in search of a new identity, for corporations and cities in need of re-branding' (Kaika, 2010, p. 458). The urban landscape, or rather the "skyline", is supposed to be able to attract multiple stakeholders activating a globalization process of the image of cities.

Although some researchers have highlighted the importance of urban identity as a resource for the competitiveness of cities (Kotler, Haider & Rein, 1993), this awareness is still to be acquired by most local decision makers. Furthermore, the latter do not always have adequate cultural skills to understand, and consequently to preserve, the urban landscape, which is a concept that is not well-established even among academics. This explains why

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

international institutions, including the United Nations Organisations UNESCO and ICOMOS, have recently expressed their concerns regarding historical cities, by stating the need for a new reflection on urban landscape, defining it as an important element of the urban heritage, and giving some guidelines to the municipal authorities on how to preserve it (UNESCO, 2011).

Nevertheless, as the paper highlights, this concept of urban landscape as part of the city identity and its cultural heritage has been theorized quite early in the European professional and legislative debates, even before the concept of historic centre, contrary to what one might assume. Italy and France played a key role in this debate, because of the qualitative and quantitative composition of their urban heritage and, above all, because of a long-standing tradition of public heritage protection.

By inquiring into the French and Italian debates of the post-World War II period, the paper aims to highlight the reasons for the failure of the urban landscape concept, at least at the legislative level. Indeed, urban landscape is the literal translation for the Italian *paesaggio urbano* and the French *paysage urbain*, which were elaborated respectively by the Italian and the French architects in the early decades of the post-World War II period. They both concerned the urban form, but corresponded to a complex concept dealing with the urban fabric, the skyline, the perspectives, and the perception of the city identity in general. In this sense the urban landscape was related to the urban heritage: the latter was conceived as the physical historic structure of the city, which included the historic monuments as well as the urban fabric and the spatial features. This conceptual elaboration, in addition to legitimizing the literal translation urban landscape, reveals the plausible cultural connection between the contemporary international debate and the French and Italian ones of the post-World War II decades.

To test this hypothesis, the historical perspective was adopted, in order to shed light on the cultural roots of the most recent debates about the protection of urban landscape in historical cities. Furthermore, because the theorisations of the French and Italian debates of the post-World War II decades were extremely forward-looking, it is hoped that this in-depth analysis will strengthen the contemporary debate, whose issues are still open questions.

To trace the debates the main sources of my research were the Italian and French professional journals, specifically *Urbanistica*, *Metron*, *L'architettura*, *Cronache e storia*, *Casabella*, *Urbanisme*, *Monuments Historiques*, *La Vie Urbaine*, *Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. They were chosen because of their prestige during the time span studied, and their significance in relation to the topic. In addition, conference proceedings, publications and newspapers' articles were also considered. Finally, the professional debate and theoretical

Greco, E.

propositions have been compared to the legislative documents with the objective of understanding which aspects of the cultural debate triggered preservation and urban renewal practices.

### **At the origins of the concept: the townscape and the critique of the Modern urban planning**

In the post-World War II period, facing the problem of reconstruction, European planners and architects developed a highly intense debate about historical cities. From the late 1940s, the *Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM) began to question the modern urbanism elaborated in the previous decades, namely the notion of functional zoning, introducing the concept of 'humanisation' of the city (Tyrwitt *et al* 1952). This context led to a discussion about the urban landscape, whose origins are to be found in the British concept of townscape (Pousin, 2007; Marchigiani, 2002) developed in the late 1940s and promoted in *The Architectural Review*, particularly by Hubert de Cronin Hastings and Gordon Cullen.

The townscape, in turn originated from the visual planning approach –studied in the 1940s by Nikolaus Pevsner under the commission of Hastings (Pevsner, 2010)– was conceived as a response to the modern urban planning and its lack of beauty. By highlighting the picturesque tradition of British urban forms, the townscape was oriented to insert modern buildings into the fabric of the historic city, improving the aesthetic features of the urban setting. These features were not necessarily supposed to be historical, but they had to belong to the identity of the place and its 'genius loci' (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). Therefore the preservation of the historical city was a collateral theme, whereas the main aim was the improvement of the whole image of the city, although in later publications Cullen focused on historic and vernacular urban forms (Cullen, 1971). This made way for the interpretation of the townscape with a conservative and nostalgic concept (MacArthur & Aitchison, 2010). As a matter of fact, the townscape was a strategy to promote cultural continuity, addressing the built-up environment as a whole (Erten, 2015). Furthermore, it was supposed to be at the centre of a new urban planning model, which was very close to what nowadays is called 'urban design' (Marchigiani, 2002). In fact, the focus was particularly on the street furniture and on the elegance of the urban surrounding, which was supposed to be cleared of the shop and road signs and of the visual pollution of the modern urban lifestyle in general.

The most innovative aspect introduced by the townscape, which was inherited by the French and Italian concepts of urban landscape, is the focus on the visual perception, which was studied and developed with the help of sketches and photographs (Gosling, 1996). This method generated a special kind of layout in which pictures took precedence over the text, and which was to influence both Italian and French journals.

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

In sealing the end of the quantitative approach of the Modern urban planning, this aspect was not only innovative, but also very up-to-date. Indeed, the current definition of landscape given by the European Landscape Convention appeals to perception: 'Landscape is an area, as perceived by people' (Council of Europe, 2000, art. 1.a).

The study of the visual perception of places was to develop from the 1960s among many international research projects belonging to different disciplines, such as urban planning (Lynch, 1960), psychology (Arnheim, 1969) and geography (Tuan, 1974).

### The birth of the Italian and French debates about Urban Landscape

Although some visual analyses of historical cities were developed even in Italy during the second post-war years (Trincanato 1948; Pane 1949), at the outset both the Italian and the French cultural debates referred to the British concept of townscape, probably due to the communication skills of the *Architectural Review's* campaigns. However, their own urban theory and proposals for reform developed in a very different way. Indeed, rather than focusing on urban design, Italian and French planners faced the problem of transformation and preservation of historical cities. Nevertheless, because of their different cultural backgrounds, the two countries developed the concept differently the one from the other. In Italy, the debate on *paesaggio urbano* developed in the 1950s principally among the Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica (INU), that is the National Institute of Urban Planning, therefore it was forthwith integrated into the issues of urban planning. The figures who mainly developed this idea were Eduardo Vittoria and Giuseppe Samonà. In the Italian debate, two INU conferences were particularly important: the one in Lucca in 1957, *Difesa e valorizzazione del paesaggio urbano e rurale*, ('Protection and enhancement of the urban and rural landscape'), and the one in Lecce in 1959, *Il volto della città*, ('The face of the city'). Indeed, the expression *volto della città* was intended as synonym of the term *paesaggio urbano*, although the latter finally prevailed. At that time, the Italian legislation regulated conservation practices only for historical monuments or natural landscapes and special panoramas (L. 788/1922, L. 1089/1939, L. 1497/1939). Therefore, the INU debates were particularly innovative because they were able to introduce the idea of extending conservation practices to urban areas. This idea developed in the 1960s, but the protection addressed specific urban areas, for which the term "historic centre" was adopted. Nevertheless, during the second half of the 1950s, the Italian architects elaborated a very complex concept of urban landscape, which dealt with the whole – historical and contemporary – urban image, and which combined the practices of preservation and transformation of the city:

Greco, E.

‘The ambition of a new landscape springs from a reflection on the whole existing landscape that cannot be separated into its good and bad parts, according to a schematic division of historical periods. [...] On the contrary, the reality that today we want to preserve, [...] is that of the city as a whole: the landscape we speak about is the entire urban landscape, expression – in its contrasting aspects – of different moments of human civilisation and not only particularly happy moments’ (Vittoria 1958, p. 118)<sup>1</sup>.

The discipline chosen to guarantee this combination was urban planning, whose goal was to promote an active protection of the historical urban values through the city plan, going beyond the protective restrictions (Piccinato 1955; Vittoria 1957; Christen 1958; Benevolo 1958; Samonà 1958). In France, the debate about urban landscape developed in the 1960s, and it was initially related to the concept of ‘art urbain’, which originated in the first half of the twentieth century (Jannièrè 2007). *Art urbain* was conceived as an intermediate discipline between architecture and urban planning, which intended to promote the harmonisation of urban elements within their visual perception (Magnan, 1966). From this point of view, the notion was quite similar to the British concept of townscape. The notion of *paysage urbain* was related to the aesthetic features of French historical cities, and it did not focus on urban planning. It shared the criticism of the townscape debate to the modern urban planning and its lack of beauty, but it considered also its lack of attention to the individual as well as the social wellness:

‘The concept of urban landscape, in contrast with rural landscape, expresses the new scale of urban design embodied in this new word of “townscape” which has recently appeared. [...] Practices such as the enhancement of the site’s topography; [...] or the search for embellishment of urban silhouettes, have to provide the same emotions in the future and to allow us to find the “climate” and character of cities which have finally become personalised, thus offering men those subjective elements of beauty and harmony which are now lacking in our technical civilisation’ (De Hoym De Marien, 1964, p. 74)<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘L’ambizione di un nuovo paesaggio nasce da una riflessione su tutto il paesaggio esistente che non può essere scisso nelle sue parti buone e nelle sue parti cattive, secondo una schematica suddivisione dei periodi storici. [...] Al contrario, la realtà che oggi interessa salvaguardare, [...] è quella della città nel suo complesso: il paesaggio del quale parliamo è tutto il paesaggio urbano, espressione – nei suoi contrastanti aspetti– di momenti diversi della civiltà umana e non solo di momenti particolarmente felici’. English translation by the author.

<sup>2</sup> ‘La notion de paysage urbain en opposition avec paysage rural exprime bien la nouvelle échelle de l’esthétique urbaine concrétisée par ce nouveau mot de “townscape” apparu dernièrement. [...] Mise en valeur de la topographie du site ; [...] recherche d’embellissement des silhouettes urbaines, doivent nous procurer demain les mêmes émotions et nous permettre de retrouver le “climat” et le caractère des villes enfin personnalisées, offrant à l’homme ces éléments subjectifs de beauté et d’harmonie qui lui font défaut dans notre civilisation technique’. English translation by the author.

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

Starting from the 1960s the French architects and planners dissociated themselves from the recent experiences of the *grands ensembles*, condemning them firstly for their lack of beauty and aesthetic quality, or better the insufficient quality of the *art urbain* (Magnan, 1966). Therefore new attention was given to historical cities, even rehabilitating a key figure such as Camillo Sitte (Sitte, 1889) in the review process of the Modern Movement (Spagnoli, 1994). Within the critiques of modern urbanisation, the urban landscape was described, even by geographers such as Philippe Pinchemel (1964), as a concept linked to urban heritage and its visual perception. Indeed, in France the term of urban landscape appeared in the 1960s both in the fields of Urban Planning and Geography, probably because of the presence of many geographers in Commissions and Research groups of the Ministry of Urban Planning (Jannièrè & Pousin, 2007).

It was only in the 1970s, within the context of the environmental issues and the influence of Italian culture (Cohen, 1984) that the concept of *paysage urbain* became explicitly associated with public spaces and the question of urban planning. Although the French architects and planners abandoned the concept of *art urbain* and focused on the environmental aspects of the urban landscape, the perceptible dimension deriving from the British notion of townscape was never reduced. Indeed, in the 1970s the urban landscape was also defined as ‘visual environment’ (Delfante, 1972).

There is no doubt that the notion of *paysage urbain* was able to animate the French debate for longer, whose main figure was Charles Delfante.

### The turning point between the Italian and the French debates

It is interesting to note that the Italian cultural debate on urban landscape dwindled at the same moment as the French one gathered momentum. This turning point corresponds with the early 1960s. In this period the Italian planners, having argued for the need to transfer the debate from the technical to the legal level, delegated the legislative reform of planning to the political action, and focused on morphological studies. The theoretical elaboration was therefore delivered into the hands of the Ministry of Public Works, and in 1964 a parliamentary Commission was instituted: the *Commissione d'indagine per la tutela e la valorizzazione del patrimonio storico, archeologico, artistico e del paesaggio*, (‘Inquiry Commission for the protection and the promotion of the historical, archeological, artistic heritage and landscape’). As it was chaired by Francesco Franceschini, member of the Italian Parliament, the Commission is usually named *Commissione Franceschini*.

In 1966 the Commission published a final document which is particularly interesting for the potential contribution to the cultural and legislative debate. Indeed, by defining the concepts of urban landscape, historic centre and cultural property, the Commission offered a global vision which recognised and re-elaborated the notions theorised in the

Greco, E.

national and international debate<sup>3</sup>. In particular, the urban landscape was defined as cultural heritage in constant evolution, whose preservation for future generations has to be taken into consideration in all practices of creation and transformation of the city. Furthermore, the Commission affirmed the importance of the cultural issues besides the social and economic requests within the urban transformation practices (Commissione d'indagine per la tutela e la valorizzazione del patrimonio storico, archeologico, artistico e del paesaggio, 1966).

The document of the Franceschini Commission was published in 1967 and was widely praised at the level of the cultural debate, but it had no outcomes in terms of legislation (Pallottino, 1987). In fact, it did not lead to any legislative reform in the field of cultural heritage, which would be achieved in Italy only in 1999.

On the contrary, in France it was exactly from the mid 1960s that the cultural debate took into consideration the issues of urban landscape. It was from this period that some planners, such as Charles Delfante, began to travel to the USA, coming into contact with the academic research of Kevin Lynch and his team on the image of the city (Lynch, 1960). Indeed, from 1964 onwards the magazine *Urbanisme* published many articles about urban landscape, most of them signed by Charles Delfante himself.

The influence of Kevin Lynch on the French debate can be observed in the importance given to the role of movement in perceiving landscape, in turn linked to time. The latter was defined as the fourth dimension of urban landscape (Delfante, 1972). Nevertheless, the most important reference, even for the French architects and planners, was the British concept of townscape, which had been disseminated by Gordon Cullen some years before through his publication (Cullen, 1961).

### **Urban Landscape and Historic Centre: legislative outcomes of the theoretical debates**

Another important interpretative concern, especially regarding Italy, is the connection between the urban landscape and the historic centre concepts. Indeed, as mentioned above, at the end of the 1950s, the cultural debate on historical cities was particularly intense in Italy. A crucial year was 1959, which corresponded to the peak of the debate on urban landscape and, simultaneously, to the origin of the term *centro storico*. Therefore, the first important data emerging from the research is that the concept of historic centre originated from the debate on urban landscape, and not vice-versa.

---

<sup>3</sup> Respectively: the two INU Conferences of Lucca 1957 and Lecce 1959; the Gubbio Convention about the protection of Historic Centers, 17-19 September 1960; the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, The Hague, 14 May 1954.

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

This fact is quite astonishing, because the historic centre, corresponding to the most ancient area of historical cities – usually the inner city – lies between the concepts of historic monument and urban landscape, and implies an intermediate notion of protection. Indeed, the latter concerns the preservation of monuments and buildings, urban fabric, materials, volumes, and the general image of the area, including its three-dimensional perception. Nevertheless, the protected area is geographically limited, therefore the preservation cannot include its background, its relationship with the site, and its landscape.

Although the urban landscape concept may therefore be intended as a development of the historic centre notion, in Italy it was the contrary. This hypothesis is confirmed by the chronological and theoretical analysis. In fact, the last Italian congress on urban landscape was in 1959, whereas the first regarding the historic centre was in 1960. In addition, if we consider that many of the architects and planners involved were the same for both congresses, we can argue that the debate on historic centre was a derivation of the debate on urban landscape. Furthermore, the two cultural debates had originally many points in common: they both opted for urban planning rather than conservative restoration to preserve the historical values of cities, and they both asked for a legislative reform, in order to unify the laws of preservation, n. 1089 and n. 1497 of 1939, with the law of town planning, n. 1150 of 1942. This cultural affinity was explicitly confirmed by the Italian planner Giovanni Astengo, who participated to both congresses (Astengo, 1960).

As proven by the Italian legislative documents, the notion of historic centre predominated over that of urban landscape. Indeed, while the urban landscape is not cited in any legislative document, the Law n. 765 of 1967 –through its ministerial decree n.1444 of 1968– introduced some modifications to the town planning Law of 1942, among them the border delimitation of the historical and artistic areas.

Nevertheless, neither of the two cultural debates was able to obtain the legislative reform, unifying preservation and urban planning. This fact reveals the substantial detachment existing in Italy between the cultural and the political milieus, neither of which was effectively able to cooperate in the field of urban planning legislation (De Lucia, 1989). Presumably, this was not the only reason for the failure of the urban landscape concept on the legislative level. The need to allow land development, which was very intense in Italy during the 1960s, probably was a reason to prefer the concept of historic centre to that of urban landscape. Indeed, regarding the preservation of a delimited portion of land, the former was less restrictive than the latter. Moreover, as a consequence of the urban restoration practices of inner cities, land and property values increased, which would be a very important feature with the coming of a *laissez-faire* policy.

Greco, E.

Furthermore, it must be considered that in the post-World War II decades, until the mid-1980s, most of the Italian historic centres were in great urban decline, with numerous critical consequences from a social and a sanitary point of view. In this context, it is understandable that Italian planners and architects, together with the politicians and public opinion, preferred to concentrate on the emergency of historic centre rather than on the discussion about urban landscape, heritage and identity, which probably were perceived as too conceptual and theoretical. As a matter of fact, the concept of historic centre achieved tangible results in Italian conservation practices, while the concept of urban landscape is still being theorized, at least on a legislative level.

In the 1970s the Italian architects rejected the concept of urban landscape, and concentrated exclusively to the one of historic centre. On the contrary, in the same period the French cultural debate elaborated a complex notion of urban landscape, which concerned the heritage as well as the planning issues. As mentioned above, especially after the oil crisis of 1973, the French architects and planners abandoned the concept of *art urbain* and focused on the environmental aspects of the urban landscape.

This theoretical evolution was reflected by the legislative framework: from the *Loi Malraux* of 1962, concerning the protection of the *secteurs sauvegardés*, meaning portions of historical cities, it proceeded to the *Loi sur l'architecture* of 1977, which insisted on the integration of architecture in the context.

The analysis of the French legislation reveals an equal and opposite situation compared to the Italian one. In France not only did the political action precede the cultural issues, but sometimes it anticipated them, as in the case of the *Loi Malraux*. In fact, dating back to 1962, the Law anticipated the cultural debate on urban landscape by only a few years. The latter would be developed after 1964.

The cohesion between the cultural and the political milieus was reinforced in the mid 1960s, particularly by the figure of Max Querrien. He was Director of Architecture at the Ministry of Cultural Affairs from 1963 to 1968, and author of many articles published in professional reviews such as *Les Monuments Historiques de la France* and *Urbanisme*. By considering the preservation practices within the architectural creation, Max Querrien represented the relationship between the cultural and the political debates, although on the legislative level the outcomes were not up to his own expectations. Indeed, the *Loi de programme 67-1174* of 1967 introduced some penal procedures, as the obligation to return the classified sites to their previous state in case of un-authorized works, but it was not able to introduce the elaboration of urban plans by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs for extended protection areas (Laurent, 2003).

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

The concept of historic centre constitutes another substantial difference between the French and the Italian theoretical elaboration. It was stronger in the Italian culture than in the French one, as the lexical analysis confirms. Indeed, in Italy from the late 1950s the term *centro storico* became increasingly important (De Pieri, 2012), replacing, from 1960, other expressions such as *città storica*, *ambiente antico* or *preesistenza ambientale* – respectively meaning historic city, ancient environment or environmental pre-existence – in France more expressions coexisted, such as *centre ville*, *centre historique* or *quartiers historiques*, meaning city centre, historic centre or historical areas.

This fact reveals that in France, unlike in Italy, the concept of historic centre did not predominate over that of urban landscape, but it was the opposite, as the legislative documents confirm. In fact, as mentioned above, from the protection of *secteurs sauvegardés* of 1962, it proceeded to the *Loi sur l'architecture* of 1977, which explicitly cited the urban landscape as something to protect and respect because of its public interest. This kind of protection was to develop during the 1980s and 1990s, particularly with the introduction of the *Zones de Protection du Patrimoine Architectural et Urbain*, introduced in 1983 – meaning areas of architectural and urban heritage protection – which were developed in 1993 in *Zones de Protection du Patrimoine Architectural, Urbain et Paysagère*, therefore adding the landscape heritage. Nevertheless, even this kind of protection was applied in delimited portions of land, therefore without considering the whole urban landscape.

### The contemporary debate

From the late 1980s to the present, following the industrial crisis and the dawn of a new global economy, European cities have faced very intense urban transformations, which have affected their physical fabric. Indeed, in the competitive global market, the image of the city has become a fundamental object of the negotiation process, having turned into a marketing brand. In most current political and technical debates of many European cities the urban landscape has been replaced by the term “skyline”. Nevertheless, the latter is not really synonymous of urban landscape, but rather it is only one of its dimensions. In particular, it usually does not take into consideration the historical heritage of the city, but rather it is conceived as an urban brand and a symbol of economic power (Attoe, 1981). This is one of the main reasons for the globalisation of the skylines of many European cities, sacrificing the historical urban landscape. The European debates of the post-World War II decades appear, therefore, particularly distant.

Today more than ever, architectural production is driven by powerful forces and societal goals which lie outside the architecture itself (Olds, 2001; McNeill, 2009). Probably as a consequence, the contemporary architectural debate turns out to be more fragmented compared to the one of the twentieth century, as the analysis of the professional journals reveals.

Greco, E.

Recently, the need for a new debate about the protection of urban landscape in historical cities has been solicited by international institutions like UNESCO. The *Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Initiative* emerged from the international conference ‘World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture. Managing the Historic Urban Landscape’, held in Vienna in May 2005. The Conference adopted the *Vienna Memorandum*: a first outline of principles and guidelines which gave birth to different international expert meetings (UNESCO, 2010), until the adoption of the *HUL Recommendation* in 2011.

