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### **Errata Corrige to Vol 8 No2**

Article: *Back on the Northside-by keexote, Winter 2018*. Kee Warner's affiliation is University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.

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## *Tianzifang: The Dilemma of Urban Renovation at the Turn of the XXI Century<sup>1</sup>*

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This article is part of a wider research looking at the impact government decisions have on urban dynamics and urban dwellers in the case of Shanghai and Xi'an, China. The specific case analysed here, the *lilong* (lanes and alleys) of Tianzifang, demonstrates that even if the transformation of the neighbourhood is an inexorable force pushed by the municipality, other forces are at work. As the discussion will show, the role of artists has been of utmost importance in the case of Tianzifang.

**Keywords:** Neighbourhood, historic preservation, cultural clusters, urban landscape transformation.

Major ethnographic studies made by Chinese scholars before the 1990s focused on Chinese rural areas and ethnic and rural minorities immigrating to the city (Engebretsen 2012, Liu 2002). Metropolises such as Beijing and Shanghai were the first to be put under the microscope through ethnographic studies. Today urban studies are well established in the field of Chinese studies. It is generally admitted by scholars in social sciences that long term fieldwork in a specific site is the prerequisite to any in-depth study (Prato and Pardo 2013). Ethnographic work on the ground has been chosen for this article as it is a powerful tool to understand life in our rapidly changing, complex cities (Pardo and Prato 2018: 2). As China is due to be more and more urbanized according to government plans, the study of different kinds of people living together in a specific area of the city is particularly important in order to identify specific issues in contemporary China, present trends and future trajectories. The case presented in this article shows that beyond government plans, a more nuanced approach to urban development is possible. Urbanization is not happening without contradictions, so the discussion will question the compatibility between preserving historic buildings and blocks while the city is modernising and taking new shape at high speed. It will assess this high tension between contradictory objectives.

In Shanghai, the latest large-scale urban transformation dates back to the 1990s. At that time, Shanghai started to play once again a leading role in the Chinese economy. This new status is reflected in the discourse of the municipality's officials, which emphasizes the deep transformation and modernisation processes of the city (Laurens 2005). To borrow the expression from Lu Duanfang's book title, China today is remaking its urban form (Lu 2006). One focus of this perspective is the city's new architecture, which is intended, first, to embody its status as a major Asian metropolis and, second, to show its potential to become rapidly a global one as well. For Shanghai leaders, the fact that the municipality was selected in 2002 to host the World Exposition (hereafter referred to as Expo) after a tough competition with five

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers who gave some very useful comments. I would also like to thank Russell L. Moses for his support and good advice. The fieldwork trips in 2010, 2011 and 2012 were funded by PRODIG UMR 8586, the research centre to which I am affiliated.

other international cities was very important. It was seen as a crowning achievement — it was interpreted as recognition of Shanghai as an international metropolis (People's Daily 2004). The official discourse is about global upgrading the city. 'Taking the successful holding of the 2010 World Expo as a driving force to boost the upgrading of the city's energy level and layout adjustment, Shanghai will continually improve its urban eco-environment, accelerate the functional development of Pudong, and advance the building of a modern international city.' (Master City Plan of Shanghai 2001: §14.1). This phenomenon can be observed throughout the world in cities that accommodated Olympic games. Beijing, for example, was transformed at high speed to welcome the summer games in 2008. This was not without its problems and some resistance from the local population (Graezer Bideau 2018).

A similar phenomenon happened in Shanghai, where urban renewal was accelerated once Shanghai was officially chosen to host the Expo. The massive and rapid destruction left little room for discussion and elaboration of a good protection plan. It was only a decade later that the issue raised concerns and some academic started to publish on it; among them, Wu (2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2015), Ren (2008), Tsai (2008), Wang and Yao (2009), just to quote the main Chinese authors who have published in English. Modernisation remained central to the vision that was publicized loudly and clearly in official discourse. The motto chosen was 'Better city, better life'. Actually, it is clearer in Chinese '*chengshi rang shenghuo geng meihao*', which can be read as: 'the city enables life to be even more beautiful'. Human beings are the focus of the visual discourse, with the Chinese character *ren* used as the mascot while the logo is made of the Chinese character for the world *shi* representing three men linked together. In the media, the following themes were developed: protection of the environment, fight against pollution, technological innovation. The authorities promoted a discourse with two different levels. First, they addressed Shanghai's population as a whole, striving to promote a positive image of the Chinese city internationally. Second, they aimed to justify evictions and relocations of the people who were directly affected. For the authorities, Shanghai's urban renovation policies — which mainly targeted areas deemed dilapidated and overcrowded — aimed to modernize these neighbourhoods, improving the comfort and safety of their inhabitants. The goal was to reduce risks such as fire, bad hygiene, robberies, drug traffic, and so on.<sup>2</sup> In order to give the world a good image of the city, transformations were made all around the city at high speed. Here we clearly see a major contradiction between the global view of planners and local people's interests or wishes. This is so important that it is a central topic in most urban ethnographies (Pardo and Prato 2018: 14).

