The Routledge Urban Reader Series

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CITIES OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH READER

The *Cities of the Global South Reader* adopts a fresh and critical approach to the field of urbanization in the developing world. The *Reader* incorporates both early and emerging debates about the diverse trajectories of urbanization processes in the context of the restructured global alignments in the last three decades. Emphasizing the historical legacies of colonialism, the *Reader* recognizes the entanglement of conditions and concepts often understood in binary relations: first/third worlds, wealth/poverty, development/underdevelopment, and inclusion/exclusion. By asking: "Whose city? Whose development?" the *Reader* rigorously highlights the fractures along lines of class, race, gender, and other socially and spatially constructed hierarchies in global South cities. The *Reader*'s thematic structure, where editorial introductions accompany selected texts, examines the issues and concerns that urban dwellers, planners, and policy makers face in the contemporary world. These include the urban economy, housing, basic services, infrastructure, the role of non-state civil society-based actors, planned interventions and contestations, the role of diaspora capital, the looming problem of adapting to climate change, and the increasing spectre of violence in a post 9/11 transnational world.

The *Cities of the Global South Reader* pulls together a diverse set of readings from scholars across the world, some of which have been written specially for the volume, to provide an essential resource for a broad interdisciplinary readership at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in urban geography, urban sociology, and urban planning as well as disciplines related to international and development studies. Editorial commentaries that introduce the central issues for each theme summarize the state of the field and outline an associated bibliography. They will be of particular value for lecturers, students, and researchers, making the *Cities of the Global South Reader* a key text for those interested in understanding contemporary urbanization processes.

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"Development and the City"

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

Michael Goldman

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

REVILED AND DESIRED: SCHIZOPHRENIA OVER THE THIRD WORLD CITY

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

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

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

experts, cities have now become the key to environmentally sustainable development, global economic growth, and poverty alleviation.

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

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

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

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

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

Across the globe in Bandung, Indonesia, 29 independence leaders representing more than 1.5 billion people met in a conference hall in April 1955 to discuss African and Asian solidarity, opposition to colonialism and the vitriolic cold war politics of the US and Soviet Union, as well as search for ways to

engage each other culturally and economically (now known as the "Bandung conference"). Subsequently, progressive national leaders including Nyerere of Tanzania, Senghor of Senegal, Nkrumah of Ghana, and Touré of Guinea initiated a policy of "African socialism" (a traditional form distinct from Europe's) in which economic development was guided by a large, job-creating public sector. In 1967, Nyerere released the Arusha Declaration that promoted an African model of development based on what he called *Ujamaa*, a Swahili word meaning "extended family"—a moral compass for a national plan based on the notion of shared development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

By contrast, and as a strong critique, *dependency* and *world-systems* theorists challenged the dominant perspective of modernization, arguing that capitalism is a historically unique and powerful social formation (emerging from colonialism) that creates unequal structures of exploitation and expropriation (Frank 1966; Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Wallerstein 1974; Amin 1976). The beneficiaries are mostly elite classes in the major cities of the North (called "the core"), and secondarily in the urban South (or "periphery"). Some called this process "underdevelopment," whereby the wealthier classes and governments in the North *underdeveloped* governments and populations

in the South (Amin 1976; Frank 1966). Such scholars argued for a historical analysis that revealed the dual processes of urbanization that inextricably linked the wealth accumulation and cosmopolitan living of New York, Paris, and London with the generation of poverty and inequities of Mexico City, Dakar, and Dhaka. Whereas modernization scholars thought of countries as discrete objects with their own internal plans and successes/failures, "developing" *sequentially*, these critical social theorists understood history in *relational* terms. That is, England became wealthy and powerful *because* it exploited India's wealth and possibilities, thereby "underdeveloping" it (McMichael 2010). In their view, as capitalism evolved after colonialism, new hierarchies and social relations emerged, such that cities like Singapore, Shanghai, and more recently Dubai contributed to the reshaping of a multi-polar system of capitalism. In either case, these scholars argued that one should not diagnose and solve developmental problems as if they exist in a vacuum, or are due to purely localized problems of "lacks" or deficiencies.

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

URBAN SHOCK THERAPY: STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND NEOLIBERALISM

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

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

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

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

Neoliberal policies undertaken by many countries in the global South reduced employment in major cities where government offices were located; they also removed employment protections and important subsidies for public goods and services. By and large, electricity, water, health services, schooling, and waste removal were priced at levels that most consumers could not afford. With rising water and

WATER WARS

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

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

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

Source: Goldman 2007.

electricity prices and the loss of subsidies for locally consumed food grains, local diets often became unaffordable. Housing prices were de-subsidized and housing became part of a globally competitive real estate market, which priced many poor city dwellers out of their homes. There is a large literature about the near universal failure of these development policies to improve the poor's lives (Ismi 2004; Naiman and Watkins 1999; SAPRIN 2002; Weisbrot and Ray 2011). Ismi concludes that "after 15 years of following World Bank and IMF-imposed policies, Latin America, by the late 1990s, was going through 'its worst period of social and economic deprivation in half a century.' By 1997, nearly half of the region's 460 million people had become poor—an increase of 60 million in ten years" (Ismi 2004: 9).

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

SPECULATING ON GLOBAL CITIES

In 2009, World Bank President Zoellick announced:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NEW APPROACHES TO THINKING ABOUT CITY LIFE AND LIVELIHOODS

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

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

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

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

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

CONCLUSION: CITIES OF INFINITE POSSIBILITY?

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

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

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

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