The analysis of the UNESCO documents suggests an influence of the previous French and Italian elaboration, even though those debates are not explicitly cited. This hypothesis is supported by the expression adopted, which, as mentioned above, is not the townscape, but rather the literal translation of the Italian and French expressions. This is further confirmed by the meanings conferred to this concept, which are very close to the ones of the Italian debate of the 1950s and to the French debate of the 1970s. Indeed, the historic urban landscape is linked to the whole image of the city, to its identity, its history, and it entrusts urban planning with the task of promoting and preserving urban landscape:

‘The historic urban landscape is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of “historic centre” or “ensemble” to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting’ (UNESCO 2011, art. 8).

‘Conservation of the urban heritage should be integrated in general policy planning and practices and those related to the broader urban context. Policies should provide mechanisms for balancing conservation and sustainability in the short- and long-term. Special emphasis should be placed on the harmonious integration between the historic urban fabric and contemporary interventions’ (UNESCO 2011, art. 22).

This focus on policy planning and practices is due to the general weakness of the legislative action, which has been unable –Italy and France are two examples– to adopt and translate into operational terms the concept of urban landscape elaborated at the theoretical level. This weakness is still a critical aspect of urban planning in historical cities, especially in a period of intense urban transformation such as the present one.

## Conclusion

The French and Italian debates of the post-World War II decades have been particularly interesting for the cultural elaboration about preservation and promotion of urban heritage. They both theorized a very innovative concept of urban landscape which, going ‘beyond the notions of “historic centres”, “ensembles” and “surroundings”’, anticipated the

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

most recent international debates (UNESCO 2005, art. 11; UNESCO 2011, art. 8). The Italian cultural debate was particularly intense, theorizing a very complex and advanced notion of urban landscape within a few years, but it had no legislative outcomes. Furthermore, it was suddenly replaced by the concept of historic centre, although the latter was its own derivation.

On the contrary, the French debate followed a more linear evolution, starting from the protection of some parts of urban land, corresponding to the historic centre, and then taking into consideration the urban landscape. The latter was developed in a longer time span, compared to the Italian debate, and therefore changed its shades of meaning: from the *art urbain* it developed into the field of urban planning. Within a decade the French debate, under the influence of Italian culture (Cohen, 1984), embraced a notion of urban landscape similar to the Italian one, although the latter had been abandoned by its own planners and architects for almost fifteen years.

Both Italian and French notions of urban landscape failed to succeed in reaching substantial outcomes in terms of legislation. In Italy, the urban landscape was not even cited in the legislative documents; in France, although the concept was adopted by the legislation, it did not obtain real protection practices. Indeed, regarding exclusively some portions of urban land, the protection of landscape features excludes the urban landscape intended as the whole image of the city.

In conclusion, the preservation and promotion of urban landscape are still open questions, and the need for a new debate has been solicited by international institutions like UNESCO. The reading of the *Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape* (UNESCO, 2011) suggests that the French and Italian debates at least did the groundwork for the contemporary international debate.

Although the promotion of the cultural heritage has been on the political agenda of European cities from the late 1980s, when its economic value was generally recognised, the cultural and economic values of the urban landscape are still to be acknowledged. This fact is at the root of substantial conflicts concerning urban landscape. On one hand, the pursuit of an attractive international skyline, which generates a process of globalisation of the image of European cities; on the other hand, the attraction of cultural tourism which needs rather the reinforcement of the local identity and memory (Choay, 1992). Therefore, without a real awareness of the potentiality of urban landscape, without the recognition of its belonging to cultural heritage, no protection practices can be experienced. Its conceptualization is urgently needed in order to obtain legislative instruments for its preservation and promotion for future generations.

Greco, E.

## References

- › Appert, M. (2008). Ville globale versus ville patrimoniale? Des tensions entre libéralisation de la skyline de Londres et préservation des vues historiques, *Revue Géographique de l'Est (online)*, 48 : 1-2.
- › Appert, M., & Montes C., (2015). Skyscraper and the redrawing of the London skyline: a case of territorialisation through landscape control, *Articulo – Journal of Urban Research*, Special issue 7 [online].
- › Arnheim, R. (1969). *Visual Thinking*. Berkeley-Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- › Astengo, G. (1960). Due convegni, *Urbanistica*. 32: 2.
- › Attoe, W. (1981). *Skylines: understanding and molding urban silhouettes*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.
- › Benevolo, L. (1958). Il piano regolatore, VI Congresso dell'Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, Difesa e valorizzazione del paesaggio urbano e rurale. Lucca, 9 novembre 1957. *Urbanistica*. 23: 118-119.
- › Choay, F. (1992). *L'Allegorie du patrimoine*. Paris: Editions du Seuil.
- › Christen, A. (1958). I nuovi quartieri coordinati a Genova ed il paesaggio ligure, Cronache urbanistiche- Rassegna dei nuovi quartieri. *Urbanistica*. 23: 89-93.
- › Cohen, J. L. (1984). La coupure entre architectes et intellectuels, ou les enseignements de l'italophilie, *In Extenso*. Paris: Ecole d'architecture de Paris-Villemin.
- › Commissione d'indagine per la tutela e la valorizzazione del patrimonio storico, archeologico, artistico e del paesaggio (1966). Allegato, Documento conclusivo, Titolo V – Dei Beni ambientali. *Urbanistica*. 46-47: I-XII.
- › Council of Europe (2000). *European Landscape Convention*. Florence: Council of Europe
- › Cullen, G. (1961). *Townscape*. London: The Architectural Press.
- › Cullen, G. (1971). *The Concise Townscape*. London: The Architectural Press.
- › De Hoym De Marien, L. (1964). L'art urbain est mort!...Vive l'art urbain!, *Urbanisme*. 82-83: 70-77.
- › Delfante, C. (1972). Éléments pour une meilleure connaissance de l'environnement visuel, *Urbanisme*. 133: 5-8.
- › De Lucia, V. (1989). *Se questa è una città. La condizione urbana nell'Italia contemporanea*, Roma: Editori Riuniti.
- › De Pieri, F. (2012). Un paese di centri storici: urbanistica e identità locali negli anni cinquanta-sessanta, *Rassegna di architettura e urbanistica*. 136: 92-100.
- › Erten, E. (2015). Townscape as a project and strategy of cultural continuity, in Pendlebury J, Erten E., Larkham P. J. (Ed.). *Alternative Visions of Post-War Reconstruction* (pp. 35-53). London and New York: Routledge.
- › Gosling, D. (1996). *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

## PRESERVING AND PROMOTING THE URBAN LANDSCAPE. THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN DEBATES OF THE POST-WORLD WAR II DECADES

- › Jannièrè, H. (2007). De l'art urbain à l'environnement: le paysage urbain dans les écrits d'urbanisme en France, 1911-1980, in Jannièrè H., & Pousin F. (Ed.). *Paysage urbain: genèse, représentations, enjeux contemporains* (pp. 25-50), *Strates* n. 13. Paris: Ladyss.
- › Jannièrè, H., & Pousin, F. (2007). *Paysage urbain: genèse, représentations, enjeux contemporains*, *Strates*. 13 [online].
- › Laurent, X. (2003). *Grandeur et misère du patrimoine, d'André Malraux à Jacques Duhamel, 1959-1973*. Paris: Ecole Nationale des Chartes.
- › Lynch, K. (1960). *The image of the city*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- › Kaika, M., (2010). Architecture and crisis: re-inventing the icon, re-imag(in)ing London and rebranding the City, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*. 35(4): 453-474.
- › Kotler, P., Haider, D., Rein, I. (1993). *Marketing Places. Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States and Nations*. New York: Free Press.
- › Magnan, R. (1966). Art urbain évolutif, *Urbanisme*. 94 : 55-70.
- › Marchigiani, E. (2002). Gordon Cullen, "Townscape", 1961. I molteplici paesaggi della percezione, in Di Biagi P. (Ed.). *I classici dell'urbanistica moderna* (pp. 173- 203), Roma: Donzelli Editore.
- › MacArthur, J., Aitchison, M. (2010). Pevsner's Townscape, in Pevsner N., *Visual Planning and the Picturesque* (pp. 173-203), (ed) Mathew Aitchison. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- › McNeill, D. (2009). *The Global Architect. Firms, fame and urban form*. New York: Routledge.
- › Norberg-Schulz, C. (1979). *Genius loci. Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli.
- › Olds, K. (2001). *Globalisation and Urban Change: Capital, Culture, and Pacific Rim Mega-Projects*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- › Pallottino M. (1987). La stagione della Commissione Franceschini, in Perego F. (Ed.), *Memorabilia: il futuro della memoria. Beni ambientali architettonici archeologici artistici e storici in Italia* (pp. 7-11), vol. 1, Roma-Bari, Italy: Laterza.
- › Pane, R. (1949). *Napoli imprevista*. Torino: Einaudi.
- › Pevsner, N. (2010). *Visual Planning and the Picturesque*. In Aitchison, M. (Ed) *Visual Planning and the Picturesque Nikolaus Pevsner*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- › Piccinato, L. (1955). Appello ai conservatori, *L'architettura. Cronache e storia*. 1: 35.
- › Pinchemel, P. (1964). *La Géographie de la France, vol. 1. Les milieux: campagnes, industrie et villes*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- › Pousin, F. (2007). Du townscape au «paysage urbain», circulation d'un modèle rhétorique mobilisateur, in Jannièrè H., & Pousin F. (Ed.). *Paysage urbain: genèse, représentations, enjeux contemporains* (pp. 25-50), *Strates* n. 13. Paris: Ladyss.

Greco, E.

- › Samonà, G. (1958). Relazione di apertura del VI convegno, in INU, Difesa e valorizzazione del paesaggio urbano e rurale. Atti del VI Convegno nazionale di Urbanistica, Lucca 9-11 novembre 1957, Roma.
- › Sitte, C. (1889). *Der Städtebau nach seinen künstlerischen Grundsätzen*. Wien: Verlag von Carl Graeser.
- › Spagnoli, L. (1994). Prefazione. In D. Wieczorek (Ed.), *Camillo Sitte e gli inizi dell'urbanistica moderna* (pp. ix-xvi). Milano: Jaca Book.
- › Tyrwitt, J., Sert, J., L., & Rogers, E., N. (1952). *The Heart of the City: Towards the Humanisation of Urban Life*. New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy.
- › Trincanato, E. R. (1948). *Venezia minore*. Milano: Edizioni Del Milione.
- › Tuan, Y. (1974). *Topophilia: a study of environmental perception, attitudes and values*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- › UNESCO (2005). *Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture, Managing the Historic Urban Landscape*. Wien: UNESCO.
- › UNESCO (2010). *Managing Historic Cities. World Heritage Papers 27*. Paris: Unesco World Heritage Centre.
- › UNESCO (2011). *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*, Paris, France: UNESCO World Heritage Centre.
- › Vittoria, E. (1957). Gli architetti moderni hanno il diritto di portare il loro contributo all'invenzione di un nuovo paesaggio, *L'architettura. Cronache e storia*.20: 111-112.
- › Vittoria, E. (1958). Una nuova concezione del paesaggio, VI Congresso dell'Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica, Difesa e valorizzazione del paesaggio urbano e rurale. Lucca, 9 novembre 1957. *Urbanistica*. 23: 117-118.

# IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Jessica Doyle

Georgia Institute of Technology, United States

Sociologists and geographers have examined immigrant entrepreneurship in the United States to discuss what types of industries immigrants enter, why some groups are more inclined to entrepreneurship than others, and how social networks influence business formation. But such analyses have generally not included considerations of how the larger geographic setting in which the immigrants operate—including the urban form, the built environment, and local economic-development efforts—affect entrepreneurial decisions. Meanwhile, immigrant settlement patterns have changed in recent decades, bringing groups of immigrants outside of larger cities and into suburban areas not accustomed to hosting immigrants. In such environments, a would-be entrepreneur might have even more difficulty accessing the information necessary to successfully start and maintain a business. This paper will survey previous literature on immigrant entrepreneurship, largely from sociology, geography, and planning, to argue that local economic-development resources, even when targeted at small business owners, fail to address the needs of immigrant entrepreneurs. Instead, these would-be entrepreneurs rely on their own personal networks and on co-ethnic community support institutions.

*Keywords:* entrepreneurship, ethnic entrepreneurship, ethnic economy, immigration, economic development

Please cite this article as: Doyle, J., Immigrant Entrepreneurs' Access to Information as a Local Economic-Development Problem *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.6vol.02>

Doyle, J.

### Introduction

Aldrich & Waldinger's (1990) overview of ethnic-entrepreneurship research broke down the process by which immigrants became entrepreneurs into three interactive components: opportunity structure, group characteristics, and "ethnic strategies", the last of which is meant to describe the collective strategies ethnic groups in particular locations adapt in response to their new business environment. The need for such strategies surfaces early on in the process towards starting a new business: how does the potential entrepreneur figure out where to start a business, how to run one, and what paperwork to fill out in the meantime? Aldrich & Waldinger's (1990, p.127) overview found that information necessary to start a successful business 'is typically obtained through owners' personal networks and through various indirect ties that are specifically linked to their ethnic communities'. Resources outside ethnic social networks did not play much of a role in promoting immigrant entrepreneurship: 'Immigrants also have special problems caused by the strains of settlement and assimilation and aggravated by their distance from governmental mechanisms of service delivery.' (ibid p. 115)

Servon *et al.* (2010) identified five 'gaps' encountered by aspiring micro-entrepreneurs and small business owners in New York City, many of whom were immigrants. Those gaps center around an inability to obtain sufficient capital; a lack of assets to parlay towards business development; a difficulty growing the business and establishing credit; difficulty obtaining critical information; and lack of training in business skills such as accounting and marketing. Servon *et al.*'s article is rare in its discussion of what role mainstream-economic development resources can do to address these gaps. By and large, research into immigrant- entrepreneurship focuses on exchanges within existing ethnic communities.

Immigrants have been self-employing at higher rates than their native-born counterparts for as long as the United States Census has been tracking such data (Bowles & Colton, 2007); meanwhile, public policy makers have been eager to proclaim their support of small businesses, assuming a link between small business development and economic growth, employment growth in particular (Craig *et al.*, 2007). Both the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) and local economic-development agencies invest heavily in small-business promotion. A 2014 survey done by the International City & County Managers Association of more than 1,000 local economic-development agencies found that 68% offered marketing assistance to local small businesses, two-thirds hosted a small business development center, and half had a revolving loan fund available (ICMA, 2014). Yet study after study suggests that these efforts fail to reach—or, worse, overlook—immigrant entrepreneurs..

This paper reviews previous literature on immigrant entrepreneurship to discuss the question of how immigrant entrepreneurs start businesses largely outside the existing

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

local economic-development infrastructure. It will show difficulty obtaining information and credit is a well-documented problem; that the immigrant entrepreneurs themselves move to solve this problem by soliciting information from existing social networks or community organizations; and that these resources are not necessarily available to all nascent immigrant entrepreneurs, and indeed may be harder to reach in less dense suburban environments. It will draw from Aldrich and Waldinger's (1990) focus on strategies as a response to opportunity structure, and Servon *et al.*'s (2010) identification of gaps at the local level, to argue that immigrant entrepreneurship takes place in a specific local context. Finally, it will conclude that local economic-development agencies hoping to encourage immigrant entrepreneurship will have to deploy more flexible strategies, including working with existing community organizations where available.

### Previous Research Into How Immigrants Become Entrepreneurs

Until the 1990s, studies of immigrant entrepreneurship (or, more broadly, 'ethnic entrepreneurship') tended to be rooted in sociology (Light, 1973; Light & Bonacich, 1987; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). These studies frequently sought to understand differences in entrepreneurial take-up between groups. Waldinger (1989) sums up three lines of argument: that particular groups might be more inclined to the risk-taking of entrepreneurship, or possess more resources, material or social, to help start businesses; that immigrants might be taking advantage of industries with easy ownership opportunities; and that entrepreneurship arose out of some combination of group characteristics and local economic factors.

Studies of ethnic entrepreneurship have also centered on concentrations of immigrant entrepreneurial activity in a particular place, such as 'Koreatown' in Los Angeles (Light & Bonacich, 1987; Yoon, 1997), Cuban immigration into Miami (Portes and Bach, 1985; Portes and Jensen, 1989), or Korean entrepreneurs in New York City (Waldinger, 1989; Park, 1997). These 'ethnic economies' are distinguishable by their appeals to a niche ethnic market, high (almost exclusive) amounts of immigrant proprietorship, high levels of co-ethnic employment, and vertical integration with co-ethnic suppliers (Kaplan and Li, 2006). Throughout, the research has emphasized the role of social and family networks in the formation and maintenance of both individual businesses and the ethnic economies they comprise. But these analyses have included less discussion of why an ethnic economy might grow in a particular place. When Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) discussed 'opportunity structures,' their geographic analysis of market conditions took place at the national, not the local, level.

The study of immigrant entrepreneurship has expanded from sociology into geography but has yet to make many inroads into planning.<sup>1</sup> The exceptions usually take the form

---

<sup>1</sup> Separate searches of the archives of the Journal of the American Planning Association for the terms 'immigrant entrepreneur' and 'ethnic economy' produce no results.

Doyle, J.

of case studies. Tseng (1995), in a case study of Taiwanese entrepreneurs in metropolitan Los Angeles, cites an ‘unfriendly community reception,’ with local development agencies openly favoring ‘American’ firms over those founded by immigrants. Preston and Lo (2000) examined the sources of community opposition to the creation of a new Chinese-themed shopping mall outside Toronto, in a suburb where both proponents and opponents came to Canada from mainland China and Hong Kong. McDaniel (2006) compared two cities in metropolitan Birmingham, Alabama, responding to a growing immigrant population; officials from one city struck a welcoming note, while their counterparts in the other city sounded more distrustful.

Studies comparing metropolitan areas, as is common in planning, have begun to tackle the question of how location and urban form influence immigrant entrepreneurship (Liu, 2012b; Wang & Li, 2007). For example, Wang (2013a) found, by comparing distributions of Latino-owned businesses in metropolitan Miami and Atlanta, that ethnic businesses benefit from co-locating with similar businesses, whether those businesses are part of an ethnic economy or not. Aguilera’s (2009) comparison of self-employed Mexican immigrants in California and Texas with self-employed Cuban immigrants in Florida found that the former’s proximity to an ethnic enclave had a greater (negative) effect on their earnings than did the latter’s, suggesting that business performance in an ethnic economy may be dependent on the larger metropolitan environment.

Analyses of ethnic economies have not excluded spatial factors. Spatial concentration of businesses is intrinsic to the definition of an ethnic economy; spatial concentration facilitates exchanges within the social networks of the ethnic community (Portes and Jensen, 1989). But these analyses tend to focus almost entirely on spatial relations within the ethnic economy itself, and spend very little time on how participants in the ethnic economy might interact with or be influenced by the broader local economy. Again, there are exceptions. Kalnins and Chung (2006) examined the relationships between co-ethnicity, social networks, and geographic proximity among Gujarati hotel owners in metropolitan Dallas. Fong *et al.* (2008) cite evidence from Chinese businesses in metropolitan Toronto to show that opening a business within a concentration of co-ethnic businesses is not necessarily the most profitable strategy for every business; rather, immigrant entrepreneurs’ business location decisions take into account both the larger neighborhood environment, co-ethnic and not, and the particular target audience of the business.

### **Changing Immigrant Settlement Patterns**

Recent shifts in where immigrants choose to live, and where they decide to open businesses, makes consideration of the potential spatial element of immigrant entrepreneurship more urgent. Until very recently, both immigrant settlement and immigrant

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

entrepreneurship were heavily concentrated in just a few major metropolitan areas (Razin & Light, 1998). In 2000, 43% of all foreign-born residents in the United States lived in New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, or Houston. But by 2010, that percentage had dropped to 38% (Wilson and Singer, 2011). This has meant increasing immigrant populations in metropolitan areas that had not previously thought of themselves as 'gateways'. Between 2000 and 2013, 78 different counties in 19 states, previously majority-white, had population shifts large enough that no one race could be considered a majority (Krogstad, 2015). Metropolitan areas such as Dallas-Fort Worth, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C. have become 'emerging gateways' (Singer, 2004) while cities such as Nashville saw immigrant populations double in a decade (Wilson & Singer, 2011). Concentrations of particular immigrant populations have arisen quickly: between 1990 and 2004, Utah's Indian population more than quintupled, Alabama's Vietnamese population quadrupled, and Nevada's Filipino population tripled (Li & Skop, 2007).

With the shift in settlement towards a larger variety of metropolitan areas comes a simultaneous shift in the types of neighborhoods into which immigrants settle. The historically urban centers of immigrant settlement—think New York's Little Italy or San Francisco's Chinatown—have given way to increasing suburbanization. The movement of employers out of inner cities and towards suburbs and increased rents in urban neighborhoods led immigrants to seek new homes in less dense settlements. By 2004 a majority or near-majority of every Asian ethnic group lived in the suburbs (Li & Skop, 2007). Suburbanization extends past the borders of the United States: many Chinese immigrants to Toronto in the 1980s and 1990s bypassed the local Chinatown altogether and settled in the suburbs (Wang & Lo, 2007). In 2003, of more than sixty Chinese shopping centers and plazas in metropolitan Toronto, only two were in the inner city (Wang & Lo, 2007). Suburban migration has even led to the creation of 'ethnoburbs' (Li, 1998; Li *et al.*, 2002), in which co-ethnic residents combine population agglomerations and relative financial stability to move towards acquiring political influence and exercising decision-making authority.

The shift to suburban locations has not meant the end of concentrated ethnic economies; rather, concentrations of ethnic economic activity have appeared in the new gateways, such as along Atlanta's Buford Highway (Odem in Singer, ed., 2004) and Sacramento's Stockton Boulevard (Datel and Dingemans in Singer, ed., 2004). These developments are new enough that scholars are only beginning to ask how locating in less dense built environments, often with more limited public transportation, affects the formation of ethnic economies. Given the importance of spatial agglomerations to the definition of ethnic economies, it would be surprising if ethnic economies in the suburbs worked exactly the same as their urban counterparts. Moreover, geographical proximity facilitates social exchanges (Kalnins & Chung, 2006), so participants in an ethnic economy may have

Doyle, J.

more trouble exchanging information in a less dense setting. This is a significant issue for immigrant entrepreneurs, since they frequently have difficulty accessing mainstream resources intended to help with small business creation.