While the policy makers have a broader view of the municipality, scholars doing ethnographic work have a close-up view (DeSena and Krase 2015). The present article focuses on one location that is part of the historical centre popularly referred to as the former French

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<sup>2</sup> According to Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on City Planning (15/06/1995), article 14, §3 (pp.13-15) 'The redevelopment of old urban areas must concentrate on those areas with a high concentration of dilapidated houses, shacks and temporarily thrown-up dwellings and those areas that are lacking in municipal works and public utility facilities, that are afflicted by traffic congestion or environmental pollution or that are water logging-prone'.

concession:<sup>3</sup> Tianzifang (hereafter TZF). Like most of the areas affected by the renovation in Shanghai, TZF is located in the heart of the city: within the first ring road, called the inner ring road.

I carried out participant observation and in-depth interviews from 2005 to 2012. Living close by TZF, I shared residents' daily life until 2010 then from 2010 to 2012 made fieldwork trips once a year from France. I interviewed local residents, economic migrants, shop owners, artists and individuals on duty at the management office. I also interviewed some tourists. This study shows that the Shanghai municipality has learned from its mistakes of massive destruction and can adapt to a certain extent to a new situation that it did not plan.

### **Contemporary Urban Renovation**

The phenomenon of renovating an urban area is quite common, and other major cities vying for international recognition also had to face the same problems in relation to urban transformation.

For Shanghai municipality leaders, modernization meant primarily getting rid of old industrial buildings and dilapidated housing in order to give a beautiful image of the city connected to the world. The goal of the leaders was to transform Shanghai so that it could compete with other global cities (Diglio 2006). As a consequence, the resident population changed and a phenomenon of gentrification followed the transformations made to the city morphology (Iossifova 2009, 2015). In the 1970s in the United States, there was a similar phenomenon. Sharon Zukin explains that the officials believed that cities 'suffered from an image crisis' and in order to upgrade cities they targeted investors and visitors (Zukin 2009: 6). A similar situation has gone on in Shanghai.

In this context, of transformation at high speed, the question of preservation of historical sites is important (Ning 1998). What is to be preserved? How to preserve? Major cities in China went through the same dilemma during the period between the 1980s until the 2000s. The Chinese government establish national guidelines and, at lower levels, each municipality has its own plan to develop the city and its leaders are responsible to achieve it. The municipality of Shanghai adopted a series of regulations in order to rationalise demolition and reconstruction (Shanghai Municipality 1995, 2001, 2002, 2007). Beijing and Xi'an, which have been capital of the Empire and have some buildings listed with UNESCO, have different views on preservation compared with Shanghai, which has no building listed with UNESCO (UN-Habitat 2008, Graezer Bideau 2018). Although Shanghai was officially recognized by the Chinese central government as a 'National Famous Historical and Cultural City' in December 1986, the concept of historical preservation seems quite weak<sup>4</sup> compared to the dominant

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<sup>3</sup> The creation of European concessions was the heritage of the first Opium War in 1842. As a result of this war, Shanghai became a treaty port. Foreigners enjoyed extraterritoriality and de facto Chinese government had no control over the administration of the concession (Bergère 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Article 14 §1-2 states: 'The development of new urban areas and the redevelopment of old urban areas must be integrated in a unified plan, must be planned and arranged rationally, must pursue a course of

modern architecture made of business centres, commercial malls, etc. (Zhong and Chen 2017). In response, the municipality listed places to be preserved, mainly located in the densely-populated city centre: 16 key state-protected relics, 110 key city-protected relics, 21 historical memorial spots and 15 protected sites, altogether there are 400 authorized buildings of historical value (Diglio 2006). In my view, the fact that the oldest buildings in Shanghai go back only to the Concession period is too shameful (this idea is also shared by Diglio 2006). In Xi'an, for example, preserving the remains of the First Emperor (259-210 BC) or the tombs of the Tang dynasty (618-907) are all linked to the glorious past of China. The emotion behind preserving native historical heritage is not the same as preserving colonial style architecture.

Like in many countries in the West, here, too, it is difficult to find the balance between growth and fast development on the one hand and cultural heritage preservation on the other hand. The feelings that Sharon Zukin expresses during her walks in New York city could be the same for a Shanghai dweller: 'I see people, streets, neighbourhoods, and public spaces being upscaled, redeveloped, and homogenized to the point of losing their distinctive identity. Not all of them are historic places, for one of the city's main distinctions is that it nurtures a constant dialogue between the two faces of authenticity: between features that every generation views as "original" because they have been there throughout their lifetimes, and features that each new generation creates on their own' (Zukin 2009: xi). There is a struggle over who controls urban spaces between local residents on the one hand, who want wet markets<sup>5</sup> and daily use shops, and newer residents and tourists on the other, who largely want leisure activities and high-class shops.

### **The *Lilong*: A Traditional Neighbourhood in Shanghai**

A *lilong* is typical of Shanghai architecture. 'The word, as an abbreviation of *Lilong* housing neighbourhood, is a rich concept that not only refers to the materiality of the dwelling form, but also to the vivid social life within and around it, which can be characterized in at least three ways: 1/ the physical forms of housing [...] which shared a similar neighbourhood structure, being organized along small alleys; 2/ the local community; 3/ a particular dwelling culture created by the inhabitants' (Zhao 2004: 50-51).