### **Immigrant Entrepreneurs and the Information Gap**

Cristina Alvanos, a Colombia native, says it's all too common for immigrants to start businesses without finding out about the laws they need to comply with. When she started a money transfer business a few years ago, she knew that she had to register the company, get a tax ID number, purchase liability insurance and apply for unemployment insurance and workers' compensation because she had worked for another firm for 11 years. 'A lot of people don't know this,' she says. 'I get calls from people telling me they got fined because they didn't know they needed workers' compensation. They don't know that when you have a sign, you have to have a permit and make it visible.' (Bowles and Colton, 2007, p. 29)

This lack of knowledge as to the exact legal requirements for starting a business was dubbed the 'information gap' by Servon *et al.* (2010). Both Bowles and Colton (2007) and Servon *et al.* (2010) focused their research on New York City, as did Gaviria (2012), who focused specifically on the experiences of Colombian-American entrepreneurs; but immigrant entrepreneurs in rural western Arkansas and Kelowna, a suburban settlement outside Vancouver, British Columbia, reported similar obstacles, in case studies by Moon *et al.* (2014) and Teixeira and Lo (2012), respectively. Chang *et al.* (2009), talking to nascent Hispanic entrepreneurs in New England, reported: '...the entrepreneurs studied lacked access to external support in sufficient qualities and quantities to make a difference in their start-up decisions' (p. 287).

In theory the Small Business Administration (SBA) provides resources to aspiring entrepreneurs, including immigrant entrepreneurs. But Yoon (1997), surveying Korean entrepreneurs in Chicago and Los Angeles, found little take-up of SBA loans, with his respondents reporting a lack of information as to how to get an SBA loan as an inhibiting factor. Bates *et al.* (2011), looking over the history of SBA attempts to target disadvantaged entrepreneurs, found that the agency's loan programs tended to be ill-structured to meet the needs of business owners in industries with low barriers to entry, and thus received little interest from the very audiences the SBA hoped to serve. Even microenterprise programs found themselves 'often serving two client pools, one of which was more advantaged and ready to borrow. The other client pool was less advantaged and not ready to borrow' (p. 258).

Lack of knowledge plays out in several related aspects of starting a business, such as understanding the applicable regulations, obtaining licenses, and securing available financing. 35% of the businesses working with ProMicro, a program founded by the

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Colombian consulate-general of New York City, were unlicensed (Gaviria, 2012). A survey of a group of Latino business owners in Las Vegas found that only 27% had written a traditional business plan and a fifth had no accountant (Shinnar and Young, 2008). A lack of contact with mainstream agencies puts the immigrant-owned firm at a disadvantage both before and after its founding. Firms may not be able to find the capital to expand beyond the smaller co-ethnic market (Levitt, 1995). Fairlie (2012), examining data from the 2007 Survey of Business Owners, found that immigrant-owned firms were undercapitalized relative to firms of native-born owners.

The economic-development assistance directors interviewed by Wah (2008), asked about challenges to the viability of firms founded by Afro-Caribbean entrepreneurs, frequently named lack of knowledge or familiarity with American business practices as a significant hindrance. They specifically pointed to such specific items of knowledge as business regulations, required licensing, borrowing from mainstream banks, and assembling required documents. Wah (2008, p. 479) concludes, 'Entrepreneurs need a great deal of handholding and without their own strong ethnic business support institutions during their first three to five years of operation will not receive the necessary program assistance.' A history of discrimination helps keep nascent immigrant entrepreneurs distant from mainstream banks and economic-development associations. Bradford (2013) summarizes 13 different studies that found evidence of discrimination against black and Hispanic borrowers. Not surprisingly, black and Hispanic borrowers have been described as more pessimistic when applying for loans (Bates & Robb, 2013). Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) quote a Cuban-American banker describing his entrepreneurial co-ethnics in Miami: 'No American bank would loan to them.' (p. 1335) Even non-minority entrepreneurs applying for loans face a higher probability of being turned down, or a less favorable interest rate, if their planned business is in a minority-area location (Bates & Robb, 2013). Park (2010, p. 891) minces no words: 'The US Small Business Administration... is a racist institution,' having taken into account the racial patterns among its loan recipients. Quite possibly as a result, aspiring minority business owners, particularly those under age 35, reported a lack of support from government and mainstream banks (Liu, 2012a).

Stereotyping of ethnic entrepreneurship may contribute to this pattern of discrimination and lack of contact between immigrant entrepreneurs and mainstream economic-development agencies. Ethnic entrepreneurship is often largely linked in the public mind with 'low wages, bad working conditions, sweatshops, and distinct inequality' (Liu *et al.*, 2014, p. 566). Economic-development agencies may be focused more on recruiting larger firms and providing incentives for existing-firm relocation than on growing local small businesses (Osgood *et al.*, 2012) or focusing on "creative class"-influenced strategies of recruitment and land use, which tend to de-emphasize small businesses outside of certain

Doyle, J.

industries and lower-skilled populations (Manning Thomas & Darton, 2006; Hackler & Mayer, 2008). Economic development decision-makers may be assuming *a priori* that smaller immigrant-owned firms are not the best recipients of their efforts. They might also assume, on the basis of stereotype rather than embedded experience, that immigrant entrepreneurs can draw on personal or family resources, and an ill-defined entrepreneurial spirit, blinding them to the actual abilities and needs of individual immigrant entrepreneurs (Nopper, 2010). In such an environment, immigrants who want to start their own business—high-skilled or low, employing others or only themselves, “creative” or not—have to look elsewhere for information and help.

### How Nascent Entrepreneurs Overcome the Information Gap

There is no formula for predicting how any given nascent entrepreneur will collect the necessary information to start a business. Past literature on ethnic entrepreneurship has emphasized the role working for family plays in helping nascent entrepreneurs understand how to run a business (Light & Bonacich, 1987; Fairlie & Robb, 2008). Prior work experience is also a predictor of business success (Fairlie & Robb, 2008). Three types of sources of information appear often enough to highlight here: non-profit community organizations, ethnic banks, and informal social networks, which includes direct participation by owners of existing businesses.

#### Community Organizations

Wah (2008) interviewed directors of small local economic-development organizations that worked specifically with Afro-Caribbean immigrants in Dade County, Florida, and Kings County, New York. Her description of her interviewees’ work makes it clear how much of a role these organizations play in helping provide information:

...the directors are important players in the delivery of minority business assistance programs and policy implementation. They are gatekeepers to information, financial and technical assistance, and a multitude of other entrepreneurial development services. They serve as middlemen between government, private foundations, and support institutions on the one hand, and their entrepreneur clients on the other. Services provided include business advice, access to revolving and other loan programs, assistance with government sub-contracting and private supplier networks, merchant association organizing, networking and marketing events, business and marketing plan preparation and neighborhood beautification programs. (Wah, 2008, p. 465)

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Such organizations, targeted specifically at particular groups, are an example of 'culturally competent' help.<sup>2</sup> The term comes from Patraporn *et al.* (2010, p. 289), who surveyed representatives of asset-building community organizations targeting the Asian-American population in metropolitan Los Angeles. These organizations provided revolving loan funds and individual development accounts, as well as enabling access to banking products and helping undocumented workers. In addition, one-third of them offered programs aimed at small business development, including workshops and one-on-one counseling services. A shared cultural background allowed the organizations to provide help a mainstream bank or economic-development agency might not: for example, using personal information to evaluate the trustworthiness of a potential loan recipient with no credit history.

Community organizations not specifically designated towards business information or aid can still function as sources of information for would-be entrepreneurs. Park (1997), observing Korean entrepreneurs in Queens, New York, found that local Protestant churches functioned as facilitators for business owners. Sometimes this facilitation was passive—providing a place for business owners to meet and talk after the service—and sometimes it went further, with churches sponsoring rotating credit associations or pastors introducing business owners to potential employees. Choi (2010), looking at Korean-American economic activity in Los Angeles, reported similar trends, with pastors encouraging Christian businesses. Similarly, Portuguese entrepreneurs in Toronto said that participation in community organizations was important for obtaining information and advice (Teixeira, 1998).

### **Ethnic Banks**

Another source of information for immigrant entrepreneurs are ethnic banks, which usually target their marketing to a particular ethnic group. An ethnic bank is a bank chartered in the United States, minority-owned and focused on a minority audience (Li *et al.*, 2002). This is to distinguish ethnic banks from banks owned outside the United States, which do not necessarily fill the same roles or target the same audiences. Zonta (2012), looking at Korean-owned bank activity in the United States, found that those banks tended to concentrate more on commercial real estate than small business loans or residential loans.

The first ethnic bank in the United States was founded by Japanese-Americans in Los Angeles at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, after they were unable to obtain loans from existing American banks (Li *et al.*, cited in Kaplan and Li, 2006). Of the more than 200 ethnic banks in the United States as of 2011, roughly half were owned by Asian-Americans

---

<sup>2</sup> Another example of formal organizations that are both ethnically targeted and focused on business promotion would be ethnic chambers of commerce, about which the literature to date is remarkably sparse.

Doyle, J.

(Hum, 2011). Hum (2011, p. 82) describes Asian-American-owned banks as ‘instrumental actors in an immigrant growth coalition’ that includes developers, contractors, realtors, and non-profit community development organizations.

If immigrant entrepreneurs are unable to get credit from mainstream banks, then the importance of ethnic banks is clear enough: they can fill the gap in the market for available credit. Yet the importance of ethnic banks goes beyond simply providing credit. Ethnic banks frequently focus on ‘relationship banking,’ developing a more detailed and sustained series of interactions with the customer (Li *et al.*, 2002). Since immigrants may have limited credit histories, ethnic banks are often in a position of needing to collect more information about potential loan recipients (Servon, 1999); a shared knowledge of the local ethnic community, or shared cultural affinity, can help with that information exchange (Zonta, 2004). Banks that have “ethnic assets”, such as familiarity with cultural traditions or fluency in languages other than English, are more likely to target co-ethnics as customers (Li *et al.*, 2014)

A second, less direct possible influence of ethnic banks on immigrant entrepreneurship is the possible role ethnic banks may play in residential settlement patterns and thus in immigrants’ spatial concentration. According to Li *et al.* (2002), Chinese-American banks were instrumental in helping Chinese-Americans move to the San Gabriel Valley, creating an “ethnoburb” whose residents had financial stability and enough security to seek political power. Zonta (2004) found a correlation between Asian-American banks’ lending activity and patterns of residential settlement in greater Los Angeles. Finally, ethnic banks frequently sponsor community events (Li *et al.*, 2014), contributing still further to the interrelationship between economic development, community development, and co-ethnic networks.

### **Social Networks**

Research into immigrant entrepreneurship has strongly emphasized the role of social networks within ethnic economies. In fact, the ability of co-ethnic participants to use social networks to help themselves economically helps distinguish an ethnic economy from a simple collection of similarly themed businesses (Greve & Salaff, 2005). Participating in an ethnic network can also help immigrants find jobs more easily during times of economic hardship (Zhu *et al.*, 2013). Admittedly, Gaviria (2012) found that Colombian entrepreneurs working in and around metropolitan New York City tended not to rely on social capital to help them start businesses. This may be a function of concentrating the research on microentrepreneurs: 25% of the businesses in her sample were home-based. .

More than half of the Korean entrepreneurs in Queens, New York, who talked to Park (1997) had secured their current job or business through personal or family connections.

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Meanwhile, Dominican and Puerto Rican entrepreneurs in Boston also used social networks to advance their entrepreneurial goals: they frequently heard about vacant storefronts or bought businesses outright from other Latino owners, and both received and provided technical assistance and skills training (Levitt, 1995). One clothing storeowner emphasized the relationship between face-to-face contact and economic success: 'My business has been able to shine because people have seen me with good eyes' (Levitt, 1995, p. 134).

Indeed, business ownership and community involvement are often intertwined. The contribution to social networks and the self-definition of the ethnic community may occur in the business itself: Oberle (2006), studying *carcinerías*<sup>3</sup> in Phoenix, emphasized the businesses' social nature: the intimacy with which the owners and staff greeted customers, and the design of the store—very much unlike an American supermarket—to allow for customers to socialize at length. Like ethnic banks, Latino-owned businesses are frequent sponsors of community events (Delgado, 2013).

The successful business owner may see community involvement as part of his or her role as entrepreneur. Portes and Zhou (1996) argue that wealthy immigrant entrepreneurs are likely to give back to the community, a benefit that is not picked up in conventional statistical measures of immigrant entrepreneurial activity. Chaganti and Greene (2002) go so far as to suggest that business owners' "ethnic involvement" can be used as a descriptor when defining ethnic economies. But this, too, may be dependent on spatial factors. A middleman business in a largely non-co-ethnic neighborhood may have little incentive to participate in community-building; or a mutually beneficial social network and a marginalized one can exist in the same space. Zhou (2005, p. 1062) remarks on Los Angeles's Koreatown: 'Koreans and Latinos of this inner-city neighborhood are actually living in two very different social worlds... The Korean ethnic environment accrues ample tangible or intangible benefits within the easy reach of Korean residents, but it is not equally accessible to Latino residents.'

Past research such as that of Light (1973) emphasized the role of lending circles among immigrant entrepreneurs. The history of such informal lending circles dates back to Japanese-American business owners in the early twentieth century (Li *et al.*, 2006). But immigrants of Asian origin who might in the past have turned to lending circles may now choose to work with ethnic, or even mainstream, banks, and lending circles do not seem widespread. A survey of the banking practices of low- and moderate-income communities found that only 5% of respondents, and only 4% of Hispanic and Asian-American/Pacific Islander respondents, had used peer lending circles (Alliance for Stabilizing Our Communities, 2015).

---

<sup>3</sup> A more literal translation would be 'meat market,' but the typical *carnicería* functions more as a grocery store, with opportunities to buy non-food items such as phone cards.

Doyle, J.

### **The Case for Exchanges Between Immigrant Entrepreneurs, Community Organizations, and Mainstream Economic Developers**

The example of Latino residents in Koreatown helps provide an answer to the question: how necessary is it that mainstream economic-development organizations extend aid to immigrant entrepreneurs? After all, if community organizations and informal social networks are so important to ethnic economies, and if immigrant entrepreneurs may be distrustful of help offered sincerely, is the targeting of immigrant entrepreneurs by non-co-ethnic economic developers a waste of time and energy? This section will argue in favor of reaching out, for two reasons. One, a continued lack of contact between mainstream economic-development resource providers and immigrant entrepreneurs is inefficient and may artificially suppress business formation. Two, mainstream economic-development agencies are well positioned to fill the information gap by bringing their expertise to the exchanges between nascent entrepreneurs and community organizations.

Those organizations, and the informal networks that have arisen to help immigrant entrepreneurs, are doing a service; but that does not mean the demand for information and help is completely met. First, not all co-ethnic social networks have an equal ability to address the needs of their entrepreneurs. Lo *et al* (2003) compared the Polish and Somali immigrant communities in Toronto: the former group was better integrated into the mainstream than the latter, and so Polish entrepreneurs had better access to credit and non-co-ethnic resources, and were able to expand outside their co-ethnic markets more easily than could their Somali counterparts. Liu (2012b) found a negative correlation between limited English proficiency and self-employment for Latinos in metropolitan Atlanta, but no such correlation for Asians; suggesting that self-employment was easier for the latter group than the former, possibly due to existing social networks.

Second, no individual would-be entrepreneur is guaranteed help from co-ethnics. (Nor are employees guaranteed help from employers, co-ethnic or not.) As with native-born social networks, differences of gender and gender performance, class, sexuality, social background, religion, and political views can stratify social networks (Li, 1998) or even lead to the exclusion and isolation of an individual. As with most things in life, the less wealth one has to begin with, the harder such obstacles can be to overcome. Blanchard *et al.* (2008) found that non-white loan applicants faced less discrimination if they had greater personal wealth. But would-be entrepreneurs with little wealth also had fewer social connections that could help them in starting their business (Casey, 2012).

Even as the opportunities for immigrant entrepreneurs expand in the future, the question of access will still remain. In some neighborhoods, for example, mainstream banks are increasing their outreach to immigrant communities, taking such steps as translating their literature into different languages and hiring co-ethnic tellers and loan officers. But that

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

does not guarantee take-up by the immigrant audience, or even that new users from the immigrant community would see the bank as a potential source of capital and financial information (as opposed to simply a place to bank) without a dedicated and sensitive effort on the part of the banks.

Thinking about such scenarios raises the question of survivor bias in the study of immigrant entrepreneurship. Previous research has concentrated on those immigrant-owned businesses that actually exist: of a necessity, businesses that failed quickly, or never existed in the first place, get much less attention. The Panel Survey of Entrepreneurship Dynamics (PSED) surveyed nascent entrepreneurs and collected data on whether they later started a business; Parker and Belghitar (2006) use such data to show that the transition from nascent entrepreneurship to actual entrepreneurship is more likely to occur if the would-be entrepreneur has secured some startup funding (and, conversely, that those who gave up altogether were more likely to not have secured any funding) and that participating in a government or university business-assistance program also had a positive effect on the likelihood of starting a business. More research on when, and why, immigrants choose *not* to start a business is needed, but it does seem possible that, facing the information gap and uncertainty over financing and regulations, at least some immigrants decide against becoming entrepreneurs.

There is, then, a need for mainstream economic-development agencies to think more deeply and more proactively about the needs of nascent immigrant entrepreneurs. But simply reaching out to those entrepreneurs will not bridge the gap entirely, for two reasons. One, already established, is a long history of mutual alienation: many nascent entrepreneurs are likely to prepare themselves to be discriminated against, and defend themselves by failing to respond even to well-meant offers of help. The second reason is that, as offering information happens in a specific cultural and social context, so does asking for information. To illustrate: the would-be entrepreneur who needs help learning about loan programs, or putting together a business plan, is incurring a debt she would someday like to pay back. Given a choice between entering into this arrangement with a larger mainstream organization, or a smaller one with which she shares a community and possibly a language, it makes more sense for her to choose the latter even if the former is equally eager to help her. She will have a better chance of understanding what receiving help entails, and can more easily envision a future in which she, having successfully started a business, can acknowledge her obligation to the helping organization by donating her money, time, or expertise.

Therefore mainstream economic-development organizations should not try to supersede or de-legitimize existing organizations that specifically target immigrants, such as community-based organizations or ethnic banks. Rather, mainstream economic-development

Doyle, J.

agencies should seek partnerships with these existing 'culturally competent' organizations, to expand their reach without disrupting existing social networks (Chang *et al.*, 2009; Patraporn *et al.*, 2010; Fairlie & Robb, 2008; Bowles & Colton, 2007; Servon *et al.*, 2010; Gaviria, 2012). Even research not concerned with immigrant entrepreneurship has suggested that small business growth is enhanced by local governments' partnerships with the private sector (McFarland and McConnell, 2013). The ideal partnership would be one in which each organization brings its particular knowledge to the benefit of the other: the community organization sharing its knowledge of the social and cultural context in which its clients operate, and the mainstream agency sharing its (presumably greater) resources and its knowledge of the legal and financial requirements.

### Conclusion

All entrepreneurs face obstacles in developing their businesses; this paper has argued in part that immigrant entrepreneurs face a different, and larger, set of obstacles than their native-born counterparts. Yet these obstacles, and the resources immigrant entrepreneurs can muster to overcome them, will vary at the local level. The presence or absence of a supportive co-ethnic community and the availability of resources from the likes of community organizations and ethnic banks can help an aspiring entrepreneur obtain the information, skills, and money necessary to open and sustain a new business. Therefore it is necessary for future research to examine the way ethnic economies develop in a spatial setting (Wang, 2013b). This will be useful in both theoretical and practical terms. On a theoretical level, it will allow planning scholars to add a heretofore less-developed dimension of immigrant-entrepreneurship research. From a practical perspective, it will help local economic-development agencies to offer small-business tools to a larger audience of potential entrepreneurs, thereby expanding immigrants' financial and economic options and helping to recognize immigrants' economic and social aspirations.

### References

- › Aguilera, M. B. (2009). Ethnic enclaves and the earnings of self-employed Latinos. *Small Business Economics*, 33(4), 413-425.
- › Aldrich, H. E., & Waldinger, R. (1990). Ethnicity and Entrepreneurship. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 16, 111-135.
- › Alliance for Stabilizing Our Communities (ASOC). (2015). *Banking in Color: New Findings on Financial Access for Low- and Moderate-Income Communities*.
- › Bates, T., Lofstrom, M., & Servon, L. J. (2011). Why Have Lending Programs Targeting Disadvantaged Small Business Borrowers Achieved So Little Success in the United States? *Economic Development Quarterly*, 25(3), 255-266.

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

- › Bates, T., & Robb, A. (2013). Greater Access to Capital Is Needed to Unleash the Local Economic Development Potential of Minority-Owned Businesses. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 27(3), 250-259.
- › Blanchard, L., Zhao, B., & Yinger, J. (2008). Do lenders discriminate against minority and woman entrepreneurs? *Journal of Urban Economics*, 63(2), 467-497.
- › Bowles, J., & Colton, T. (2007). *A world of opportunity: Center for an Urban Future*.
- › Bradford, W. D. (2013). *Minority Businesses in the U.S.: An Economic Review of Scholarly Research Since 2000: Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation*.
- › Casey, C. (2012). Low-Wealth Minority Enterprises and Access to Financial Resources for Start-Up Activities: Do Connections Matter? *Economic Development Quarterly*, 26(3), 252-266.
- › Chaganti, R., & Greene, P. G. (2002). Who are ethnic entrepreneurs? A study of entrepreneurs; ethnic involvement and business characteristics. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 40(2), 126-143.
- › Chang, E. P. C., Memili, E., Chrisman, J. J., Kellermanns, F. W., & Chua, J. H. (2009). Family Social Capital, Venture Preparedness, and Start-Up Decisions: A Study of Hispanic Entrepreneurs in New England. *Family Business Review*, 22(3), 279-292.
- › Choi, H. (2010). Religious Institutions and Ethnic Entrepreneurship: The Korean Ethnic Church as a Small Business Incubator. *Economic Development Quarterly*. doi: 10.1177/0891242410375426
- › Craig, B. R., Jackson, W. E., & Thomson, J. B. (2007). Small Firm Finance, Credit Rationing, and the Impact of SBA-Guaranteed Lending on Local Economic Growth. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 45(1), 116-132.
- › Datel, R., & Dingemans, D. (2004). Immigrant Space and Place in Suburban Sacramento. In A. Singer, S. Wiley Hardwick, & C. Brettell (Eds.), *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America* (pp. 171-199). Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- › Delgado, M. (2013). *Latino Small Businesses and the American Dream: Community Social Work Practice and Economic and Social Development*. New York, New York: Columbia University Press.
- › Fairlie, R. W. (2012). *Immigrant Entrepreneurs and Small Business Owners, and Their Access to Financial Capital: United States Small Business Administration, Office of Advocacy*.
- › Fairlie, R. W., & Robb, A. M. (2008). *Race and Entrepreneurial Success: Black-, Asian-, and White-Owned Businesses in the United States*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- › Fong, E., Anderson, E. E., Chen, W., & Luk, C. (2008). The Logic of Ethnic Business Distribution in Multiethnic Cities. *Urban Affairs Review*, 43(4), 497-519.
- › Gaviria, A. (2012). *Immigrant Micro Entrepreneurship: The Colombian Case in New York and New Jersey*. (Ph.D. Dissertation), The New School, New York, NY.

Doyle, J.

- › Greve, A., & Salaff, J. W. (2005). Social network approach to understand the ethnic economy: a theoretical discourse. *GeoJournal*, 64(1), 7-16.
- › Hackler, D., & Mayer, H. (2008). Diversity, Entrepreneurship, and the Urban Environment. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 30(3), 273-307.
- › Hum, T. (2011). The Changing Landscape of Asian Entrepreneurship, Minority Banks, and Community Development. *AAPJ Nexus: Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders Policy, Practice and Community*, 9(1), 78-90.
- › Hung, C.-K. R. (2007). Immigrant nonprofit organizations in US metropolitan areas. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 36(4), 707-729.
- › International City-County Management Association. (2014). Economic Development 2014 Survey Results.
- › Kalnins, A., & Chung, W. (2006). Social capital, geography, and survival: Gujarati immigrant entrepreneurs in the US lodging industry. *Management Science*, 52(2), 233-247.
- › Kaplan, D. H., & Li, W. (Eds.). (2006). *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- › Krogstad, J. M. (2015, April 8). Reflecting a racial shift, 78 counties turned majority-minority since 2000. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/08/reflecting-a-racial-shift-78-counties-turned-majority-minority-since-2000/>
- › Levitt, P. (1995). A Todos Les Llamo Primo (I Call Everyone Cousin): The Social Business for Latino Small Businesses. In M. Halter (Ed.), *New Migrants in the Marketplace: Boston's Ethnic Entrepreneurs*. Boston, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press.
- › Li, W. (1998). Anatomy of a New Ethnic Settlement: The Chinese Ethnoburb in Los Angeles. *Urban Studies*, 35(3), 479-501.
- › Li, W., Dymski, G., Zhou, Y., Chee, M., & Aldana, C. (2002). Chinese-American Banking and Community Development in Los Angeles County. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92(4), 777-796.
- › Li, W., Dymski, G., Chee, M. W. L., Ahn, H.-H., Aldana, C., & Zhou, Y. (2006). How Ethnic Banks Matter: Banking and Community/Economic Development in Los Angeles. In D. H. Kaplan & W. Li (Eds.), *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy* (pp. 111-132). Rowman & Littlefield: Lanham, Maryland.
- › Li, W., Lo, L., & Oberle, A. (2014). The embeddedness of bank branch networks in immigrant gateways
- › L'ençhâssement des réseaux de succursales bancaires aux portes d'entrée des immigrants. *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien*, 58(1), 48-62.
- › Li, W., & Skop, E. (2007). Enclaves, ethnoburbs, and new patterns of settlement among Asian immigrants. In M. Zhou & J. V. Gatewood (Eds.), *Contemporary Asian American: A multidisciplinary reader* (pp. 222-236). New York, New York: NYU Press.

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

- › Light, I. (1973). *Ethnic Enterprise in America*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- › Light, I., & Bonacich, E. (1991). *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles, 1965-1982*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- › Light, I., & Johnston, M. F. (2009). The metropolitan dispersion of Mexican immigrants in the United States, 1980 to 2000. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(1), 3-18.
- › Liu, C. Y. (2012a). The Causes and Dynamics of Minority Entrepreneurial Entry. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 17(01).
- › Liu, C. Y. (2012b). Intrametropolitan opportunity structure and the self-employment of Asian and Latino immigrants. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 26(2), 178-192.
- › Liu, C. Y., Miller, J., & Wang, Q. (2014). Ethnic enterprises and community development. *GeoJournal*, 79(5), 565-576.
- › Lo, L., Teixeira, C., & Truelove, M. (2003). Polish and Somali Entrepreneurship and the Building of Ethnic Economies in Toronto. *Espace*, 1, 167-181.
- › Manning Thomas, J., & Darnton, J. (2006). Social diversity and economic development in the metropolis. *Journal of planning literature*, 21(2), 153-168.
- › McDaniel, P. N. (2006). *An International Corridor in the Making?: Immigrant-Owned Entrepreneurial Establishments in Birmingham, Alabama*. (Master's of Science), University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
- › McFarland, C., & McConnell, J. K. (2013). Small Business Growth During a Recession: Local Policy Implications. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 27(2), 102-113.
- › Moon, Z. K., Farmer, F. L., Miller, W. P., & Abreo, C. (2014). Identification and Attenuation of Barriers to Entrepreneurship: Targeting New Destination Latino Migrants. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 28(1), 61-72.
- › Nopper, T. (2010). Colorblind Racism and Institutional Actors' Explanations of Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurship. *Critical Sociology*, 36(1), 65-85.
- › Oberle, A. (2006). Latino Business Landscapes and the Hispanic Ethnic Economy. In D. H. Kaplan & W. Li (Eds.), *Landscapes of the Ethnic Economy* (pp. 147-162). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.
- › Odem, M. E. (2004). Unsettled in the Suburbs: Latino Immigration and Ethnic Diversity in Metro Atlanta. In A. Singer, S. Wiley Hardwick, & C. Brettell (Eds.), *Twenty-First Century Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburban America* (pp. 105-136). Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- › Osgood, J. L., Opp, S. M., & Bernotsky, R. L. (2012). Yesterday's Gains Versus Today's Realities: Lessons From 10 Years of Economic Development Practice. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 26(4), 334-350.
- › Park, K. (1997). *The Korean American Dream: Immigrants and Small Business in New York City*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- › Park, K. (2010). Sources and Resources of Korean Immigrant Entrepreneurship. *Critical Sociology*, 36(6), 891-896.

Doyle, J.

- › Parker, S. C., & Belghitar, Y. (2006). What Happens to Nascent Entrepreneurs? An Econometric Analysis of the PSED. *Small Business Economics*, 27(1), 81-101.
- › Patraporn, R. V., Pfeiffer, D., & Ong, P. (2010). Building Bridges to the Middle Class: The Role of Community-Based Organizations in Asian American Wealth Accumulation. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 24(3), 288-303.
- › Portes, A., & Bach, R. L. (1985). *Latin Journey: Cuban and Mexican Immigrants in the United States*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- › Portes, A., & Jensen, L. (1989). The enclave and the entrants: Patterns of ethnic enterprise in Miami before and after Mariel. *American Sociological Review*, 54(6), 929-949.
- › Portes, A., & Sensenbrenner, J. (1993). Embeddedness and Immigration: Notes on the Social Determinants of Economic Action. *American Journal of Sociology*, 98(6), 1320-1350.
- › Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1996). Self-Employment and the Earnings of Immigrants. *American Sociological Review*, 61(2), 219-230.
- › Preston, V., & Lo, L. (2000). Canadian Urban Landscape Examples - 21 'Asian theme' malls in suburban Toronto: land use conflict in Richmond Hill. *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien*, 44(2), 182-190.
- › Razin, E., & Light, I. (1998). Ethnic Entrepreneurs in America's Largest Metropolitan Areas. *Urban Affairs Review*, 33(3), 332-360.
- › Reynolds, P. D., & Curtain, R. T. (2008). Business Creation in the United States: Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics II Initial Assessment. *Foundations and Trends in Entrepreneurship*, 4(3), 155-307.
- › Servon, L. J. (1999). *Bootstrap Capital: Microenterprises and the American Poor*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- › Servon, L. J., Fairlie, R. W., Rastello, B., & Seely, A. (2010). The Five Gaps Facing Small and Microbusiness Owners: Evidence From New York City. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 24(2), 126-142.
- › Shinnar, R. S., & Young, C. A. (2008). Hispanic Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the Las Vegas Metropolitan Area: Motivations for Entry into and Outcomes of Self-Employment. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 46(2), 242-262.
- › Singer, A. (2004). The Rise of New Immigrant Gateways *Living Cities Census Series*. Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. The Living Cities Census Series, February 2004: Brookings Institution. Retrieved from [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2004/2/demographics%20singer/20040301\\_gateways.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2004/2/demographics%20singer/20040301_gateways.pdf)
- › Teixeira, C. (1998) Cultural resources and ethnic entrepreneurship: A case study of the Portuguese real estate industry in Toronto. *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien*, 42(3), 267-81.

## IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION AS A LOCAL ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

- › Teixeira, C., & Lo, L. (2012). *Immigrant Entrepreneurship in Kelowna, BC: Challenges and Opportunities: Metropolis British Columbia Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Diversity*. Vancouver, B.C.: Metropolis British Columbia
- › Tseng, Y.-F. (1995). Beyond 'Little Taipei': The Development of Taiwanese Immigrant Businesses in Los Angeles. *International Migration Review*, 33-58.
- › Wah, T. (2008). The Essential Structure Of Afro-Caribbean Immigrant Enterprise Viability: Views From Local Economic Development Practitioners And Implications. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, 13(04), 463-484.
- › Waldinger, R. (1989). Structural opportunity or ethnic advantage?: Immigrant business development in New York. *International Migration Review*, 23(1), 48-72.
- › Wang, L., & Lo, L. (2007). Immigrant grocery-shopping behavior: ethnic identity versus accessibility. *Environment and Planning A*, 39(3), 684-699.
- › Wang, Q. (2012). Ethnic Entrepreneurship Studies in Geography: A Review. *Geography Compass*, 6(4), 227-240.
- › Wang, Q. (2013a). Beyond Ethnic Enclaves?: Exploring the Spatial Distribution of Latino-Owned Employer Firms in Two US Immigration Gateways. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 35(5), 569-589.
- › Wang, Q. (2013b). Constructing a multilevel spatial approach in ethnic entrepreneurship studies. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research*, 19(1), 97-113.
- › Wang, Q., & Li, W. (2007). Entrepreneurship, ethnicity and local contexts: Hispanic entrepreneurs in three U.S. southern metropolitan areas. *GeoJournal*, 68(2-3), 167-182.
- › Wilson, J. H., & Singer, A. (2011). *Immigrants in 2010 Metropolitan America: A Decade of Change: Metropolitan Policy Program*. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/10/13%20immigration%20wilson%20singer/1013\\_immigration\\_wilson\\_singer.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2011/10/13%20immigration%20wilson%20singer/1013_immigration_wilson_singer.pdf)
- › Yoon, I.-J. (1997). *On My Own: Korean Businesses and Race Relations in America*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
- › Zhu, P., Liu, C. Y., & Painter, G. (2013). Does residence in an ethnic community help immigrants in a recession? *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 112-127.
- › Zonta, M. M. (2012). The Continuing Significance of Ethnic Resources: Korean-Owned Banks in Los Angeles, New York and Washington DC. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(3), 463-484.
- › Zonta, M. M. (2004). *The Role of Ethnic Banks in the Residential Patterns of Asian Americans: The Case of Los Angeles*. (Doctor of Philosophy), University of California, Los Angeles.

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

Deepika Andavarapu\* and Mahyar Arefi

University of Cincinnati, USA

Slums are typically perceived as substandard eyesores, corrupt, makeshift, impoverished and crime-ridden. The growing literature on resilience challenged these perceptions, and promoted new debates on their ingenuity and adaptability to overcome external circumstances. Yet these debates are often limited to short term coping and adaptive capacity of slum dwellers. In this paper we look at long-term transformation of a slum over a forty-year period. Holling's Adaptive Cycle model is a useful tool to study the transformations occurring within a slum. The four phases of the adaptive cycle are: conservation (K), creative destruction/release ( $\Omega$ ), reorganization ( $\alpha$ ) and exploitation (r). The  $\Omega$  and  $\alpha$  phases are together known as the "backloop" and are the focus of this paper. This paper explores how the residents of Pedda Jalaripeta slum in Visakhapatnam use their social capital (bonding, bridging and linkages) to survive and recover from disasters. Based on empirical ethnographic findings, this paper shows that when slum dwellers collaborate with government or non-government agencies their community can recover and retain its unique social and cultural identity.

*Keywords:* Resilience, Adaptive Cycle, Social Capital, Bonding and Bridging, Linkage capital

Please cite this article as: Andavarapu, D., and Arefi, M., Understanding Resilience in Urban Slums: Lessons from Pedda-Jalaripeta, India *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.7vol.02>

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

## Introduction

In developing countries, nearly one billion people live in urban slums, their numbers are projected to grow by 500 million between now and 2020. Slums are growing the fastest in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeastern Asia, and Western Asia (World Bank, 2013). Slums or informal settlements are a core feature of urbanization in the global south. The growth of slums is attributed to large-scale urbanization coupled with a lack of affordable housing (UN-Habitat, 2003). Given their prevalence across the world, informal settlements are receiving increased attention from planning professionals and academics. Special issues dedicated to informal urbanism were published in several international journals including *Planning Theory and Practice* (2011), *Built Environment* (2011), *City* (2011), and *International Development Planning Review* (2012). This recent explosion of research created a rich database of empirical and theoretical research articles aimed at exploring new ways of thinking about informal urbanism.

There however exists a gap in research on slums in terms of their resilience and social capital. Statistics about poverty do not give a holistic understanding of the quality of life in informal settlements and challenges faced by the residents on a daily basis (Satterthwaite & Mitlin, 2014, p. 10). Using a resilience lens to study and observe these slums will allow us to learn how these communities use their limited resources to fight external threats. The adaptive cycle model of resilience is among the first models that have been applied to study the resilience of a socio-ecological system. It has been used to study retention of ecological knowledge among local communities (Madzwamuse & Fabricius, 2004), management of rangeland ecosystems (Abel *et al.*, 2006), fisheries (Folke *et al.* 2004), and forest governance in public lands (Beier *et al.*, 2009). The model was also used to study social systems such as urban areas (Chelleri, 2012), and climate change disaster in cities (Pelling & Manuel-navarrete, 2011).

In this paper, we will use the Adaptive Cycle model to study the resilience of the Pedda Jalaripeta slum in Visakhapatnam, India. The model will allow us to conceptualize and operationalize resilience in urban slums. Like most urban slums, the PJ slum witnessed a myriad of disasters over the past four decades. In 1983 a fire destroyed two thirds of the PJ slum and the community was rebuilt after the disaster. Starting in early 2000, the PJ slum has witnessed an avalanche of tourism-oriented development within the Coastal Protection Zone (CRZ) that threatens the coastal ecosystem and the community's livelihood (fishing). The PJ community, not only survived these natural and man-made hazards, but it has moved to a better economic, physical, and social standing in the past four decades. The analysis of these changes in relation to issues of resilience have revealed possible long-term transformative resilience of an urban slum and offered significant insights regarding the role of social capital in the ongoing resilience of an urban slum.

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

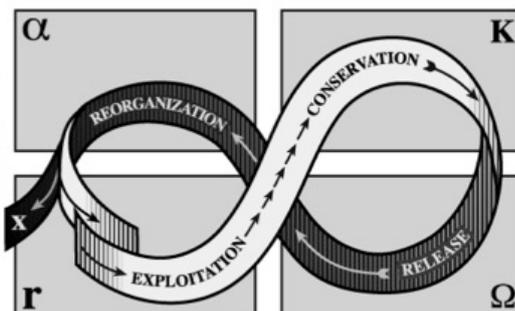
The next section identifies six definitions of resilience commonly used in urban planning literature and elaborates why we chose the adaptive cycle definition to analyze the PJ slums. The subsequent section presents the qualitative research methods that were used to collect data in the PJ slum. Next section chronologically narrates the history of the PJ slum and elaborates the challenges that the community faced and survived over the past forty years. The conclusion reflects on how resilience was manifested in a remote slum in coastal India.

### Resilience and Slums

In his seminal article on resilience, Holling (1973) challenged the command and control approaches to ecosystem management advocated by the ecologists of the time. He dismissed the idea that ecosystems organize around a single equilibrium point to which a system will automatically return following a disaster, and outlined a new ontology of ecosystems rooted in the complex adaptive systems debate (Holling, 1973). After its initial introduction in ecological thinking, the concept of resilience has gained traction and prominence across several disciplines such as disaster and crisis management, climate change, and urban planning. Resilience thinking, although ubiquitous, is far from being accepted as a normative urban planning theory. The multiple meanings and interpretations of resilience create a rich interdisciplinary scholarship in urban planning literature (Andavarapu & Arefi, 2015; Desouza & Flanery, 2013; Rogers, 2012)

Urban planning scholars frequently use the following five interpretations of resilience: *Engineering resilience*, refers to bouncing back to pre-disaster conditions (Campanella, 2006; Haigh & Amaratunga, 2012). The *equilibrium resilience* definition refers to the pursuit of a preferred alternative rather than bouncing back to the original state (Arefi, 2005; Pickett *et al*, 2004). The *evolutionary resilience* definition challenges the whole notion of equilibrium and suggests that it is in the nature of the system to evolve and change with or without external disturbances (Davoudi *et al.*, 2013). *Community resilience* refers to the development of personal and collective capacities of communities to respond and influence change to sustain and renew the community (Magis 2010). *Adaptive cycle* (Figure 1) definition, posits that socio-ecological systems go through four phases of development in their life cycle: conservation (K), creative destruction/release ( $\Omega$ ), reorganization ( $\alpha$ ) and exploitation/growth ( $r$ ) (Gunderson & Holling, 2002).

**Figure 1:**  
Adaptive Cycle  
Framework  
Source: Holling &  
Gunderson (2002),  
p.34. Reproduced by  
permission of Island  
Press, Washington  
DC.



Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

Some scholars argue that adaptive cycle is not an appropriate framework for studying slums, since they are not eco-systems (Dovey, 2012). Despite the controversy surrounding the nomenclature, the *adaptive cycle* definition incorporates both the long-term and short-term challenges that the slum dwellers face on an ongoing basis. More importantly, this definition accurately describes how communities can survive and reinvent themselves after multiple disasters. Applying the adaptive cycle framework to slums/informal settlements, we can see that exploitation (r) occurs when the first hut is built on a vacant land. The settlement then enters the conservation phase (K) as permanent structures are added; residents create new norms and networks for their community, and over time improve their social capital (Dovey, 2012). New linkages with external agencies are formed. Informal settlements can continue in this stage for a long time, but in some cases, creative destruction ( $\Omega$ ) phase might occur when the community is threatened by man-made or natural disasters.

When that happens, the community enters the reorganization ( $\alpha$ ) phase, when a new order may begin to appear. It is in this phase that the community's social capital is tested: the residents may use their linkage capital to formalize their slums and gain tenure security. On the contrary, during this phase, the residents can be displaced or the settlement can spiral downward as a dangerous slum (Dovey 2012, p. 356).

Social networks within slums as well as linkages to external agencies often play an important role in the recovery and reorganization of a slum area after a disaster (Islam & Walkerden, 2014). There are three types of social networks: bonding, bridging and linking. Bonding ties are shared between individuals who share the same ethnic and religious identities. These networks typically represent relationships between immediate family members and relatives (the in-laws, their sons and daughters). Bridging ties are described as social relationships of exchange, often of association between people with shared interest or goals but contrasting social identity. Both these ties represent the internal horizontal linkages within the community (Islam & Walkerden, 2014; Pelling & High, 2005). For slums (and communities with low socio-economic status) bonding social capital allows them to "get by" but without connecting to external agencies they have difficulty getting ahead (Aldrich, 2011; Arefi, 2009; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

Linking ties are a sub category of bridging ties, these relationships cross group boundaries in a vertical direction. Linking networks can provide political, economic, or knowledge-based support to slum residents. The linking networks often provide the community with much needed resources not just to recover and bounce back but also transform the communities to a better physical state. The bonding/bridging/linking triplet provides a valuable explanation as to why certain slums fail to survive a disaster while others continue to be resilient despite multiple disasters.