The end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by political instability, rebellions and the arrival of Westerners in Shanghai. All this pushed many Chinese to find refuge in big cities, like Shanghai (Bergère 2009). Because of the rapid increase of people running away from

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comprehensive development, and must give priority to the construction of auxiliary, complementary projects and of infrastructure works, and construction work must be carried out with a relative concentration of resources. The redevelopment of old urban areas must be integrated with the restructuring and redistribution of industries, must rationally readjust the use of land, must keep a check on the building of high-rises, must lower building density, must increase public green space, must help improve urban traffic, must further improve urban infrastructure, and must strengthen the multifunctionality of the city. [...]' (*Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on City Planning*, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> These markets are places where people can buy fresh vegetables, fruit, live fish and sometimes poultry. There, people can also find a locksmith, a tailor, and so on.



surrounding provinces like Anhui and Jiangsu, housing was not sufficient and some slums and ghettos appeared (Ho 2010). Some housings were just huts called *gundilong* (earth-rolling dragon) and were modelled after the roofs of the riverboats that carried peasants to Shanghai. These people lived first on their boats and after a while moved to the barges and built huts (Ho 2010). Slowly, some new buildings were erected in the undeveloped areas of the foreign settlements during the 1920s. When newcomers arrived at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the foreign concessions there were houses that would accommodate extended families called *Shikumen* (literally translated ‘with stone gates’). They were two- or three-story structures made of stone or bricks with a narrow front yard. These *Shikumen* lined the alleys that formed the *Lilongs*.

Chiang Kai-Shek, the Nationalist leader, started to unify China in 1926 under what is known as the Northern Expedition. One year later his army entered Shanghai, pacifying it. China was united under Nationalist rule. The Nationalists made efforts to develop the economy. The last stage of *Lilong* development emerged in a context of dynamic industrialization. The *Lilong* erected at this time had the objective of creating affordable homes for the workers of small production units that were located near the waterways that then crisscrossed Shanghai. *Lilong* design thus moved beyond areas of the French concession, to expand into the rest of Shanghai. As more *lilongs* were built, there were variations in style. However, commonalities remained. These buildings were generally built quickly, using wood or bricks. They usually comprised three floors linked together through alleys and lanes leading to the main gates, which were guarded. This gave a feeling of safety for the inhabitants and allowed them to create strong social ties within a closed perimeter. The intensive use of common areas and a vivid life in the alleys generated a strong sense of community (Qiu 2010).

By the 1950s this type of housing was the most common, accounting for 72.5% of the city’s residential buildings (Zhong and Chen 2017). Of course, they were of various kinds according to the quality of the material used, some high class, others more common (Rutcosky 2007). These constructions were stopped in 1950 when the Communist government took power and changed its policy towards city dwellers. There was no more private property after the 1950s and the State was the only owner. Industries and businesses were nationalized as well as housing. The State was providing accommodation at a very low rent for people working in the cities (Fan 2004).

## Tianzifang: A Traditional Lilong in Shanghai

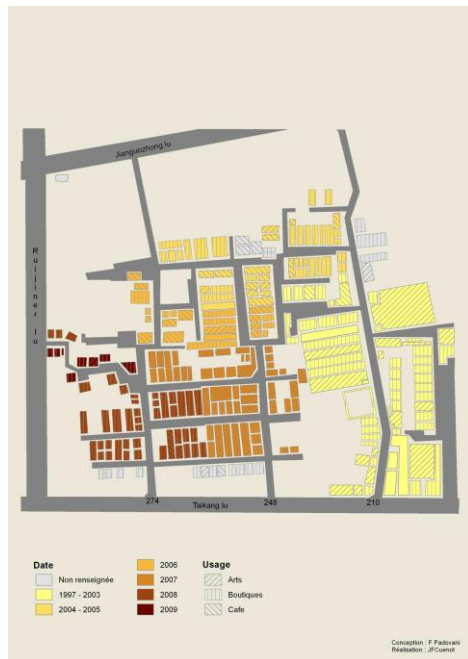


Figure 1. Map of TZF

Tianzifang was built during the 1930s, this was the last stage of *Lilong* construction. It consists of a set of small three-floor buildings made of grey and red bricks and a dozen houses called *Shikumen* of two to three floors. At first, its size was 7.2 hectares. There was only one lane, but since 2010 the perimeter has expanded westward, incorporating other *lilongs* under the label TZF. It is now an administrative part of Luwan district, in the southwestern part of Shanghai's city centre. At the time of its construction, it was part of the French concession.



Figure 2. One of the stone doors in TZ (photo by the author)



Figure 3. One narrow alley after passing the stone doors – All ground floor dwellings are used as shops (photo by the author).

TZF is crammed in between Jianguo Zhong Road to the north — a relatively narrow one-way street with two lanes, lined with plane trees and usually busy — the small Taikang Road to the south — a one-way street that was not very popular before TZF's success — Ruijin Nan Road to the west — an important thoroughfare (also one-way, with two lanes and plane tree-lined) — and finally the small Sinan Road to the east — also one-way, and comparatively less busy. To the south is Zhaojiabang road, one of the municipality's main thruways with six lanes. It was an old waterway used in the past for the transportation of goods produced in the small factories that bordered it. Now covered, it continues to play an important role in Shanghai's transport system.

Since its beginning, a variety of residents lived in TZF. After 1950, some of the *Shikumen* in TZF were destroyed to make room for small factories; the rest were subdivided and made into low-rent apartments. Each building was re-divided creating small flats with an average of 3m<sup>2</sup> per capita in living space (Zhong and Chen 2017). During the pre-communist period housing was relatively comfortable for an average size family, afterwards it became overpopulated. In addition to workers, residents included minor officials, artists and teachers who took advantage of the low prices of these buildings to move in. The organizational configuration of the *lilong* created very important spatial as well as social constraints for their inhabitants. The kitchen and the bathroom became common spaces. There were no private toilets, so residents had to go to public toilets in the morning, carrying their chamber pots. Another consequence was the degradation of the premises as none of the residents took responsibility for the upkeep of the buildings.

At the end of the 1950s, several lanes in the *lilong* were demolished to make room for six small factories, which produced spare timepieces single parts, canned food, etc. The food factory, which housed a photo gallery, Deke-Erh, until 2012 (Zhou P. 2012), has three floors, and the tallest building has six floors (Liang 2008, Pan 2005).

Today, Luwan is considered a district imbued with a particular nostalgic charm. The area also attracts property developers who want to benefit from the latest urban transformation policies. When private developers collaborating with local authorities took advantage of the opportunity to launch large-scale modernization projects in the district, TZF was one area that attracted them.

### **From an Unknown *Lilong* to Tianzifang**

The six small factories built in TZF during the 1950s filed for bankruptcy in the 1990s and closed. The lower level of the Chinese administration (the street level) decided to rent these empty spaces to a wet market and some daily necessities shop. Later, in the 1990s and early 2000s, step by step, artists took the opportunity to rent former industrial sites at very low prices; here they installed their workshops. A community of painters, sculptors, photographers and designers slowly developed. This is how a former food factory came to house Deke-Erh's photo gallery until 2012 (Zhou P. 2012). The six-floor building is rented to artists (Liang 2008, Pan 2005). Some shops were converted into galleries and artist studios and gradually some restaurants and souvenir shops moved in.

Some of the artists had studied in the West and were aware of places like Soho in New York City. They considered this a model to be followed. They wanted 'to build Shanghai's SOHO at Tianzifang'. In Shanghai at that time, the idea of converting old factory buildings into artistic venues was brand new (Gu 2014). TZF was the pioneer of creative industry in Shanghai.<sup>6</sup>

Some artists have a certain degree of notoriety, like the aforementioned Huang Yongyu, or Chen Yifei, a renowned photographer, one of those with a long stay in North America, where he discovered the practice of converting old factories into art galleries. His contribution was particularly significant for the artists that settled in TZF. By 2004, an estimated 1.8 hectares of TZF's industrial space had been converted into galleries, artists' studios or interior design offices, occupying almost all of the previously available factory space (Wang W. H. 2011). From the start, TZF stood out as different from the other *lilongs* because of the presence of artists (Ley 2003).

Interestingly, the name of Tianzifang was given by the artists in 2002 without consulting the local residents. Given the symbolic importance of giving a name to something (Yu 2015), the fact that people living there were not asked reveals how they had been marginalized in their own living space. What is now called Tianzifang was just known as 'Taikang lu'; until 2008,

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<sup>6</sup> In 2004, TZF was one of the 18 Creative Industry Clusters selected by the Shanghai Municipality (Yu 2015).

no official text had used the name TZF. The name TZF was given by Huang Yongyu.<sup>7</sup> Tianzifang was the name of a painter from ancient China, who has now fallen into oblivion. The artistic connotation was to become the trademark of the area (Wang J.Q. and Yao Z. G. 2009). The fact that the *lilong* was named by such a highly renowned artist was a good trademark in the eyes of the art connoisseurs and the municipality's authorities (SCIC 2006). Only after the authorities' acknowledgement of the place's identity did the name 'Tianzifang' appear in official documents and on road signs in 2008.

### **The Population of TZF**

The specificity of TZF is that residents, economic migrants, and artists in daytime only, coexist in the same limited space. In other places where artists have settled in Shanghai, such as Suzhou Creek or Red House, there were often only abandoned industrial structures and no inhabitants (Wang J. and Li 2009, Wang J. 2009).

Since the beginning, the artists and the older residents did not have much in common and did not have many opportunities to interact in daily life. In fact, the artists did not live in TZF, but only worked there. They paid rent for their studios to a government office because up to this day the factories are still owned by the local government. Here we have a case of what DeSena call 'parallel cultures' within a community (DeSena 2012). There is a segregation between the two groups who deal with their daily occupations in the same neighbourhood, co-exist but do not interact. They are like strangers to each other.