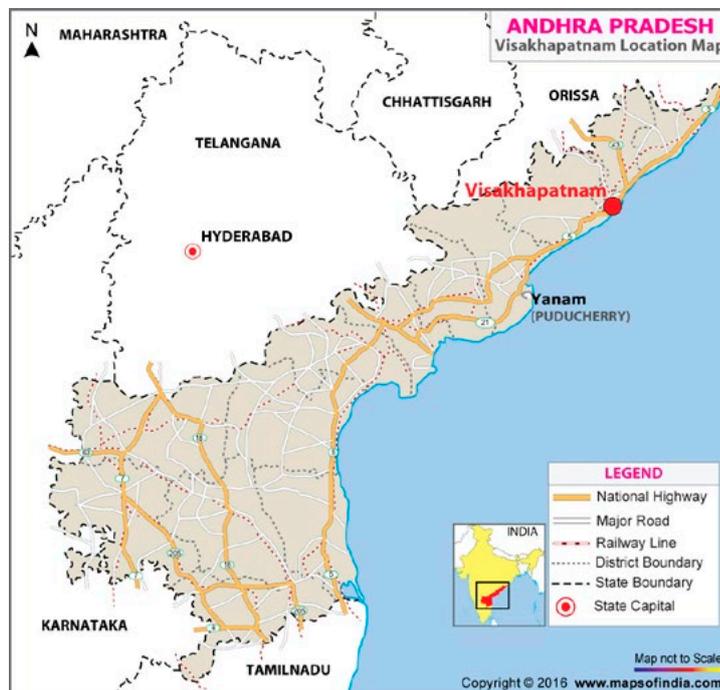
## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

Slums can be resilient when they create an atmosphere for individual growth without interrupting the existing social networks, or disturbing access to ecological resources. The survey of the existing literature shows that four forms of capital (*physical, human, social, and ecological*) are critical for resilient slums (Adger, 2012; Andavarapu and Edelman, 2013; Arefi, 2009; Perlman, 1976; Roy, 2003). The *physical capital* refers to infrastructure, i.e., water, sewer, roads, and electricity. Access to educational services (schools, anganwadis<sup>1</sup>), and hospitals supports *human enrichment*. *Social capital* includes the social networks within and outside the community. Resources such as fishing, urban forest, and life stock represent *ecological capital*. In the next section we select a resilient slum in the City of Visakhapatnam based on these four forms of capital.

### Operationalizing Resilience and Selecting a Resilient slum

Of 1.7 million residents in the city of Visakhapatnam, 770,971 (44.1%<sup>2</sup>) live in slums. Land is a valuable and scarce resource in the city since it is landlocked (Sea Coast on the west and hills on the east side). Low skill work opportunities in the city such as, the Naval Port, Steel industry and the growing tourism industry, attract rural migrants to

Figure 2:  
Location map of City  
of Visakhapatnam  
Source: Maps of  
India.com



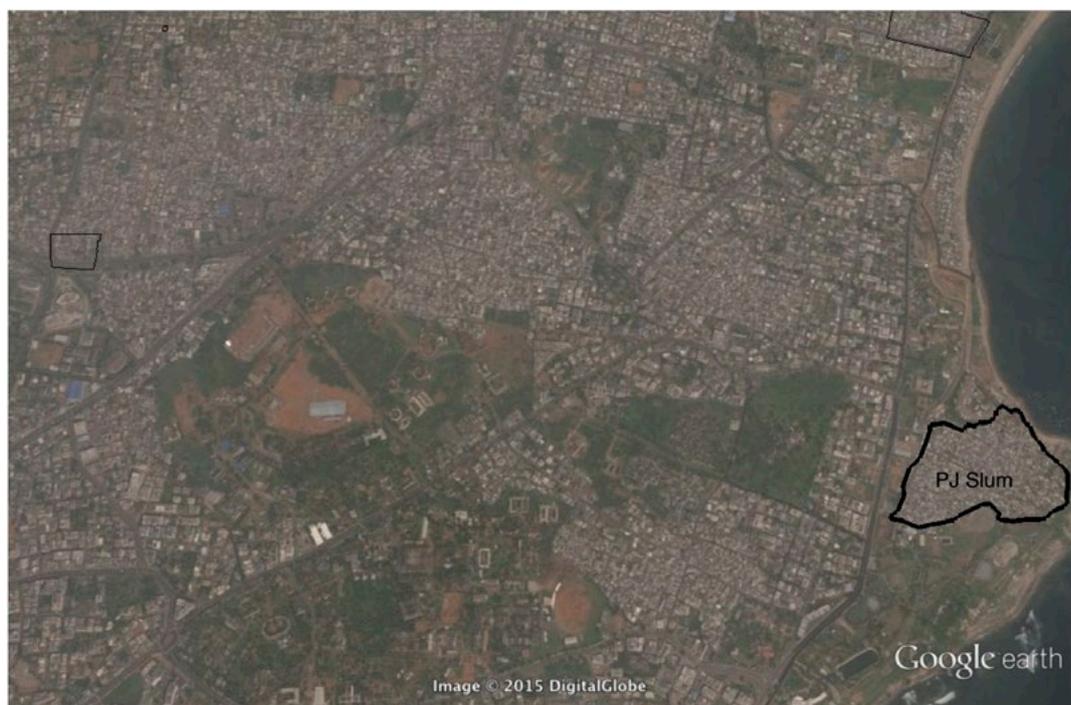
- <sup>1</sup> Government funded day care centers, which are usually run by two anganwadi workers. These centers provide a variety of services including prenatal and antenatal care to pregnant women; providing supplementary nutrition to both children below the age of 6 as well as nursing and pregnant women; and pre school education to children who are between 3 to 5 years old (Website of Ministry of Poverty Alleviation, India).
- <sup>2</sup> 2011 Indian Census data on Slums accessed on 2013-08-02 from <http://www.census2011.co.in/census/city/402-visakhapatnam.html>.

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

Visakhapatnam further exacerbating the land scarcity and thereby increasing slums. In 2009, the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) conducted a household survey of all the 654 slums in the City. This database was available online and provided information such as the physical infrastructure of the slum, and the demographic and economic profiles of the slum residents (GVMC, 2009). Additional data were accumulated through review of scholarly publications and newspaper articles.

A methodological review of the database on slums in Visakhapatnam revealed that the Pedda Jalaripeta (PJ) slum – the largest (6,000 residents) and oldest slum in the city – had strong stocks of physical, social, human and ecological capital. Nearly all (92.9%) the houses in the PJ slum are located along paved roads, and all the residents have electricity connections. 75% of households have access to tap water and less than 50% have pour-flush toilets on premises. This data demonstrates that the PJ community has access to basic infrastructure (*Physical capital*) (GVMC, 2009). The community also has access to educational services (Anganwadis and schools) and health care (*Human capital*). The PJ has a publicly accessible beach (*Ecological capital*), which provides a livelihood (fishing) to 70% of the PJ residents (Figure 3) (Immanuell & Rao, 2012). The majority (70%) of the residents in the PJ slum belong to the Jalari caste generating a strong homogenous community with tight knit social networks (Equations, 2008; Philipose, 2013).

**Figure 3:**  
Aerial view of Pedda  
Jalaripeta slum in  
Visakhapatnam  
Source: Google Earth



## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

Popular media often portrays slums as dirty and filthy where the streets are filled with raw sewage and the houses are nothing more than shacks. The PJ community description provided here does not resemble the image of a slum portrayed in the popular media. Despite its outward appearance, the PJ slum continues to struggle with issues such as poverty<sup>3</sup> and poor infrastructure<sup>4</sup> and is therefore officially notified as a slum by the GVMC.

### Research Approach and Methods

Between September 2013 and March 2014, we collected preliminary data about the PJ slum through a variety of data bases including: GVMC's household surveys (GVMC, 2009); Department of Fisheries socio-economic survey on the fishermen in the PJ slum (Immanuel & Rao, 2012); NGO Action Aid project reports outlining their programs and successes in the PJ slum (Phillipose, 2013); and other scholarly articles about the city of Visakhapantam and the PJ slum. In February 2014, University of Cincinnati's, Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and approved the PJ slum research protocol. We conducted the fieldwork in the PJ slum from March thru July 2014. During that time 54 interviews (44 with slum dwellers, 10 with government employees) and 3 focus group discussions were held. The perspectives of local leaders were canvassed through multiple key informant interviews. Additionally, ethnographic observations were recorded on a daily basis in a journal. During this time an average of 15 hours per week were spent on interviews and participant observations.

The researcher engaged three key informants (AT, TS & TJ) one in each of the three main cohorts in the PJ slum (senior fishermen, young fishermen, and women within the community). These three key informants were well respected in the community and helped with recruiting other interviewees to the research. Four research activities were conducted in this research study:

#### **1 Interviews with government officials and representatives of NGOs**

Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with government officials who work with the slum residents on an ongoing basis. Our questions were focused on the evolution and history of the PJ slum, the government funds and projects in the region over the past forty years. We also aimed to understand the interaction or lack thereof between the government agencies and the slum residents. This first round of interviews aimed at understanding the government agency's perspective about the PJ slum. From the Department of Fisheries

---

<sup>3</sup> The international poverty rate is \$1.25 per day per person (UN-Habitat, 2010). In 2009, 96.8% of the PJ slum residents earned Rs. 6000 per month for a family of four representing a \$0.80 per person per day (at a conversion rate of \$1=Rs. 62.22) (GVMC, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Over 50% of the residents in the PJ slum do not have toilets and use the public toilets paying Rs. 2 per visit. Water is supplied only for 2 hours a day.

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

the interviewees included KR (Joint Director); LR (Director); SR (Field Development Officer); DY (Field Development Officer), and from the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation the interviewees included VK (Capacity Building Training Coordinator); UR (Urban Community Development Officer); SK (Anganwadi Teacher); RN (Assistant City Planner); VR (City Planner); and CL (Zonal Engineer). In addition to the government employees, we interviewed the leader from three key institutions in the PJ slum: Grama Sabha (TP); Marine Co-operative Society; and Fishermen Youth Welfare Association (FYWA)). These face-to-face interviews averaged 45 minutes and were conducted in Telugu language (local language). From the Grama Sabha we interviewed GR (Secretary) and PR (president); from the Marine Co-operative Society we interviewed AT (Past President), who is one of the key informants for this study and AN (President). From the FYWA we interviewed TS (President), TJ (President of the Women's co-operative wing), BT (Treasurer) & ANN (Secretary). TS and TJ are also key informants of this study.

## **2 Informal interviews with slum residents in their homes**

Informal interviews were conducted with slum residents. These interviews were 20-45 minute and were conducted in Telugu but were translated and transcribed in English. These interviews were informal and conversational, but were designed to gain an understanding of resilience and social capital within the community.

## **3 Focus Groups**

During informal interviews, the community members usually huddled together, discussing research questions or narrating a story about their community. These informal conversations among the residents were more organic and lively; the residents felt more comfortable sharing their experiences and stories in this setting. After observing these interactions among the residents we conducted three focus groups with the older fishermen, women and younger fishermen in the community.

## **4 Ethnographic observation in public parts of the PJ slum**

The ethnographic observation component of this study included observing the spatial layout of the community, use of public/private space, participation in religious festivals (polaramma jatara), and social gatherings. The researcher attended several community affairs such as public information meeting organized by the Department of Fisheries; Marine co-operative society elections; women's micro-savings group meeting, and the executive board meetings of the Fishermen Youth Welfare Association (FYWA). Observations from these encounters were entered in a digital journal, these entries were organized as three themes: use of public/private space, social gatherings, interaction between the community members and government agencies.

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

**The First Cycle: conservation, creative destruction/release, reorganization and exploitation**

The data collected in the field shows that over a forty-year period, the PJ slum transitioned from small fishing village with no amenities to a low-income urban neighborhood with adequate physical, human, social and ecological capital. During this period it faced both natural and man-made disasters, in this section and next, we narrate the history of the PJ slum through the adaptive cycle lens.

*Conservation (K) phase of the adaptive cycle is characterized by stability, certainty, reduced flexibility and low resilience:* In 1969, GVMC first officially notified<sup>5</sup> the PJ community as a slum. At that time, the PJ community was a fishing village with no infrastructure and all the residents in the community were fishermen.

*Release ( $\Omega$ ) phase is characterized by chaotic collapse and release of accumulated capital:* On December 17, 1983, an election banner caught fire, 600 of the 800 huts in the PJ community burned to the ground.

When our houses burned down, we ran out to the sea. Since it was winter, we were holding on to blankets and we were shivering- (Senior citizen focus group interview, may 2014). My wife was pregnant at that time so my mother took her away from the crowd, once I helped with the rescue efforts, I started looking for them, but it was so chaotic I could not find them. I finally found them away from the crowd sitting in the dark, I was very relieved to find them. (Interview with TP, April 2014)

After the fire we had nowhere to live, some of us lived with our friends and relatives while other built new temporary shacks closer to the beach (Interview with AT, March 2014)

As seen in these excerpts, the PJ slum residents had to flee to the open beach on a cold December night to escape the fire, they lost their houses and their belongings to the fire.

*Reorganization ( $\alpha$ ) phase is characterized by innovation, restructuring, and greatest uncertainty but high resilience:* GVMC officials proposed redeveloping the PJ slum under the Visakhapatnam Slum Improvement Project (VSIP) with infrastructure and serviced lots<sup>6</sup>. The PJ slum residents did not trust the government officials. The slum residents

---

<sup>5</sup> A tenure formalization policy, where the state officially recognizes settlements as slums and protects the occupancy rights of the residents (Nakamura, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> During 1988-1996, GVMC received 9 million pounds from UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to implement VSIP. The project extended infrastructure to about 200,000 slum residents in the city (GVMC, 2012).

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

refused to leave their homes and rejected the redevelopment proposal. OC, who was the elected representative of the community from 1983- 88 (Member of Legislative Assembly, MLA), convinced the PJ residents that he would oversee the redevelopment efforts. Since OC was a Jalari<sup>7</sup> who was born and raised in the PJ community, the residents trusted him and vacated their houses (Personal interviews with TP 4/3/2014; OG 3/22/2014; and AT 3/22/2014).

Over the next few years, the MLA worked closely with the government agencies to redevelop the PJ slum. The redevelopment plan was based on John Turner's self-help slum redevelopment program, where the government provides infrastructure and tenure security to the slum residents while the residents are responsible for building their own housing (Turner, 1976). The intention of the self-help slum redevelopment program was to make housing affordable to low-income households without payment of subsidies. Therefore, the government laid out the infrastructure (water, sewer, and roads) but did not construct the actual houses.

In 1984, the government gave us a 60 gajas of land (540 sq.feet). they gave us some rods, cement, gave us Rs. 30,000 (\$500) worth of building material. So we added another Rs. 60,000 and built these houses for a total of Rs. 90,000. But not all of us got the scheme. I did not get the scheme I built my house by myself. (Interview with OG, March 2014.)

As seen in the above excerpt, the residents whose houses were lost in the fire were allotted tracts of land, building material and limited funding to build their houses. The PJ slum was redeveloped in two phases, 432 houses in the first phase (1984-85) and 50 in the second phase (1990-91).

MLA (OC) worked closely with the government officials to create a redevelopment plan that did not displace any of the residents, thereby retaining social networks of trust within the community (*social*). Houses were laid out in a grid format and a direct public access to the beach was ensured (ecological & economic resource). The *physical* infrastructure laid out as part of the redevelopment improved the drainage, sanitation and water supply in the community.

*The growth (r) phase is characterized by rapid accumulation of resources (capitals):* As seen in Figure 4, some of the original houses built under the redevelopment scheme are now 3 stories tall; the residents who received formal housing through the government program expanded their houses vertically to accommodate their growing families or to

---

<sup>7</sup> Prior to the redevelopment, the PJ community was primarily a fishing village where all the residents belonged to the Jalari caste (Personal Interview with AT on 3/22/2014). Jalari literally means fishermen.

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

rent the units as an additional income source. While 68% of the houses in the PJ slum have permanent roofing material (concrete) the other 32% are built with temporary material such as thatched roof or corrugated metal sheets, these units do not have water or sewer access and rely on public pay-to-use toilets (figure 5).

The PJ slum is a homogenous community where 88.5% of the residents belong to the 'Jalari' caste (GVMC, 2009); the shared caste and kinship groupings result in stronger bonding within the community. Previous research has established that homogenous communities tend to have stronger bonding capital (Aldrich, 2011). The PJ slum's Grama

**Figure 4:**  
Image shows the multi-story structures in the PJ slum  
Source: Authors



**Figure 5:**  
Affordable housing in the PJ slum built with temporary material.  
Source: Authors



Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

Sabha organizes religious festivals such as the Polaramma Jatara, Nookalamma Jatara, Sri Rama Navami and other religious festivals throughout the year (Figure 6). In 2006, the Grama Sabha organized a donation campaign for the construction of the Ramalayam temple (Figure 7). The slum residents donated three days of fishing catch equivalent to Rs. 1,500,000<sup>8</sup>. The residents continue to donate 1% of their income voluntarily for the temple upkeep and maintenance. After the redevelopment, the PJ slum residents built four such temples through donations raised within the community.

**Figure 6:**  
Polaramma Jatara  
festival: animal  
sacrifice ritual at  
the entrance of the  
temple.  
Source: Authors



**Figure 7:**  
Ramalayam Temple.  
Source: Authors



<sup>8</sup> About \$ 24,105 at a conversion rate of \$1= Rs. 62.22

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

The ceremonies and construction activities increase the social capital within the community. This bonding and bridging capital is critical for the PJ slum, since the fishermen venture out 10-15 miles into the sea for offshore fishing. During these fishing expeditions, the fishermen rely on their friends and family in the nearby boats for first aid and emergency evacuation in case of an accident. The social connection that is built on the land saves lives on the sea (Focus group meeting with the fishermen dated March 30, 2014).

At the end of the first adaptive cycle, the *physical* and *human* capital of the PJ slum substantially improved while its *social* capital and access to *ecological* resources were retained. Slum redevelopments are typically notorious for disrupting the social-ecological integrity and leaving the urban poor worse off after the redevelopment (Andavarapu & Edelman, 2013; Patel, 2013; Perlman, 1976). The PJ slum avoided those potential pitfalls due to the involvement of the MLA who acted as the direct link between the community and the government. Without the MLA's (OC) involvement, the PJ slum redevelopment would have been more chaotic and could have resulted in some displacement.

### **The Second Cycle: conservation, creative destruction/release, reorganization and exploitation**

*Conservation (K) phase is characterized by stability, certainty, reduced flexibility and low resilience: 1980's physical redevelopment of the PJ slum significantly improved the human capital in the community in areas such as health<sup>9</sup>, education, and birth control. The older citizens ruminate about how the PJ slum has changed in just one generation:*

Our ancestors used to go fishing on a wooden boat and they were wearing just a loin-cloth. Today, the fishermen are wearing pants while fishing, so we don't know if it's a fisherman or a student. Civilization has increased and has come into our village. (Interview with OG, March 2014).

Yes, we developed a lot after our houses were burned. When we used to live in the thatched roof huts, we did not know anything. We were saving money, but we did not know about houses, clothes or jewelry. Back then we used to have four or five kids, now these youngsters just have one or two kids and then get an operation (family planning). (Interview with PM, April 2014).

Civilization is increasing right so unity is increasing. Once we were not civilized, but now the younger generation is very civilized they come back from fishing wear pant and shirt and then go for a movie, drink juice. (Interview with VY, March 2014).

---

<sup>9</sup> Improved sanitation, drainage and water supply in the PJ slum reduced the spread of water borne diseases such as diarrhea, cholera etc... and improved the health of the residents especially the children (Abelson, 1996).

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

The above excerpts illustrate the fact that the PJ slum residents made several leaps towards urbanization in just one generation. Over the years they have incorporated urban ideologies such as education, birth control, use of household appliances as well as a sense of urban style.

Starting in 1995, Action Aid an international NGO with a focus on empowering poor urban communities started expanding in the fishing communities in and around Visakhapatnam. Action aid organized fellowship programs to educate youth in the PJ slum and other fishing communities around the City, about federal and state regulations such as the Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (MFRA)<sup>10</sup>, Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)<sup>11</sup>, Right to Information Act<sup>12</sup> as well as the judicial process for filing legal petitions against projects that were infringing on the rights of the fishermen and fishing communities. TS and other youth in the PJ slum, who graduated from the fellowship program, registered a NGO Fishermen Youth Welfare Association (FYWA) in 2001.

*Release ( $\Omega$ ) phase is characterized by chaotic collapse and release of accumulated capital:*

Starting in early 2000 the PJ slum faced a man-made disaster, when the Andhra Pradesh state government launched several programs to convert Visakhapatnam's seacoast into a tourist destination. As part of the process, Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA)<sup>13</sup> acquired tracks of land in the City of Visakhapatnam and created Special Economic Zones to build tourism infrastructure.

In early 2000, VUDA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the chairman of Vizag Beach Resorts Ltd., a private company. The MoU supports development on the Visakhapatnam beach for tourist destinations such as beach resorts, discotheques (pubs), star hotels, multiplex complexes, nature care parks etc worth up to 20 billion rupees<sup>14</sup>. This MoU further solidified the threat against the PJ slum and its identity as a fishing village.

---

<sup>10</sup> MFRA is a 1994 Indian federal law, which created an exclusive fishing zone within eight kilometers (4.9 miles) from the shoreline for traditional fishermen.

<sup>11</sup> CRZ is a 1991 Indian federal law, which was revised and updated in 2011. This federal law reconciles three objectives: protection of livelihoods of traditional fisher-folk communities; preservation of coastal ecology; and promotion of economic activity that have necessarily to be located in coastal regions. The primary function of CRZ was to regulate development along the coastal.

<sup>12</sup> A 2005 federal law under which, any citizen may request information from a "public authority" (a body of Government or "instrumentality of State"), which is required to reply expeditiously or within thirty days.

<sup>13</sup> VUDA, which was created in 1978, is responsible for preparing and implementing a Master plan for the Greater Visakhapatnam region along with the surrounding suburbs.

<sup>14</sup> \$321.44 million at a conversion rate of 62.22 rupees per dollar

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

The tourism plan if implemented would displace 45,000 fisher folk families including the families in the PJ slum. The first phase of the MoU project was widening the road from Visakhapatnam to Bhimli (Equations, 2008; Philipose, 2013).