The residents still living at TZF when I started my research in 2005 came there during the 1950s. They were retired workers or small shop owners. Their level of education was quite low and their revenue likewise.

A third group of people living at TZF are the rural migrants or economic migrants. In the late 1990s, they started to rent rooms from the long-time residents and establish themselves there. They are the only ones who accept to live in dilapidated surroundings without any modern comfort. They usually originated from nearby provinces (Anhui, Jiangsu, Zhejiang), and came in the hope of earning a better living in Shanghai. The residents and the economic migrants interact on a daily basis. They jointly use the common facilities like the toilets and the kitchen. They buy their goods in the same wet markets. Their income levels are not very different, and their level of education is rather similar. According to Chinese law they have no rights at all; they are allowed to stay in Shanghai on a temporary basis. They are mute actors of the social life even if they are also actors in reshaping the urban landscape.

### **Fighting for Preserving TZF**

From 1991 to 2000, the city demolished old houses covering a total area of 28 million square meters and relocated about 0.64 million households. TZF was at high risk of being demolished

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<sup>7</sup> Huang Yongyu, a famous writer and painter, was born in 1924. After suffering from the Cultural Revolution, he continued his artistic activities but focused on calligraphy and wood carving.

like the nearby *lilongs*. It was saved by the mobilisation of different groups of people and also by the Asian Crisis (1997) which stopped some investments.

The first group of actors was composed by the different levels of the administration: the central, the municipal and the district level governments. The Shanghai municipality was interested in issues of renovation. The second group were the private investors, responsible for financing it. They also had their own agenda. These two groups had to negotiate an agreement before any project could carry on. Developers obtained urban land use right and then carried out their project. In this case, in an effort to build a more modern image of Shanghai and to take advantage of an attractive financial opportunity,<sup>8</sup> city authorities made the deal with a Hong Kong real estate company. This company, ShuiOn Land, has designed several other *lilong* renovations in Shanghai. Its plan was to build large luxury residences and a shopping centre.

As for the inhabitants, the economic migrants who rented a living space were voiceless, so they had no choice but to prepare to move to another place further from the inner city. The old residents were more resigned: ‘the government decided so what can we do?’, ‘we cannot go against the government decision’, ‘we have to follow what we are ordered to do’. These were reactions to be heard from the long-time residents.

Then there were the artists, the later comers. They were the first to react. They became an important group as the influx of artists seeking inspiration and affordable rents had increased. The mobilization of artists, academics<sup>9</sup> and even political executives took place in various forms to denounce the massive destruction of local heritage. A debate was held in the Luwan district government offices and was not public. Although sometimes violent, the debate did not receive significant media coverage. Some academics who took part in the meetings with the Luwan administration suggest that the main argument was that a modern international metropolis needs to keep some historical enclaves. Second, according to those who wanted to preserve TZF from destruction, the experiment of mixing different groups was going on fine; moreover, the public seemed to appreciate this mix of residential life for the popular classes and artistic flavour. Eventually, Luwan leaders decided to use TZF as an experiment in a new kind of historic preservation. The Asian economic crisis forced the developers to reduce the scale of their project because of the lack of funds and the fall of real estate prices. So, the Luwan district government took the decision to give TZF some time to show what could be done. It is important to note that the decision was made at the lowest level of the administrative hierarchy. It was a real risk for the leaders because if it failed, they would be held responsible.

Despite being the first to be affected by the development project, the degree of involvement of long-time residents was minimal. They appeared to be caught in a dynamic that they were not able to stop. Side-lined from all negotiations, they were to be evicted for the purpose of adding value to the district. Initiated by the government and by private developers, this huge demolition and development project in TZF was to transform completely the district

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<sup>8</sup> ‘In China, in 2010, revenue from trade in real estate accounted for 1/3 of national revenue’ (Yu 2012: 24). And for Beijing and Shanghai it was 1/2 of the local revenue (Yu 2015:7).

<sup>9</sup> Like Chen Yinfang, then Professor of Sociology at East China Normal University. She published in Chinese about slums in Shanghai and social problems with urban development (Chen 2008).

by reallocating its space. Some people I interviewed said that they were not strong enough to fight against a government decision. They also said they did not want to get into trouble. A very fatalistic feeling was shared by many.

### **Daily Life Under the Name of TZF**

It is only when it was sure that TZF would not be immediately destroyed that negotiations began between the artists, the businessmen and the resident-owners (Shinohara 2009). This was particularly difficult. On the one hand, state regulations prohibited changing the zoning of land use.<sup>10</sup> On the other, because of the large number of owners in such a small area, reaching an agreement became a major challenge. One may need the agreement of six or seven owners to be able to open a shop big enough to accommodate goods and consumers. For Ms Li (55 years old) who had spent her whole life in TZF before getting married, 'People here are uneducated, they don't know how to negotiate with these people from the outside. They feel uneasy about renting their place and moving out of the community far away.' The place as we know it today was born of these different struggles.