*Reorganization ( $\alpha$ ) phase is characterized by innovation, restructuring and greatest uncertainty but high resilience:* In 2003, the Fishermen Youth Welfare Association (FYWA) along with the District Fishermen Youth Welfare Association filed a writ petition, against the Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA), in the Andhra Pradesh High Court, arguing that the road widening violated the Coastal Regulation Zone notification. The court case halted the project for three years. VUDA was forced to make some modifications to its original plan (Philipose, 2013). Eventually, the MoU with the Vizag Beach Resorts Ltd. was canceled (Equations, 2008).

It was a CRZ violation. Firstly, the road would fall under CRZ 1, where construction is not allowed. Second a lot of fishermen used that area for drying fish and it is a source of income for us. Third there is no need for a four-lane road way from Visakhapatnam to Bhimli, there isn't enough traffic to warrant the demolition of a hill. (Interview with BG, May 2014)

BG is the treasurer of FYWA and as seen in the excerpt, the fishermen had strong case to oppose the road widening. Therefore, through filing a legal petition against the road expansion, FYWA demonstrated that the community was willing and able to fight developments that encroached on their community. Between 2000 and 2014, the FYWA filed 13 court cases against the government and private agencies for violating the CRZ guidelines.

*Growth ( $r$ ), is characterized by rapid accumulation of resources (capitals):* Three of the top tourist attractions in the city of Visakhapatnam are in close proximity to the PJ slum: a 55 acre historical VUDA park; Tenneti Park and Kailashgiri a 380 ac hill top park and the Rama Krishna beach (RK beach) a public beach (Figure 8). Close proximity to these attractions resulted in multiple attempts to redevelop the PJ slum as a tourist destination. The PJ slum residents use a two-prong approach to defy those attempts: FYWA thwarts large-scale projects through their media outreach and legal filings when necessary; the PJ slum residents prevent piecemeal re-development of their community by refusing to sell their property to outsiders (non-fishing families) (Senior citizen from the focus group 5/22/2014). The social capital that the residents built through mutual investment in the community (temples) and cultural/religious activities (religious ceremonies) generates a sense of trust among the residents thereby reducing the probability of piecemeal development of the community by outsiders. Additionally, the strong dose of social capital within the community, places a high opportunity cost on the government to want to disturb the community.

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

**Figure 8:**  
PJ slum and  
surrounding tourist  
destinations.  
Source: Google Earth



Unlike the 1983 fire that ravished the PJ slum within a few minutes, tourist-oriented development is a slow moving threat. Just like the fire ushered a new era of development, the tourist oriented development ushered in a new era of political thinking in the community. The older leaders in the PJ slum are illiterate and are not knowledgeable about laws and bureaucratic procedures. These leaders trust the elected representative or depend on the government bureaucrats to assist them with welfare schemes (Senior citizen focus group 5/22/2014). Whereas, the youth leaders at the FYWA use the media and do not hesitate to take legal action and fight with powerful opposition for their human rights, community rights or their fishermen rights. This drastic change in the community's interaction with the bureaucratic agencies over one generation speaks volumes about the role of education and empowerment.

### Resilience in Urban Slums

As shown in this paper, two adaptive cycles have occurred in the PJ slum in the past forty years. Despite the multiple challenges PJ slum maintains its social, cultural and economic identity as a fishing village where 70% of the adults depend on fishing as their livelihood (Immanuel & Rao, 2012). PJ slum successfully avoided alternative undesirable states, including loss of local control, loss of fishing, and tourism oriented development.

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

The first cycle started when the community was notified as a slum in 1969 (*conservation, K*). *Creative destruction* ( $\Omega$ ) came in the form of the fire accident. The accident was a fast moving variable, but the community was able to recover (*reorganization,  $\alpha$* ) from the loss primarily due to its ability to connect (or link) to the government agencies. This vertical linkage to the government agency provided the capital to recover from the fire accident and transform in to a new community. The PJ slum is a testament to the fact that the physical and human capital of slums can be improved while preserving the social and ecological assets of the community. Thirty years after the redevelopment, the community continues to be desirable and loved by a younger generation who are willing to invest time, energy and resources to preserve and protect it (*growth, r*). Slums when redeveloped in collaboration with the community can be resilient in the long term.

In the second cycle, the threat was the intent to develop the seashore for tourism; this threat unlike the fire accident moves more slowly but is more dangerous than the fire (*creative destruction,  $\Omega$* ). The community accessed capital in the form of knowledge and training from the NGO Action Aid to file legal petitions against the private developers and government agencies (*reorganization,  $\alpha$* ). Over the years, the FYWA developed a system to file legal petitions against these developments and became a politically savvy organization (*growth, r*). The high reserves of bonding and bridging within the community provide several non-monetary incentives to residents of the PJ slum; the residents therefore abide by the community's pact and do not sell their property to outsiders (non-fishermen) thereby avoiding piecemeal redevelopment and gentrification of the slum.

The adaptive cycle and complex systems theory in general are useful integrating frameworks. However, to explain causes and effects in specific cases disciplinary theories must be used. In the case of the PJ slum, the bonding, bridging and linkage capital provides a valuable disciplinary explanation. The capacity to self organize is the foundation of resilience. Rebuilding this capacity at times requires access to external resources; investment in capital (social, physical or knowledge) is the way to enable reorganization and rebuilding. The PJ case shows that, bonding and bridging social capital are central for building resilience in slums. However, this holds true only for the conservation and growth phases of the adaptive cycle. The PJ slum dwellers relied on their links with external agencies in order to build capital and recover from disasters.

Academic and policy debates on slums can be placed on a continuum; at one end of the spectrum slums are portrayed as signs of underdevelopment- a series of problems evident in their most extreme form in exploding mega cities – a planet of slums (Davis, 2006; UN-Habitat, 2003). At the other end of the spectrum, the slums are seen as an evidence of the creativity, ecological superiority, romanticized entrepreneurialism and adaptability (Appadurai, 2001; Boonyabanacha, 2005).

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

The PJ slum case study shows that a slum, which was at one end of the spectrum (underdeveloped), can transform to the other end of the spectrum. Through this case study we illustrate that resilience on the ground is a long and laborious process, the PJ slum residents collaborated with the government and non-government organizations to improve the physical and social infrastructure of their slum. The residents invested time, money and labor to rebuild their community from ground up.

The PJ case is an exception in that it was able to access linkage capital at two different times in its history. Accessing linkage capital is not possible for all urban slums especially when slums are seen as a hindrance to urban development (Bhan, 2009). The urban poor's existing hardships are further exacerbated when governments and city municipalities reject the subalterns' claims on urban space (Datta, 2012). Informal small-scale businesses including traditional fishermen are being fought against and displaced, which leads to the marginalization of the informal economy and contributes to the restructuring of informal economy. Today, aesthetics and beautification have become key criteria of urban governance, and discursively marginalizing and physically displacing the traditional elements of the urban economy are seen as modernizing cities.

## References

- › Abel, N., D. H. M. Cumming, & J. M. Anderies. (2006). Collapse and reorganization in social- ecological systems: questions, some ideas, and policy implications. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 17.
- › Abelson, P. (1996). Evaluation of slum improvements, *Cities* 13(2), 97–108.
- › Adger, W. N. (2012). Social Capital , Collective Action , and Adaptation to Climate Change. *Economic Geography*, 79(4), 387–404.
- › Aldrich, D. P. (2011). The Externalities of Strong Social Capital: Post-Tsunami Recovery in Southeast India. *Journal of Civil Society*, 7(1), 81–99.
- › Andavarapu, D., & Arefi, M. (2015). Resilient Slums: Role of Social Capital. *Tekton*, 2(1) 38-54.
- › Andavarapu, D., & Edelman, D. J. (2013). Evolution of Slum Redevelopment Policy. *Current Urban Studies*, 01(04), 185–192.
- › Appadurai, a. (2001). Deep Democracy: Urban Governmentality and the Horizon of Politics. *Environment and Urbanization*, 13(2), 21–47.
- › Arefi, M. (2005). Reflections on the Pedagogy of Place in Planning and Urban Design. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 25(1), 75–88.
- › Arefi, M. (2009). Order in Informal Settlements : A Case Study of Pinar , Istanbul. *Built Environment*, 37(1), 42–56.
- › Bhan, G. (2009). This is no longer the city I once knew. Evictions, the urban poor and

## UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE IN URBAN SLUMS: LESSONS FROM PEDDA-JALARIPETA, INDIA

- the right to the city in millennial Delhi. *Environment and Urbanization*, 21(1), 127–142.
- › Beier, C. M., A. L. Lovecraft, & F. S. Chapin. (2009). Growth and collapse of a resource system: an adaptive cycle of change in public lands governance and forest management in Alaska. *Ecology and Society* 14(2):5.
  - › Boonyabancha, S. (2005). Baan Mankong: going to scale with “slum” and squatter upgrading in Thailand. *Environment and Urbanization*, 17(1), 21–46.
  - › Campanella, T. J. (2006). Urban Resilience and the Recovery of New Orleans. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 72(2), 141–146.
  - › Chelleri, L. (2012). From the « Resilient City » to Urban Resilience. A review essay on understanding and integrating the resilience perspective for urban systems. *Documents d’Anàlisi Geogràfica* 2012, vol. 58/2 287-306.
  - › Datta, A. (2012). *The Illegal City*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.
  - › Davis, M. (2006). *Planet of Slums*. New York; London: Verso.
  - › Davoudi, S., Brooks, E., & Mehmood, A. (2013). Evolutionary Resilience and Strategies for Climate Adaptation. *Planning Practice and Research*, 28(3), 307–322.
  - › Desouza, K. C., & Flanery, T. H. (2013). Designing, planning, and managing resilient cities: A conceptual framework. *Cities*, 35, 89–99.
  - › Dovey, K. (2012). Informal\_urbanism\_and\_com.pdf. *International Development Planning Review*, 34(4), 349–367.
  - › Equations: Equitable Tourism Options. (2008). *Right to Information and Tourism*. Bangalore: Equations: Equitable Tourism Options.
  - › Folke, C., and L. Gunderson. 2006. Facing global change through social-ecological research. *Ecology and Society* 11(2):43.
  - › Gunderson, L. H., & Holling, C. S. (2002). *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
  - › GVMC. (2012). *City Development Plan – Greater Visakhapatnam*. Retrieved on 15 September, 2014 from [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2012/10/16/000356161\\_20121016033041/Rendered/PDF/732240WP-0P09510reater0Visakhapatnam.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2012/10/16/000356161_20121016033041/Rendered/PDF/732240WP-0P09510reater0Visakhapatnam.pdf)
  - › GVMC (2009) *Survey of Households in Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation* accessed through Andhra Pradesh Mission For Elimination of Poverty. Retrieved on November 7, 2012 from Municipal Areas (MEPMA) Website: [http://www.apmepma.Gov.In/HHPS/Hh\\_Rep\\_Slum.Php?Ulbid=109](http://www.apmepma.Gov.In/HHPS/Hh_Rep_Slum.Php?Ulbid=109)
  - › Haigh, R., & Amaratunga, R. (2012). *Making cities resilient*. Retrieved 22 August, 2014 from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?issn=1759-5908&volume=3&issue=2&articleid=17042461&show=html>
  - › Holling, C. S. (1973). Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, 4(1), 1–23.
  - › Immanuel, S., & Rao, G. S. (2012). Social Status of Hook and Line Fishermen in Visakhapatnam, *Fishery Technology*, 49 (2). 204-209.

Andavarapu, D. and Arefi, M.

- › Islam, R., & Walkerden, G. (2014). How bonding and bridging networks contribute to disaster resilience and recovery on the Bangladeshi coast. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 10, 281–291.
- › Madzwamuse, M., and C. Fabricius. (2004). Local ecological knowledge and the Basarwa in the Okavango Delta: the case of Xaxaba, Ngamiland District. Pages 160–173 in C. Fabricius and E. Koch, editors. *Rights, resources and rural development: community-based natural resource management in southern Africa*. London: Earthscan Publications.
- › Magis, K. (2010). Community Resilience: an indicator of social sustainability *Society and Natural Resources*, 23(5), 401-416.
- › Nakamura, S. (2014). Impact of slum formalization on self-help housing construction: A case of slum notification in India. *Urban Studies*, 51(16), 3420–3444.
- › Patel, S. (2013). Upgrade, rehouse or resettle? An assessment of the Indian government's Basic Services for the Urban Poor (BSUP) programme. *Environment and Urbanization*, 25(1), 177–188.
- › Pelling, M., & High, C. (2005). Understanding adaptation: What can social capital offer assessments of adaptive capacity? *Global Environmental Change*, 15(4), 308–319.
- › Pelling, M., & Manuel-navarrete, D. (2011). From Resilience to Transformation : the Adaptive Cycle in Two Mexican Urban Centers. *Ecology and Society*, 16(2).
- › Perlman, J. E. (1976). *The Myth of Marginality: Urban Poverty and Politics in Rio de Janeiro*. Berkley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- › Philipose, B. P. (2013). *Critical Stories of Change*. New Delhi: Action Aid International Retrieved on July 25 2015, from [http://www.actionaidusa.org/sites/files/actionaid/critical\\_stories\\_of\\_change\\_i.pdf](http://www.actionaidusa.org/sites/files/actionaid/critical_stories_of_change_i.pdf)
- › Pickett, S. T., Cadenasso, M. L., & Grove, J. M. (2004). Resilient cities: Meaning, models, and metaphor for integrating the ecological, socio-economic, and planning realms. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 69(4), 369–384.
- › Rogers, P. (2012). *Resilience and the City: Change, (Dis) Order and Disaster*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.
- › Roy, A. (2003). *City Requiem, Calcutta*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- › Satterthwaite, D., & Mitlin, D. (2014). *Reducing Urban Poverty in the Global South*. New York: Routledge.
- › Turner, J. F. (1976). *Housing by People: Towards Autonomy in Building Environments*. Marion Boyars.
- › UN-Habitat. (2003). *The Challenge of Slums*. UN- Habitat.
- › Woolcock, M., & Narayan, D. (2000). Social Capital : Implications for Development Theory , Research , and Policy. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 15(2), 225–49.
- › World Bank & International Monetary Fund (2013), Global Monitoring Report 2013: Rural-Urban Dynamics & Millenium Development Goals. Retrieved on May 27, 2013 from <Http://econ.worldbank.org/wbsite/external/extdec/extdecprospects/0,,contentmdk:23391146~pagepk:64165401~pipk:64165026~thesitepk:476883,00.html>.

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Galya Vladova\* and Jörg Knieling

HafenCity University Hamburg, Germany

Recent years have witnessed the emergence of the first EU macro-regional strategies as a new instrument for territorial governance. This paper argues that both the benefits and limitations of the macro-regional approach are largely determined by the existing territorial, political, institutional and socio-cultural context of each big transnational area. Studying the debate about macro-regionalisation of the European territorial cooperation, the paper assesses the prospects for projection of the macro-regional idea upon the Black Sea area. It analyses the complex Black Sea regional context, marked by ongoing political and economic changes, studies the cooperation landscape in the area and concludes that despite the existing high level of multi-functionality in the Black Sea, the region currently lacks clear perspectives for the development of a comprehensive macro-regional approach.

*Keywords:* EU macro-regional approach, Black Sea, regional cooperation.

Please cite this article as: Vladova, G., and Knieling, J., Prospects for an EU macro-regional Approach in the Black Sea Region *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.8vol.02>

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

### Introduction

The processes of globalisation, EU enlargement and enhanced European integration have released new dynamics in the development of the European territory and have caused its fundamental transformation. The growing concern about economic competitiveness, the dependency on external energy resources and the transnational character of many pressing issues such as climate change and security have led to promotion of new policy scales, domination of functional logic over territorial logic and to the decreased role of fixed administrative borders (Faludi, 2013; Jessop, 2013). The search for effective tools to tackle issues of common interest and concern has necessitated the consideration of each territory in a wider geographical context and has resulted in the emergence of new types of cooperation across large-scale transnational regions. These are defined on the basis of existing functional interdependencies, especially evident in river catchment areas (e.g. the Danube region) and sea basins (e.g. the Baltic Sea region), and are characterized by divides and heterogeneity resulting from the different administrative structures, socio-political cultures, etc. of the individual nation states. Heterogeneity is particularly indicative for large-scale transnational regions that stretch beyond the EU external borders since the development of these areas largely reflects the interplay between their internal regional dynamics and the influence of international policies. The geopolitical significance of such regions and the importance of their stability and prosperity for the stability and prosperity of the European continent emphasize the need for rethinking their cooperation process.

Looking throughout the recent history of Europe a more diverse and dynamic region than the Black Sea could hardly be found. The territorial delineation of the region significantly varies according to who defines it and thus ranges from the area of the Black Sea littoral states solely up to a wider area stretching over the Balkans and the Caucasus (Manoli, 2012; King, 2008). In this paper the Black Sea region will be defined as the six littoral states Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine as well as Moldova that prove historical and present socio-cultural, political, geostrategic and economic interdependencies. After the EU accession of Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 the Black Sea region has changed from peripheral for Europe to a part of the EU where important gas, oil and energy routes cross. Yet, due to the still existing domestic and inter-state conflicts, non-recognized entities and weak state systems (Balcer, 2011), the region is often perceived as a source of instability for Europe. The recent security threats on the Turkish-Iraqi border, the spill-over effects of the Syrian civil war and the war against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) on the region and the political instability in Ukraine with the Russian presence in Ukraine's border areas have additionally increased the attention of domestic and external actors to the Black Sea and have emphasized the importance of its stable development and cooperation process both for the locals and the EU.

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

As a result, the regional dynamics in the Black Sea area are presently greatly influenced by the policies and interests of a wider range of actors. In this context the EU, launching a number of initiatives aimed at the region, proved to be an important player in determining the region's future development. Yet, despite the application of its Neighbourhood Policy, the Black Sea Synergy and the Eastern Partnership, the EU still lacks a comprehensive approach to the Black Sea area. In 2010 the European Parliament pointed out that there is a need for a comprehensive Black Sea strategy that should enhance the coherence of EU actions in the region and should provide an integrated way to address the challenges and opportunities of the area. Such a strategy should promote the coordination of sector policies and the alignment of resources and could thus contribute to strengthened regional cooperation and sustainable development in the Black Sea (EP, 2010).

The discussion about a possible strategy for the Black Sea is placed in the broader debate about the macro-regionalisation as a new form of governance of European territorial cooperation (Schuh *et al.*, 2015). The discussion has been initiated in the context of preparation and implementation of the first macro-regional strategies for the Baltic Sea and the Danube regions and has raised the question whether such a strategy is conceivable for the Black Sea region as well. Using this questing as a starting point the current paper aims to study whether an EU macro-regional approach is appropriate for the Black Sea region and what are the main challenges for the adaptation of a comprehensive regional strategy for the area.

The paper follows a qualitative empiric approach based on literature review and expert interviews. It is structured in five main sections. After this introduction, section two studies the key features of the EU macro-regional concept tracing the current debate about its added value and shortcomings in the context of European territorial cooperation. In section three, the paper introduces the dynamics and the present context in the Black Sea area and gives an overview of its regional cooperation process. Based on the gained insights the paper analyses in section four the expected added value and the main challenges for the application of a Black Sea macro-regional approach and ends with a discussion on the possible future development of the Black Sea area.

### **The EU macro-regional approach**

In recent years, large territories confronted with similar problems have been increasingly faced with the need to jointly address common challenges and achieve common objectives. This has resulted in a noticeable expansion of the activities and fields of cooperation and has at the same time moved the need for better interregional governance to the front. The attempts to ensure better governance of large territories have led among others to the establishment of macro-regions as a new territorial governance principle and to the promotion of EU macro-regional strategies as a new tool for European integration (Kern

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

& Gänzle, 2013; Dubois *et al.*, 2009). The concept of macro-regionalisation builds on the principles of multi-level governance. These illustrate the dynamic interrelations between and within the different levels of government and governance, point to the moving away from the sovereign state towards more international cooperation and to the transfer of competences upwards to interregional organisations and downwards to the subnational level (Bache & Flinders, 2004). Moreover, the process of macro-regionalisation promotes the interrelation between formally independent but functionally interdependent territorial entities and stakeholders and is to be seen in the context of weakening of fixed administrative borders and the emergence of soft spaces following functional logic for policy making and strategy delivery (Allmendinger *et al.*, 2015). How does a macro-regional approach address the multi-level, multi-actor and functional character of territorial cooperation, what are its added value and limitations in terms of functional and strategic considerations, actors' involvement, implementation and structural issues?

Although the term 'macro-region' has long been used in political discussions of various kinds, it was not before 2008 that it was officially placed on the European agenda with a clear conceptual intent. Its significance and acceptance in EU documents is closely related to the development of the EU policy in the Baltic Sea region, which was declared the first EU macro-region (Schymik, 2011). While in the international context the macro-regions generally fall under the description "significant groups of nations or groupings of administrative regions within a country" (CoR, 2010, p. 3), in the European context macro-regions have been more precisely defined as "area[s] including territory from a number of different countries or regions associated with one or more common features or challenges" (CEC, 2009, p. 1). Thus, besides the simple geographical criteria (a common sea basin, a river catchment area, etc.) it is the multi-functionality, i.e. the existence of a large number of common issues, challenges and problems that is an important prerequisite for the definition of a given territory as a macro-region (Schymik, 2011).

Along with the need for overlapping of territorial and functional characteristics, the establishment of a macro-region is also conditioned by the existence of historical and cultural traditions, of strong subnational authorities and an active civil society (Kern & Gänzle, 2013). The focus of the macro-regions are the administrative regions and municipalities at the subnational level. These are now provided with new options for stakeholder participation in the processes of policy making and implementation (Gänzle & Kern, 2011). The initial macro-regional concept has seen the involvement of third countries as an exception than as a rule. Yet, the establishment of the first EU macro-regions has proved that macro-regional cooperation might serve as a vehicle of involving EU neighbouring countries and of governing the relations between the EU Member States and their external neighbours. Thus, as argued by Schuh *et al.* (2015, p.23) "macro-regions are imageries of both the internal and external re-scaling of the territorial borders of the EU".