During the period when negotiations were going on, TZF was gaining notoriety amongst Shanghai people and it quickly became a trendy place for young people (Guo 2005). But still the situation remained precarious for many of its residents. In 2004, an agreement to save TZF was sealed between the artists, government officials and newcomer entrepreneurs. At the same time, new management structures were created to oversee its development. Till then it had been an informal and small-scale committee. The owners were private ones<sup>11</sup> but most of them left to make room for shops or galleries. As Mr Tan (80 years old) told me 'I am happy to leave this place. It is too dirty, too small. I will stay with my daughter who bought a modern flat in Pudong. The rent of my room will help for daily life'.

In order to keep an eye on these transactions, the government decided to create a management committee. The main role of the committee was to prevent disputes given the complexity of establishing a lease. The involvement of municipal authorities in the management of TZF marked a turning point in the evolution of the site. One year later, in 2005, TZF was named 'Shanghai's most creative industrial zone'. This was the final victory for people who wanted to protect TZF from destruction because gaining this title meant that TZF had been formerly recognized as a creative and touristic area that could not be destroyed easily.

Starting from 2004, some residents began renting their property to newcomer artists who did not find room in former factories. They also started to rent to entrepreneurs who opened shops. More and more cafes, restaurants and souvenir boutiques appeared all around. For the residents who wished to move to a less confined environment, the opportunity was too good to

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<sup>10</sup> Article 45 of the *Regulations of Shanghai Municipality on City Planning* (1995: 7) states 'The use of an architectural structure must conform with the function designated and approved for it in the Permit for Planning of Construction Project. Any change in the designated function of an architectural structure must be reported to the Municipal or Area/District/County Administrative Department in Charge of City Planning that originally handled the examination and approval procedures for approval'.

<sup>11</sup> Since 1986 residents could buy their property and became owners of their flat.

pass up, especially for those who lived on the first or second floor. For those living on the third floor, it was — and still is — quite difficult to find a tenant. Shanghai newspapers reported that the first resident in TZF who embarked on the adventure did a bit of renovation work in his apartment and, before he finished, he was offered 4,000 Yuan per month by a fashion designer, who also ended up hiring him as an employee for a salary of 1,500 Yuan, which represented more than ten times the worker's former monthly income. Today, prices are continuously increasing, and a 40 m<sup>2</sup> apartment in the main alley can be rented for up to 40,000 Yuan per month.<sup>12</sup>

The creativity of TZF and its official recognition brought great vitality to the community and a substantial increase in income for the residents (Hiu et al. 2014). In 2011, the proportion of rented premises was 75% at number 210, 78% at number 248, and only 28% in the third and final section, one that was developed more recently and is located further west.<sup>13</sup> In total, 45% of the families that were surveyed chose to remain there, 37% have rented their apartments, and 17% have become entrepreneurs (1% were not able to answer the questionnaire). Out of the 301 families living there, 114 would have like to find a tenant, 34 wanted to leave, 97 wanted to stay, and 75 were not sure. These figures show that the development of TZF had a very significant impact on the residents. Residents, who did not have much to say about the transformation of their community, still wanted to take advantage of the development. The third floor was not easily accessible and often not visible from the alley. Therefore, as I mentioned earlier, it was more difficult to rent, and those residents were often likely to stay.

Alongside this transformation, because the resident population density has been decreasing; one might expect that the structures would be better maintained. However, the increase in the tourist population and the turnover of entrepreneurs (as the rent prices rocket) have had an impact on maintenance. In addition, construction was not planned for shops and restaurants, and few inspections have been performed, so some fear that the buildings might collapse.

During the interviews I had with local residents, some, especially those who lived on the second or third floors, complained about not finding tenants. Many were also distressed by the mass of tourists, who seemed to consider them as curiosities. Another subject of recrimination was the disappearance of small shops useful to residents. For example, the large market at the end of Taikang Road — small hairdressers, shoemakers, glaziers — have all given way to more luxurious boutiques. The retired Ms Li thus complained in 2010: 'Back in the days, I used to go to the market every morning and we would all meet up, chatting while buying vegetables. Now the new market is smaller, some services are no longer available and it's much more expensive. Only fashionable shops are left; it is good for young people and foreigners, but not for people like us!' For Mr Huang, a retired man, the situation is not easier: 'I can only go out early in the morning, otherwise I would have no respite; they [the tourists] all want to take my

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<sup>12</sup> This figure was given by several people during interviews in May 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Results of a public poll ordered by the local committee from Luwan district in 2010. The survey interviewed 671 families in Tianzifang. The whole survey has not been published, but some abstracts are available (Xu 2011).



picture and they make so much noise that my bird becomes frightened. At night, they are shouting and making noise until the late hours. If I could, I would move as quickly as possible. This is not a life!’ Ms Yao, who has been living in a nearby *Lilong* since her childhood and who is selling tea in TZF is critical of residents: ‘people are not sensible; they all think that their small flat on the second or third floor is gold. They are too greedy, so my neighbours below are condemned to cope with noise and daily stress’. Disputes between residents, bar owners and even customers happen from time to time, forcing the neighbourhood committee to intervene. Although residents did not carry out formal demonstrations in front of Luwan’s District Committee, some third-floor residents set up banners denouncing the changes they faced (witnessed by the author in April 2008). This shows sporadic resistance, with little impact on the development of TZF.