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

The novelty of the macro-regional concept lies in the consideration of a given area as a singular entity and the development of a comprehensive approach towards it (Bengtsson, 2009). Yet, macro-regions have no independent political status. They are characterized by variable geometries and fuzziness of their boundaries, which may vary according to the type of problem being tackled at a macro-regional level (CoR, 2010), and might be investigated as emergent soft spaces (Stead, 2011). Hence, it might be assumed that “macro-regionalisation can be conceived as a shift from territorial to functional regions” (Kern & Gänzle, 2013, p.10).

The issues with priority for each macro-region are set by a common strategy. As formulated in the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), a European macro-regional strategy is “an integrated framework that allows the European Union and Member States to identify needs and allocate available resources thus enabling the [Baltic Sea] region to enjoy a sustainable environment and optimal economic and social development” (CEC, 2009, p. 1). The preparation and subsequent implementation of European macro-regional strategies do not envisage the establishment of any new legislative, financial or institutional mechanisms, the so-called “*three No's*” (Schymik, 2011; Dubois *et al.*, 2009). The adopted definition highlights that the integration of efforts, stakeholders and resources and their optimal use as well as the attempts to achieve coordination between European, national and subnational and sector policies is considered to be the main added value of the macro-regional strategies (Böhme, 2013). Besides the integrated approach and the policy coordination it is the determination of the scope of cooperation in accordance with the objectives for cooperation (Stocchiero, 2010) that completes the picture of the added value of the macro-regional strategies. Similar to the delimitation of the macro-regions, the coverage of the strategy and its actions depends on the topic concerned. Each action covers different geographical boundaries and requires involvement of different actors which results in ‘a complex, overlapping, “soft” patchwork of activities, relationships and responsibilities’ (Stead, 2011, p. 165).

So far, four EU macro-regional strategies have been put forward - the Baltic Sea strategy, endorsed by the European Council in 2009, the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (2011) and the recently adopted strategies for the Adriatic and Ionian region (2014) and for the Alpine region (2015) that are still in an early phase of implementation. Possible strategies for further regions such as the Black Sea, the Carpathians, the Mediterranean and the North Sea are currently under consideration (Schuh *et al.*, 2015). The experience from the Baltic Sea and Danube regions shows that intergovernmental cooperation has played a pivotal role in the process of strategy-making. This could be interpreted as an attempt by the nation states to safeguard a strong position in the context of EU enlargement (cf. Keating, 1998, on territorial rescaling). The European Commission, in particular the Directorate General for Regional Policy (DG Regio) and its Unit for Territorial

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

Cooperation, has facilitated and later on also shaped the design and implementation process of the macro-regional strategies. It has been responsible for the coordination and consultation with other DGs, the nation states, the regional authorities and the existing transnational organizations and NGOs in the process of strategies' formulation (Metzger & Schmitt, 2012; Gänzle & Kern, 2011).

It could be argued that the involvement of the European institutions, and in particular the European Commission, aims to provide more stability in the cooperation process, the success of which is often limited by its intergovernmental nature. Changes in the political priorities of successive governments and cases of competing or even diverging political interests for instance may influence the cooperation agenda and may lead to uncertainty about expected cooperation results (Dühr, 2011). Furthermore, the moving of transnational cooperation from the intergovernmental cooperation domain into the domain of EU multi-level governance might contribute to improving coordination of sector policies across national borders. It calls for increased relevance of supranational institutions as well as better embedment of regional stakeholders in the process of macro-regional cooperation. Yet, it might also be true that while performing mainly coordinating functions in the preparation and implementation of macro-regional strategies, the European Commission could also take the role of a "legitimate regional spokesperson" with the right to define the interests of the macro-region (Metzger & Schmitt, 2012, p. 272). Responding to this statement the European Council has recently asked for the creation of Strategy Points as coordinating layers that could replace the strong role of the Commission while the latter should maintain its role in supporting the initiation and implementation of the macro-regional strategies (Schuh *et al.*, 2015).

Along with the potentials and added value of the macro-regional approach there are associated practical challenges. As per Dühr (2011, p. 37) these challenges could be summarized in the following four categories. Firstly, there exists a contradiction between functional geographies and political realities. The definition of macro-regional borders according to functionalities faces the political dimension of policy-making, since the political conditions, especially concerning internal and external relations of the countries, remain relevant even in the context of functional geographies. An example in this regard comes from the Baltic Sea strategy, in which insufficient attention has been given to Russia, which is a non-EU Member State, but at the same time a key player from a functional and territorial perspective. The insurance of lasting macro-regional cooperation thus requires better alignment of the functional regional approach and the political reality of the EU and its neighbours.

Secondly, difficulties arising from the definition of priorities for cooperation might be expected. To bring actual results, the macro-regional strategies should focus only on

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

issues of truly transnational significance, which will bring a real added value. A consensus should be reached to narrow the priorities of the strategy, so that the political energy could focus on a set of specific tasks. However, this narrowing is a complex political process, since it necessitates the integration of views of a number of different parties with own and sometimes diverging interests.

Thirdly, to achieve coordination horizontally (across sector policies), vertically (across different levels of governance), and geographically (across administrative boundaries) the EU macro-regional strategies are based on complex governance arrangements. There is a web of institutional relations between the EU Commission as an overall strategy coordinator and the Member States in their responsibility to coordinate the different priority areas within the strategies. Since the Member States have different experiences with EU politics and diplomacy, the risk exists that the macro-regional cooperation agenda is defined by a small number of powerful leaders rather than being a result of a collective action.

Fourthly, since macro-regional strategies should lead to the optimisation of existing policy networks it could be expected that they may have transformative potential. On the one hand, although they do not envisage the establishment of new institutions they could prompt institutional changes in order to facilitate the implementation of the strategy's objectives and actions (the network of agencies in Sweden, established to strengthen the implementation of the Baltic Sea strategy, for instance). On the other hand, since the strategies do not get additional EU funding, but aim at better coordination and optimal use of existing funding sources, it is often argued that the EU policies and instruments should be aligned to the needs of the macro-regional strategies and the coordination between them should be improved.

The above discussion on the added value and possible limitations of the EU macro-regional approach and its significance in the context of European integration has shown that the outcomes of its application depend greatly on various factors. Promoting functional geographies, the macro-regional approach faces different political realities, interests and conditions and is largely dependent on the existing territorial, political, institutional and socio-cultural context in which it is embedded. Against this background the extent to which this approach could be replicated across Europe should be questioned. In the following sections the prospects for its application in the Black Sea and the challenges related to it will be analysed. First, the analysis will study the nature and dynamics of regional cooperation in the area. It will discuss the existing territorial context identifying the main motives behind the Black Sea cooperation activities, the nature of cooperation, the driving actors in the regional cooperation process and the role and involvement of external actors, in particular the EU. Second, based on the gained insights, the analysis

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

will focus on targeted discussion on whether the presented specific regional context in the Black Sea would facilitate the application of a macro-regional approach in the area. The discussion will be structured according to the identified main principles of the macro-regional approach in functional and strategic considerations, driving actors and stakeholder participation, implementation and structural issues.

### Regional context and dynamics in the Black Sea area

The Black Sea area, strategically situated at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, has for many years witnessed a competition of great powers to dominate it. Situated on the margins of the historically important Danube region to the west and the Caspian Basin to the east, the Black Sea enabled the only connection with the Marmara and the Aegean Seas (via the Bosphorus strait) and turned into a subject of manifold interests. The struggle for dominance by the Byzantine, Ottoman, and Russian Empires and later on by the Soviet Union resulted in the region's closure to the outside world for decades. It was only after the end of the Cold War when fundamental geopolitical changes happened (formation of new sovereign states (Figure 1) and changes in the political and economic dynamics) that a new international future of the region was made possible (Aydin, 2004). It is within this context that attempts have been made to transform the Black Sea area into an area of peace, stability and security by means of enhanced regional cooperation.

**Figure 1:** Changes in the political map of the Black Sea region: political map of the region in the 20th century (Left); and formation of new independent states after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Right). Source: Authors' visualisation.



In response to the altered realities after the collapse of the Soviet Union the Black Sea states endeavoured to initiate a number of regional activities and schemes (Aydin, 2005). In the early 1990s significant efforts have been undertaken to strengthen the process of regional cooperation with the establishment of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation forum (BSEC) in 1992 (Manoli, 2012) and its update in a full-fledged organisation in 1999 (King, 2008). These initial efforts to develop regional cooperation in the area clearly reveal the attempt of the Black Sea states to revive their own identity after many years of imposed Soviet identity (Manoli, 2010). Initially, regional cooperation was seen by the states as a means to enhance their international standing, but also mainly as a way to “return to Europe” rather than as

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

a process of integration with the neighbours (Manoli, 2012). Gradually, experiencing the growing regional impact of global issues such as climate change and organized crime, and facing the pressing need to find solutions to common challenges such as maritime security, the Black Sea states started concentrating efforts on concrete sector issues. As a result, a number of sector initiatives and structures have been launched for example the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group, the International Centre for Black Sea Studies and the Black Sea Forum for Partnership and Dialogue (see Table 1).

While some fields of Black Sea cooperation (e.g. the environmental and maritime security field) enjoy the support and participation of all states, others are dominated by the major regional powers and their national interests (the energy field for instance). It is not an exception that individual countries approach regional issues on a bilateral basis. This has led to the establishment of a number of subregional arrangements and schemes, covering only a part of the Black Sea states, and has in some cases moved the search for opportunities to cooperate to the background. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Black Sea cooperation runs mainly at the national level, which could, to a large extent, be explained by the fact that many of the Black Sea states are very centralized and do not have traditions in regional development. In addition, the subnational level often has insufficient administrative powers of its own especially when it comes to foreign relations, definition and implementation of regional policies, setting of cooperation priorities and participation in international projects (Vladova & Knieling, 2014).

Many of the cooperation initiatives in the Black Sea have been predominantly initiated by the big regional states Russia and Turkey. These, although still competing for influence in the area, have joined powers to withstand external involvement in the region. The reaction of Russia and Turkey could be explained by the fact, that while the Black Sea cooperation was firstly ignored by external players such as the EU, it gradually attracted more and more external attention and involvement. The increased interest in the region was predominantly due to three main reasons. Firstly, the Black Sea region has a geostrategic importance as a crossroad of major oil, gas, transport and trade routes, due to which it has turned into a key area in the competition between major powers like Russia, the US and the EU (Commission on the Black Sea, 2010). Secondly, the demise of the Soviet Union has raised instability and security problems in the region, liberalizing ancient sources of tension and grievances as well as a series of frozen conflicts - Chechnya in Russia, Abkhazia, Adjara and South Ossetia in Georgia, Trans-Dniester in the Republic of Moldova, and Crimea in Ukraine (Rusu, 2011; Aydin, 2005). Thirdly, after the latest phase of EU enlargement in 2007, when Bulgaria and Romania became full EU members, the Union turned into "the newest member of the Black Sea regional complex" (Manoli, 2012, p.16). The recent developments in Ukraine and its border regions with Russia and the threat for military actions and ethnic conflicts related to them have had significant implications on the Black

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

Regional institutions and initiatives in the Black Sea	Year	Members (2012)	Status
<b>Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)</b>	1992	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.	Multilateral political and economic initiative functioning since 1999 as a regional economic organization with an international legal entity.
<b>The Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution</b>	1992	Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine.	Intergovernmental body established in implementation of the Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution.
<b>Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN)</b>	1998	Over 60 NGOs from Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine.	An independent, non-political, nongovernmental, non-profit voluntary regional association of NGOs.
<b>Black Sea Universities Network</b>	1998	Over 100 universities from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine.	A multilateral cooperation among academic communities from the Black Sea region.
<b>International Center for Black Sea Studies</b>	1998	Albanien, Armenien, Aserbaidschan, Bulgarien, Georgien, Griechenland, Moldau, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.	A non-profit organization functioning as an independent research and training institution in the wider Black Sea region and as a related body (think-tank) of the BSEC.
<b>Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)</b>	1999	Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine.	A regional multilateral development institution established as a financial pillar of BSEC and functioning as a private bank, financed by the BSEC Member States.
<b>Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR)</b>	2001	Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine.	A multinational naval on-call peace task force.
<b>Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)</b>	2008	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Greece, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, EU, international donor states and organizations.	Regionally owned organization working under the political guidance of the South - East European Cooperation Process.
<b>Black Sea NGO Forum</b>	2008	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, engagement of other EU Member States.	A regional forum for debate centered on NGOs as a driving force for positive change in the wider Black Sea region.
<b>Black Sea Euroregion</b>	2008	14 local or regional authorities from Bulgaria, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Romania, open also to the other 3 riparian states Russia, Turkey and Ukraine, as well as to Albania, Greece, Serbia, Azerbaijan.	Non-profit making association with a legal personality / forum for cooperation among local and regional authorities of the Black Sea area.
<b>International Black Sea Economic Forum</b>	2010	Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan.	A high-level continuous platform for dialogue among leading government and business stakeholders of the Black Sea area.

Table 1: Overview of major regional institutions and initiatives in the Black Sea.  
Source: Authors' visualisation.

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Sea cooperation process (e.g. lack of trust, predominance of national interests over regional ones) and have evoked a new wave of increased external interest in the Black Sea region. As a result, the regional dynamics in the Black Sea area are presently determined both by the policies and interests of the Black Sea states and the policies and intentions of a number of external actors. In this regard, Balcer (2011, p. 21) sums up that the Black Sea stands today “at the intersection where Turkey claims its status as a regional power, Russia considers it as a zone of Russian influence, and the EU has been formulating its own policies of transformation for creating a secure ring around its borders”. The present uncertain situation in the Ukrainian-Russian border regions proves the truth of this statement. It raises concerns for future intensification of the East-West division in the region and for the provocation of ethnic conflicts. At the same time it (along with the weakened economic climate in several countries as a result of the financial and debt crisis) might lead to renegotiation of interests on the Black Sea regional scene as is obvious from the recent attempts at discussion on a possible Russian-Greek cooperation in the energy field. In this regard it might be argued that on the one hand recent developments have led to a slowdown of cooperation activities in the region and on the other hand have emphasized the importance of regional cooperation for the achievement of democratic development, economic stability and enhanced security in the area.

The involvement of external actors in the Black Sea region has fostered the emergence of new alliances between the states and has resulted in participation of the states in several schemes at the same time. While in some cases the external initiatives have led to overlapping with existing regional agendas and activities, they have also largely facilitated the cooperation process in the Black Sea region (Manoli, 2012). External actions have proved to be especially beneficial for peaceful discussions on the resolution of some of the region's frozen conflicts and the strengthening of the weak governance structures in the countries. In this context the EU has played an important role in supporting the region towards democratisation and stability. Currently after the EU is implementing three different policies towards the non-member states in the region – pre-accession policy towards Turkey, European Neighbourhood Policy towards Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, and Strategic Partnership with the Russian Federation (CEC, 2007).

Approaching the Black Sea countries mainly on a bilateral basis, the EU has for a long time lacked a perception of the region as a separate functional area. It was not before the launching of the Black Sea Synergy in 2008 that the EU addressed the region as a whole<sup>1</sup> and explicitly stressed the need to reinvigorate the cooperation among the Black Sea

---

<sup>1</sup> In the Black Sea Synergy the EU adopted the definition of a Wider Black Sea Region including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine (Manoli, 2012)

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

countries. The EU approach to the Black Sea has been rounded by the Eastern Partnership, launched in 2009. This targets the post-Soviet republics (among which are the Black Sea states Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) and intends to bring them closer to the EU through intense bilateral cooperation (Rusu, 2011; Manoli, 2010). Since 2010 the Black Sea states Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and Ukraine have also been involved in the EU Strategy for the Danube Region. They are expected to benefit from projects in the fields of transport and energy, environment, socio-economic development, tourism and security when the strategy is fully implemented and at the same time to get further experience in regional cooperation (EC, 2013).

The variety of cooperation initiatives and schemes in the Black Sea region, as well as the existing complex constellation of relevant actors in the area, moves the need for better coordination between the various cooperation activities to the fore. Yet, up to now there exists no comprehensive approach towards the region neither from the regional states themselves, nor from the external interested parties. Instead, the area is currently approached mainly within the framework of different policies (security policy, maritime policy, etc.). Against this background, the following section will analyse the potentials for a comprehensive macro-regional approach in the Black Sea. It will consider the present Black Sea cooperation process and dynamics and will identify the main benefits and challenges for application of a macro-regional approach in the area in terms of functional and strategic considerations, driving actors and stakeholder participation, implementation and structural issues.

### **Prospects for a macro-regional approach in the Black Sea area**

An overview of the Black Sea cooperation process reveals that there is a high level of multi-functionality in the area. Regional actions are concentrated in the fields of maritime security, environmental protection and trade while the issues of energy and border security are still largely dominated by the policies of individual states. Currently, there is overlapping and insufficient coordination between cooperation activities. In this sense, a comprehensive macro-regional approach would bring significant added value in terms of improved coordination between organisations across sectors and borders. From a strategic point of view, promoting cooperation in functional areas, a macro-regional approach would contribute to the identification of cross-sectoral goals of real Black Sea interest. This would have a positive impact both on the establishment of joint priorities for cooperation and on the alignment of the agendas and implementation methods of the various regional organisations. Yet, while the targeted focus on issues of common interest is expected to support the generation of mutual trust and the promotion of regional identity, it could face long-lasting problems and pre-existing regional disparities that hamper the integration of views and interests of the regional actors as well as the process of consensus finding. Hence, a macro-regional approach in the Black Sea region could be conceivable only in case it is

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

adapted to the specific policy-making landscape in the area and takes into consideration the established habits of cooperation.

Presently, the Black Sea cooperation process runs predominantly at the national level. Opening new options for stakeholder participation in the processes of policy making and implementation (Gänzle & Kern, 2011) a macro-regional approach could enable new role of the subnational level and of local organisations in regional cooperation. Yet, to gain support by the regional parties, a new comprehensive cooperation approach should be perceived as locally driven and not imposed from outside. In this line a new macro-regional strategy for the Black Sea, coordinated by the European Commission, could be considered as an external action which aims at diminishing the influence and power of the two dominating Black Sea states Russia and Turkey. On the other hand, the EU itself, while recognizing the geostrategic importance of the Black Sea region, realizes the difficulties related to the application of a macro-regional approach in the area. Currently, only two of the Black Sea states - Bulgaria and Romania - are EU members. Given their limited power, experience in cooperation activities and available resources, they could hardly serve as promoters of macro-cooperation in the region. This function could rather be taken by the core states Russia and Turkey. These, however, are reluctant to new EU policies in the Black Sea due to concerns about increasing EU influence in the region and possible conflicts with existing regional designs such as the new Eurasian Economic Union with the participation of Russia. In this sense, intensified intergovernmental cooperation in the region is an important prerequisite for a new macro-regional strategy for the Black Sea to receive adequate regional support. This, together with a possible future EU accession of the Black Sea states Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine after a full implementation of their association agreements might create the necessary conditions for successful initiation of a macro-regional approach in the area.

The expected challenges in the initiation and preparation of a comprehensive strategy for the Black Sea region are related to challenges in the implementation of such a strategy. As the experiences from the Baltic Sea and the Danube regions have shown the actual strategy implementation is left to the regional stakeholders (Metzger & Schmitt, 2012) and no new legislative, financial or institutional mechanisms are envisaged. As it became clear during the implementation of the Black Sea Synergy, the complex constellation of actors and the diversity of actions envisaged in a comprehensive strategy, on the one hand, and the limited organizational and institutional resources in the Black Sea on the other hand could hamper the coordination of actors and actions. Hence, the coordination and implementation of the strategy's various actions could require the adaptation of new governance arrangements. However, the establishment of any new institution or organization in the Black Sea could be seen by the regional states as duplication of existing regional structures and might not receive their backing. It is thus possible that the responsibility for the coordination

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

and stability of the macro-region, defined by the EU macro-regional strategy, is pushed from the regional stakeholders to the European Commission (Metzger & Schmitt, 2012, on the EUSBSR), which in the case of the Black Sea region will additionally reinforce the perception that the strategy is externally imposed.

Besides the need for new governance arrangements a possible strategy for the Black Sea region would most probably require a separate budget line or a new financial instrument designed for the region (cf. EP, 2010). This contrasts to the Baltic Sea and the Danube region strategies that have been designed to fit within the existing institutional arrangements and rely on already available instruments and financial resources. Although some may argue that the assignment of extra grants to the EU strategies might be seen as a mere source of money and could thus lead to feeding of resources in artificially created macro-regions, the Black Sea case is quite exceptional. Currently, the Black Sea cooperation is financed by different instruments within the framework of different programmes (the Danube Transnational Programme, supported mainly by the Regional Development Fund, the cooperation with Turkey by the Instrument for Pre-Accession, the Black Sea Synergy and the Black Sea Basin Joint Operational Programme by the Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument). The lack of coordination between these, reinforced by the poor financial situation of the Black Sea states and organisations active in the region would be a challenge for the application of a macro-regional approach in the area. The unequal access to resources by the individual countries along with the contrasts in political cultures, the recent tensions in the region and the increasing lack of trust between the states in the area add to the uncertain outcomes of the approach.

Taking the above aspects into consideration it could be argued that the Black Sea area is not ready yet for coordinated macro-regional cooperation the way the Baltic Sea and the Danube regions are. In this regard, the preparation and implementation of a macro-regional strategy for the area currently lacks important fundamentals to build on. It could be assumed that a future approach towards the Black Sea should initially focus on the rebuilding of trust and promotion of regular exchange between the regional institutions setting the ground for a generation of mutual confidence and identification of common interests. Additionally, efforts should be concentrated on the reinvigoration of existing cooperation activities in the region, mainly the Black Sea Synergy and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation as well as on further development of the European Strategy for the Danube Region. The latter could provide Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine with the possibility to gain experience in cooperation that could be an important basis for future development of the Black Sea cooperation.