The departure of residents has only accelerated since 2000. In 2010 there used to be 670 households living in TZF; now only 80 households remain, most of whom are composed of elderly people. Since 2011, street signs in Chinese and English indicating that visitors are not allowed to penetrate further or that pictures are forbidden beyond a certain limit have started to appear at the end of the shopping alleys. Small booths have been installed at the entrances of the alleys for the security guards on duty;<sup>14</sup> barriers were set up to prevent vehicles and even bicycles from entering.



Figure 4. No tourist allowed (photo by the author)

At the end of 2012, a survey of the tourists visiting TZF commissioned by Luwan district showed that it was ranked last among the Shanghainese sites (Zhou S. L. 2013). According to the journalist who analysed the report, visitors complained that there were too many tourists in the narrow alleys. They also complained about inflated prices for average quality goods. As for

<sup>14</sup> They are paid by the management committee. In China one can see them at the entrance of gated communities and in most public spaces. In that sense TZF is not an exception.

the residents, they did not have any more private space where they could meet amongst themselves. The businessmen were not satisfied either because the rent was now too high, or because there was harsh competition. Some artists had already left for more attractive places. As an example, Deke-Erh, one of the first famous artist to have moved to TZF, left for Suzhou, where the municipality provided him with a large space for a low rent. After a decade of development, there were mixed results. Miss Wu, a Taiwanese, thus explained her feeling: ‘During my first visit, while having coffee in an alley, we could see some residents cycling about, carrying the vegetables they had just purchased. This passage of the recent past was quite fascinating. [...] During the past two years, the number of daily visitors has greatly increased. Inside TZF, people have to push and bump into each in order to move forward’.

The co-residence of artists and other residents in a single neighbourhood now appears to be a *victim of its success*. I have described how residents are divided among those who enjoy a comfortable income, and others whose quality of life has deteriorated. As for the artists who allowed TZF to exist, they have started to leave. Rents have become too high, tourists often pass by quickly without making a purchase, and competition has become increasingly tough.



Figure 5a. Before renovation (photo by the author)



Figure 5b. During renovation (photo by the author)



Figure 5c. After renovation (photo by the author)

## Conclusion

Modernisation of Shanghai was made at high speed. Issues linked to the protection of historical and cultural heritage have been in contradiction with the desire of municipal leaders to give a modern image of the city. As this article shows, there is another contradiction between the lucrative real-estate transactions and the protection of community life in places like TZF. Participant observation and in-depth interviews highlight an ambivalent feeling among the residents themselves. On the one hand, they have been living a long period of their life in this *Lilong* and they have a strong feeling of being part of a community. On the other hand, they are willing to go and enjoy more comfortable, quieter surroundings. As Mr Li (about 75 years old) told me, 'I wish the government had displaced us (he and his wife) because we would not have to do everything ourselves. We are too old for that and the children don't want to come and visit us: we don't even have private toilets!'

Tourists, who are mostly Chinese, come to walk through the alleys and make a selective reading of the local history through a sanitized reconstruction. They come to find authenticity, which is a very good marketing cultural product. TZF is advertised as authentic and the residents are the guarantee. Bride and groom come to take romantic pictures just like the crowds of tourists.

Today, TZF is a victim of its own success. It is becoming step by step similar to other 'historic villages' and enclaves in China: a reconstructed leisure area with an obsolete fragrance where you can buy the same souvenirs as elsewhere.

Even if negative comments can be heard from the different stakeholders, the relatively harmonious relationship between artists, residents and entrepreneurs is part of the good image on which Shanghai leaders have tried to build. Moreover, in TZF, there were no protests against eviction and no negative media coverage about the displacement of residents. So, harmonious TZF was put forth as a model to be emulated.

China's ongoing rapid urbanisation means that the preservation of local communities and historical spaces as well as the modernisation of the cities will be major challenges for the Chinese authorities. The fact that residents are not involved in the planning process exacerbates a fatalist feeling and dispossesses them of their social network and community memory.

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## *The Politics of Access to Potable Water in a Marginalized Neighbourhood of Cochabamba, Bolivia.*

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In many marginalized areas of Cochabamba, Bolivia, access to potable water cannot be taken for granted. In most of these areas, people must generate their own strategies to gain access to this resource. This is the case of Villa Chaquimayu, a neighbourhood where people established a Water Committee to provide potable water for the area. This article explores the dynamics of communal water governance in Villa Chaquimayu through the analysis of its meetings. By using ethnographic data, this article shows that in Villa Chaquimayu communal meetings do not follow the conventional rules associated with western democratic institutions. Instead, they are a complex articulation of performativity, conflicts and affective ties that enhance communal values and legitimize the actions of communal leaders.