In the meantime, the possibility should not be excluded that the Black Sea states, collaborating within the framework of the BSEC for instance, agree on a comprehensive

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

approach towards the development of the Black Sea region and its cooperation process. However, given the many problems in the Black Sea, which cannot be solved only within the region, such as security concerns, closed borders, etc., the achievement of a consensus in the different areas of cooperation will need time and will in many cases require external support. In this regard, a common strategy covering all areas of cooperation between all the states in the region could be assumed as a next step or as a logical consequence of the reassessment of the individual fields of Black Sea cooperation. Therefore, it is currently reasonable to promote further the sector-based approach as the most relevant route for future development of the Black Sea cooperation. This should focus on a small number of sectors offering joint incentives and promoting existing geographical and functional interdependencies. In addition, it should aim at balance between regional and external actors and focus on concrete projects of joint interest. In doing so it will contribute to strengthening the mutual confidence and trust in the region that will be an important prerequisite and basis for the application of a macro-regional approach at a later phase.

### Conclusion

The current cooperation scene in Europe has been defined by a variety of activities embedded in different territorial, political, institutional and socio-cultural contexts. The cooperation process differs greatly from one region to another and reflects the specific regional framework conditions and dynamics. The newly launched macro-regional approach opens up new opportunities for cooperation among different stakeholders at various levels within large-scale transnational areas. Promoting the coordination of sector policies, functional geographies and the alignment of existing activities and resources as its main principles this approach proves to be of benefit for areas with established structures and experience in cooperation. Yet, when it comes to regions which stretch far beyond the EU external borders and which are characterized by a high grade of regional disparities this approach faces a number of limitations both regarding its conceptualisation and application. This statement proves to be particularly true for regions marked by ongoing stability dilemmas, historical rivalries and divergence between national interests as in the case of the Black Sea.

The study of the specific regional context in the Black Sea area, the main motives behind its cooperation activities, the driving actors of the cooperation process and the interplay between the different parties reveals that there exists a high level of multi-functionality in the region, diverse often overlapping cooperation activities and insufficient coordination between them. Although the involvement of external stakeholders in the region has often facilitated its cooperation process, cooperation activities have mainly been initiated and controlled by the regional states. Against this background a potential macro-regional approach that is perceived as imposed from outside is expected to face serious limitations and to gain insufficient support from the regional parties, at least at the current stage.

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

A comprehensive Black Sea approach, initiated by the regional states, could presently also be judged as difficult or at a very initial phase due to the limited power and resources of the Black Sea states, the often diverging political agendas, the dominance of national interests over regional ones, the still existing frozen conflicts and the security threats in the area. It could be argued, however, that exactly due to the recent developments in the region with the unrest in Ukraine and the uncertainty in the relations with Russia, the rethinking of the Black Sea cooperation process gains increasing relevance and the need for building of mutual understanding for problems of common interest comes to the fore. In this regard, it is important to conduct a further research to identify those sectors, for which a regional cooperation brings benefit and to create conditions for stronger involvement of the local actors in the cooperation process. In the meantime, it will be necessary to define those issues for which an external involvement would be crucial and beneficial and for which could not be solved purely by the regional parties such as the security threats. Seen against this background it could be argued that the promotion of a regionally tailored sector approach could set the basis for reinvigoration of the Black Sea cooperation process. This should be based on building trust and activation of the regional parties as well as on the interplay between regional and external ones and will lay the foundation for the application of a macro-regional approach at a later phase.

## References

- › Allmendinger, P., Haughton, G., Knieling, J. & Othengrafen, F. (eds.) (2015). *Soft Spaces in Europe. Re-negotiating governance, boundaries and borders*. New York: Routledge.
- › Aydin, M. (2005). *Regional Cooperation in the Black Sea and the Role of Institutions. Perceptions, Journal of International Affairs*. Center for Strategic Research, autumn 2005: 57-83. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/MustafaAydin.pdf>.
- › Aydin, M. (2004). *Europe's next shore: the Black Sea Region after EU enlargement*. Institute for security studies, occasional papers n°53. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/ebooks/files/ISS\\_EU\\_occ53.pdf](http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/ebooks/files/ISS_EU_occ53.pdf).
- › Bache, I. & Flinders, M. (2004). *Multi-level Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- › Balcer, A. (2011). *The Eastern Partnership in the Black Sea Region: towards a New Synergy. Demos Europa*. Centre for European Strategy. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.demoservices.home.pl/www/files/demos\\_rr\\_styczen2011\\_uk\\_v12\\_www\\_.pdf](http://www.demoservices.home.pl/www/files/demos_rr_styczen2011_uk_v12_www_.pdf).

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

- › Bengtsson, R. (2009). An EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region: Good Intentions Meet Complex Challenges. *European Policy Analysis*. Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies, 9: 1-12. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.sieps.se/sites/default/files/562-2009\\_9epa.pdf](http://www.sieps.se/sites/default/files/562-2009_9epa.pdf).
- › Böhme, K. (2013). Added value of macro regional strategies: a governance perspective. *Spatial Foresight Brief 2013: 3*. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.spatial-foresight.eu/tl\\_files/files/editors/dokumente/Brief-2013-3-130710.pdf](http://www.spatial-foresight.eu/tl_files/files/editors/dokumente/Brief-2013-3-130710.pdf).
- › CEC (Commission of the European Communities) (2009). Macro-regional strategies of the European Union. Discussion paper. Directorate General for Regional Policy. Retrieved February 17, 2016, from [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/cooperate/baltic/pdf/macroregional\\_strategies\\_2009.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/baltic/pdf/macroregional_strategies_2009.pdf).
- › CEC (Commission of the European Communities) (2007). Black Sea Synergy – a new regional cooperation initiative. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. Brussels. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52007DC0160&from=EN>.
- › Commission on the Black Sea (2010). A 2020 Vision for the Black Sea Region. Bartelsmann Stiftung. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.euractiv.de/files/docs/A\\_2020\\_Vision\\_for\\_the\\_Black\\_Sea.pdf](http://www.euractiv.de/files/docs/A_2020_Vision_for_the_Black_Sea.pdf).
- › CoR (Committee of the Regions) (2010). Europe's Macro-Regions. Integration through territorial co-operation. Forum at the Committee of the Regions, Brussels, Conference brochure. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from <http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/forums/Documents/c4fdb9d5-4c9a-487a-9f9b-416e8e989ae0.pdf>.
- › Dubois, A., Hedin, S., Schmitt, P. & Sterling, J. (2009). EU macro-regions and macro-regional strategies – A scoping study. Electronic Working Paper 4. Stockholm: Nordregio. Retrieved February 17, 2016, from <http://www.nordregio.se/Publications/Publications-2009/EU-macro-regions-and-macro-regional-strategies/>.
- › Dühr, S. (2011). Baltic Sea, Danube and Macro-Regional Strategies: A Model for Transnational Cooperation in the EU?. *Notre Europe, Study and Research*. 86. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx\\_publication/Etud86-Macro-regional-strategies-en.pdf](http://www.notre-europe.eu/uploads/tx_publication/Etud86-Macro-regional-strategies-en.pdf).
- › EC (European Commission) (2013). Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions concerning the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region. COM: Brussels. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/cooperate/danube/pdf/danube\\_implementation\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/cooperate/danube/pdf/danube_implementation_report_en.pdf).
- › EP (European Parliament) (2010). Motion for a European Parliament Resolution on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2010-0378&language=EN#-title1>.

Vladova, G. and Knieling, J.

- › Faludi, A (2013). Territorial cohesion, territorialism, territoriality, and soft planning: a critical review. *Environment and Planning A*. 45: 1302-1317.
- › Gänzle, S. & Kern, K. (2011). Macro-regional Strategies: A New Mode of Differentiated Integration in the European Union. Paper prepared for presentation at the CEPISA Annual Conference “Multilevel Politics: Intra- and Inter-level Comparative Perspectives, 27-29 October 2011, Vienna.
- › Jessop, B. (2013). Hollowing out the ‘nation-state’ and multi-level governance. In P. Kennett (Ed.), *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy, Second Edition* (pp. 11-26). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- › Keating, M. (1998). *The New Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- › Kern, K. & Gänzle, S. (2013). ‘Macro-regionalisation’ as a New Form of European Governance: The Case of the European Union’s Strategies for the Baltic Sea and the Danube Regions. Institut for Statsvitenskap og Ledelsesfag (ISL) Working Paper 3, Department of Political Science and Management. Agder: University of Agder.
- › King, C. (2008). The Wider Black Sea Region in the Twenty-first Century. In Hamilton, D. & Mangott, G. (eds.). *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives* (pp. 1-19). Washington D.C.: Center for Transatlantic Relations.
- › Manoli, P. (2012). *The Dynamics of Black Sea Subregionalism*. Farnham, England: Ashgate.
- › Manoli, P. (2010). *Reinvigorating Black Sea Cooperation: A Policy Discussion*. Policy Report III, Commission on the Black Sea. Gutersloh, Germany: Bertelsmann Foundation.
- › Metzger, J. & Schmitt, P. (2012). When soft spaces harden: the EU strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. *Environment and Planning A*, 44: 263 – 280.
- › Rusu, D. (2011). Regionalization in the Black Sea Area: A Comparative Study. *Romanian Journal of European Affairs*. 11 (2): 47-65. Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1871645](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1871645).
- › Schuh, B., Kintisch, M., Dallhammer, E., Preku, A., Gløersen, E., Toptsidou, M., Böhme, K., Valenza, A., Celotti, P., Brignani, N., Cristino, B., Stead, D., Zonneveld, W. & Waterhout, B. (2015). *New role of macro-regions in European territorial cooperation. Study - Part I*. Brussels: European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies.
- › Schymik, C. (2011). *Blueprint for a Macro-Region. EU Strategies for the Baltic Sea and the Danube Regions*. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) research paper. Berlin: German Institute for International and Security Affairs. Retrieved November 25, 2015, from [http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research\\_papers/2011\\_RP10\\_shy\\_ks.pdf](http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/research_papers/2011_RP10_shy_ks.pdf).

## PROSPECTS FOR AN EU MACRO-REGIONAL APPROACH IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

- › Stead, D. (2011). European Macro-Regional Strategies: Indications of Spatial Rescaling? Policy & Planning Brief. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 12 (1): 163-167.
- › Stocchiero, A. (2010). Macro-Regions of Europe: Old Wine in a New Bottle? Working paper 65/2010. Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CeSPI). Retrieved November 24, 2015, from [http://www.cespi.it/WP/WP%2065-CeSPI%20Macroregioni%20europee%20\\_eng\\_.pdf](http://www.cespi.it/WP/WP%2065-CeSPI%20Macroregioni%20europee%20_eng_.pdf).
- › Vladova, G. & Knieling, J. (2014). Potential and challenges for the Black Sea regional cooperation. *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, 5 (1): 39-66.

## CRITICAL CITIES VOLUME 3: IDEAS, KNOWLEDGE AND AGITATION FROM EMERGING URBANISTS

Naik Deepa and Trenton Oldfield (Ed).  
London: Myrdle Court Press, 2012, ISBN: 9780956353931

### Basak Tanulku

Independent Scholar, Turkey  
tanulkub@gmail.com; <https://independent.academia.edu/BasakTanulku>

Inequality is a matter of everyday life and cities are places where inequality is experienced more violently. As Deepa Naik and Trenton Oldfield argue, cities, particularly large metropolises are sites to generate and reproduce inequalities, a similar process seen in different parts of the world. They suggest this is a result of what they call the “urban industry”.<sup>1</sup> *Critical Cities Volume 3*—the third in a series published by “This Is Not a Gateway” (TINAG) platform—is an attempt to explore various urban inequalities. The editors, Naik Deepa and Trenton Oldfield, are actively involved in bringing forward various forms of inequalities related to cities. They formed the platform, which organizes the annual festival bringing together a wide variety of people working on and interested in urban issues. They also run Myrdle Court Press<sup>2</sup>, an independent publishing house, and organise “Salons” to discuss urban and spatial issues. In addition, Deepa Naik and Trenton Oldfield also advise various cultural and not-for-profit organisations, charities, private businesses, independent publishers and organises courses, produces articles for a range of publications, prepares lectures, and presents research findings at various conferences, festivals and similar events<sup>3</sup>.

This book comes out of the third TINAG festival which aimed to connect activists from all over the world concerned with various forms of urban inequality and examine the problems associated with urban regeneration particularly through finance and real estate

- 
- <sup>1</sup> See their article titled *This is what activist and Boat Race disrupter Trenton Oldfield did next... published in the INDEPENDENT, 31 October 2014.* <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/this-is-what-activist-and-boat-race-disrupter-trenton-oldfield-did-next-9831575.htm>
  - <sup>2</sup> Home page at <http://myrdlecourtpress.net/bookshop.html>
  - <sup>3</sup> For more information see <http://www.thisisnotagateway.net/>.

Please cite this article as: Tanulku, B., *Critical Cities Volume 3: Ideas, Knowledge and Agitation from Emerging Urbanists* *plaNext* (2016), <http://dx.medra.org/10.17418/planext.2016.9vol.02>

sectors. The authors take us on a journey into the world of cities as diverse as Zagreb, London, New York, Bogota, Hong Kong and Beirut, all under the influence of a global culture of spectacle and consumerism reflected in sanitised spaces such as high-rises, gentrified neighbourhoods and 'Designated Public Places'. The book is divided into five chapters, each of which contains several articles written either by a single author or collectively by various authors. The first chapter "Introduction: City as Inequality" belongs to the editors who put forward the aims of the book by indicating the need for a more equal global society where people should override tyrannical regimes, seen in the latest uprisings in the Middle East. The editors demonstrate that the new social movements emerge in cities, where inequality is reproduced through mass rural-to-urban migration and urban densification (pp. 3-8). The second chapter, "Erase, stretch and relinquish" looks at the processes of late-capitalistic urban development and finance which are the two most important profit-generators bringing economic crisis of the late 2000s (p. 29). Each article looks at specific cases of Recife (Brazil), Hong Kong (China), London (the UK) and New York (the USA), New Belgrade (Serbia) and Zagreb (Croatia). While Recife and Hong Kong are depicted as the aggressor peripheries ready to demand and consume everything (pp. 38-68), London and New York are represented as the less-dynamic cities representing legacies of the past hegemony of the West (pp. 69-88). The other two articles discuss the post-socialist countries of Serbia and Croatia, which cannot propose a clear future for their residents due to their transition from socialism to neoliberal capitalism as well as the social turmoil caused by the war in former Yugoslavia (pp. 89-109).

The third chapter "Archipelago" looks at various landscapes where inequalities emerge, by giving examples from Hong Kong, Cyprus, and London. The first two articles explore Filipino women who live and work as domestic workers in Hong Kong (pp. 124-151). The first one is about how these women create their own spaces in the Exchange Square in Hong Kong to spend time together, talk, share their problems, and pack gifts for their relatives in their home country. The photographs accompanying the first article demonstrate the irony of making a female, immigrant and working class space in a square where the HSBC Bank is located, an institution associated with financial speculation and power (pp. 130-149). Another article explores the island of Cyprus, regarded as a woman oppressed by male power, seen in the nationalist discourses used in both sides of the island. The women have a powerless role and image in the public realm of Cyprus. The article looks at two institutions which have important role in the island: sex industry and the Church. The women are regarded as sex objects and slaves in the sex industry, such as those coming from ex-Soviet Bloc, Asia, Latin America and the Near East. Women do not have a voice also in the Orthodox Church, the richest institution of the island (pp. 152-162). Instead, in another piece, men who work in the City of London are presented as having the right and power to wear pink shirts, who overthrow gender norms by masculinising the colour pink. Ironically, men depicted in the article are all white and

well-dressed working in the City, a symbol of political, economic and cultural power and hegemony (pp.163-171). The same city was explored in the last two articles from different angles: a photographer describes his work experience in London, regarded as the symbol of greed, British spending culture, finance, and neoliberal capitalism (pp. 172-183). The last piece, an interview, explores how the City of London, centre of finance and business, is protected through an invisible wall, named as the “Ring of Steel” designed to discourage people from lingering which ends up in the normalisation of the fortress mentality and is regarded as a model to import elsewhere (pp. 184-199).

The fourth chapter, “Agency” discusses whether people can determine their own fate, and various forms of urban resistance and activism despite the existence of a debt economy which creates sustainable slavery (p. 203). The chapter begins by the discussion of a protest camp, the “Democracy Village” established in London during the protests in May 2010, symbolising “the topos and the nomos” of the post-political age, an open, autonomous and transitional space. This is the opposite of the “camp” mentality crystallised in Guantanamo, which limits people’s power to think and act (pp. 212-223). The second piece, an interview by the Spirit of ’68 Group, a cosmopolitan group formed to discuss the failure behind the 68 movements, questions the reasons of various past and present unsuccessful social movements: this was due to lack of sufficient material conditions in the case of the 68s, and the lack of consensus and ideology in the contemporary student protests in the UK. Also the resistance against the Barcelona 1992 Olympics in the form of collectives established by the intellectuals and creative classes of the city was unsuccessful due to its appropriation by big museums and consideration by people as a festive event instead of a real protest (pp. 224-239). Instead, the last three articles discuss several successful examples of urban resistance: the first discusses the “Battle of Cable Street” which took place in East End, London when people defended their multicultural spaces more than 75 years ago (pp. 240-251). The second article discusses a more recent urban resistance which was to defend Wards Corner, Tottenham in London by its residents, a successful initiative in creating a coherent narrative among very different people (pp. 252-264) and the last explains an “elite success story”, the case of William Morris, a political figure from the 19th century, transforming from a wealthy man into a socialist activist (pp. 265-278).

The last chapter “Stratification” explains the underlying mechanisms behind urban inequality, increased by and/or concealed behind various forms of urban transformation. The first piece, an interview with the director of the documentary “The Flickering Darkness”, explores the food industry in the city of Bogota and how it reflects the city’s massive class segregation. The article demonstrates the relationship between rural-to-urban migration, land grabs in rural areas, and urban development in Latin America, leading to a polarised class structure and a mixture of urban and rural culture in cities like Bogota (pp. 292-305). This is followed by a series of photographs, depicting

low-paid workers in one of the largest fruit and vegetable markets of Latin America, Corabastos (pp. 306-313). Another article explains how public space is re-created through the use of design by looking at the pilot project “Soft-Connection” in the post-war Beirut (Lebanon), planned to connect the unused urban park with the downtown. However, it ended up in creating a space sanitised from Beirut’s political and social past full of mourning and antagonism (pp. 314-331). The next one depicts performances of artists during the Urban Festival X which aimed at making Zagreb’s upper town, the city’s historic centre more visible and accessible by people. While these performances did not have a real effect on reviving neglected and under-used public spaces, they questioned the power of artists in tackling current urban problems (pp. 332-346). The last piece explores the Designated Public Place in Hackney, London, an alcohol control zone which would increase the segregation and stigmatisation of the working class, seen as people who do not like to work but prefer to depend on benefits (p. 347-358).

One shortcoming of the book is to cover similar topics in different chapters which led to repetitions. The book also covers inequalities experienced mostly in service sector, and the role of finance and real estate in creating and/or advancing inequalities. It might have covered different groups and sectors, such as precariat, conventional working classes and farmers and their role in fighting against austerity and creating collective resistances. As example, “precariat” had a pioneer role in Occupy movement in the USA and other similar resistances. However, as a product of an independent publishing house, the book does a good job in bringing together very diverse urban activists and subjects under the same title. It also shows the antagonisms brought by inequalities cutting across classes, genders, races, and cultures. In addition, it transcends the limits of academic writing and also uses photographs and interviews which lighten the gravity of its subject. By doing this, it addresses anyone who is interested in cities and various forms of inequality reflected on urban space in different parts of the world.

The book also raises several concerns on the realization of radical urban politics and engages with philosophical questions on possibilities and limitations of human agency to intervene in everyday problems due to pressure from despotic authorities and the apathy of people themselves. It discusses whether initiatives led by artists and/or creative classes can succeed due to the influence of big capital digesting them in the process or their evaluation by people as not real protests but as “events”. Another important issue the book raises is the conformism of people living in developed countries, concerned about of losing everything they have if they fight for their or other peoples’ rights. In this context, the role of the social media is also discussed in the book, seen as a lesser compensation for the people who cannot defend their rights in real life. Instead, people can play the role of rebel only in the twittering blogosphere, while the real world lacks real political action, eliminating real life community while fostering a consumer culture.

The book also allows the reader to reflect on power structure behind cities, i.e. if Hong Kong and Recife are emerging powers, who invests and lives in these cities? And if Corabastos market is manned by low-paid workers, where do they come from, what do their countrymen do in their rural settings, especially in a world said to be increasingly connected and dependent on each other? The current antagonisms are also fed by a global economy where technology alters the nature of production, killing sectors while creating new ones. However, it should be asked whether the new technologies and/or jobs compensate for the ever increasing number of unemployed people. The book also provides the reader to reflect on the power of design and planning in the transformation of cities. However, it is important to ask who designs for whom, which demonstrates different approaches of design and planning: the top-down examples of design, such as “Soft Connection Project” in Beirut and alcohol control zone (Designated Public Place) and “Ring of Steel” in London lead to segregation and stigmatisation of certain groups. Instead, the “Democracy Village” in London and the cardboard-box “casitas” in Exchange Square in Hong Kong made by Filipino domestic workers are examples of design made by people for people.

While raising these concerns, the book also allows the reader to think on the future by venturing out of the ivory tower of academia and bringing activism to the agenda. This is seen in the examples of several successful urban resistances depicted in the book, which emerged as the result of the urgent need for intervention and action against the neoliberal restructuring of cities. This urgent need can be the answer to the lack of consensus among diverse and sometimes conflicting ideologies which have created endless anti-capitalist radical social movements but could not create an alternative with a tangible effect. This urgent need for action can establish solidarity between different communities, identities and ideologies leading to future successful urban resistances. This is where social media can play a primary role by unifying diverse social movements taking place in different parts of the world and which can inspire activists in fighting against the same tyranny with different faces: neoliberalism.