**Keywords:** Local politics, communal meetings, basic services, marginality, political performativity.

### **Introduction**

Cochabamba is a Bolivian city located in the Andes mountains at an elevation of 2500 meters above sea level. Nowadays, it is the fourth largest city in Bolivia, with a population of 632,013 people (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2012). From a sociological standpoint, one of the most distinctive characteristics of this city is its spatial segregation. Indeed, in the city's northeastern area most neighbourhoods have optimal infrastructure, whereas people in the southern zone have limited access to basic services and often live in precarious conditions (Ledo 2013, Durán 2008, Cielo and Céspedes 2010). Access to potable water is clearly shaped by Cochabamba's spatial segregation,<sup>1</sup> as in the southern zone of the city only 22% of people have access to the public system of potable water distribution (Marston 2015).

In most of the neighbourhoods where the state does not provide people with access to potable water, people collectively generate their own strategies to get access to this resource, such as drilling water wells or buying from water trucks. Simply put, in these zones access to water is communally managed. Although scholars such as Hurtado-Tarazona (2018) have shown that often citizens resort to private governance schemes due to lack of trust in the government, in the case of Villa Chaquimayu, the communal management of water must be understood as a direct response to the absence of the state. In the academic literature, the Bolivian schemes of communal management of water are a constant subject of debate. For some scholars, these communal mechanisms represent alternative and sustainable models of water distribution, whereas other authors are skeptical about the sustainability of these systems (Linsalata 2014, Marston 2015, Walnycki 2015). Lucia Linsalata (2014), for instance, argues that communal management of water in Bolivia is more democratic and fair than public or private administration because communal institutions are not oriented to create economic or political profit but to improve people's lives. On the other hand, Andrea Marston (2015)

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<sup>1</sup> During the early 2000s, Cochabamba gained international attention for the 'Water Wars' events. The Water Wars were a series of protests, road blockades and riots that forced the government to stop a plan to privatise Cochabamba's water supply. Many scholars consider these events as an example of collective action able to stop neoliberal globalisation (Kruse 2005, Lazar 2007).

considers that marginalised communities in Bolivia cannot successfully provide people with access to water due to environmental problems and economic constraints.

Villa Chaquimayu is one of the illegal neighbourhoods where the state does not provide people with access to potable water. To cope with this situation, in 1992 the inhabitants of Villa Chaquimayu founded a Water Committee,<sup>2</sup> an institution solely oriented to find their own mechanisms to get access to water. Nowadays, Villa Chaquimayu's Water Committee (henceforth V.C.W.C.) provides water to 140 households.<sup>3</sup> To become members of this committee, residents must buy an (approximately) 1000 dollars membership (Mantilla 2018). In 2014, the members of V.C.W.C. decided to build a communal water well. Today, this well enables members to get access to this resource on a regular basis. In practice, however, water distribution through this well faces numerous technical and economic problems. For instance, the quality of water is far from optimal, the amount of water provided is not enough to suffice people's demands, and caretaking activities are constantly needed. Thus, administering this water well is not an easy or straightforward task. To deal with these problems, the Water Committee has a directive board consisting of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer and three counsellors.

The organization of V.C.W.C. largely depends on a series of general meetings, which are held once every two or three months. During these events both leaders and regular members can participate in decision-making processes, communal leaders are held accountable for their actions, and the most relevant issues of this institution are discussed. By using ethnographic data, this investigation analyses the role of communal meetings in the way people in marginalized neighbourhoods get access to water. The study of Villa Chaquimayu meetings is used to shed light on the dynamics and rationalities of local politics, legitimacy and governance in illegal urban settings. In this context, this article contributes to a corpus of current urban anthropology that discusses 'the relations between ordinary people and their rulers and the legitimacy of governance' (Prato and Pardo 2013: 98; Pardo and Prato 2018). The results show that meetings in Villa Chaquimayu are a complex articulation of unwritten rules, performativity, conflicts and affective ties that allow communal leaders to legitimize their decisions in the eyes of the rest of the community.

In this research, data was collected through the application of a set of qualitative methods, mainly interviews, participant observation, document analysis and small talks. The application of ethnographical-qualitative methods was the most suitable approach to collect this type of information, as these methods are 'intrinsically sensitive to the subtlety and complexity of human social life in a way that a quantitative approach cannot be' (Della Porta and Keating

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that around 200 similar organisations exist throughout the city of Cochabamba (Linsalata 2014), and it is estimated that between 56 and 67 percent of water provision in the city depends on these institutions (Walnycki 2015).

<sup>3</sup> Many people in Villa Chaquimayu cannot afford or are not willing to become members of this Water Committee. For them, gaining access to potable water is far more difficult. These people depend on the work of aguateros (water trucks) that sell water in marginalized areas throughout the city. The service provided by aguateros is far more expensive than that provided by the Water Committee. Furthermore, the quality of water provided by aguateros is often extremely bad.



2008: 300). Participant observation was the main method of data collection in this investigation. The relevance of this technique is that it allows researchers to analyse social dynamics directly at the scene. In the words of Tylor et al.: ‘no other method can provide the depth of understanding that comes from directly observing people and listening to what they have to say at the scene’ (Taylor et al. 2015: 104). In this research, participant observation was used to collect data about language, space and power relations during, before and after general meetings. Extensive information about the ideas, narratives and practices people use to get access to water in the neighbourhood was also collected.

The structure of this article is as follows. First, I discuss the relevance of studying communal meetings in illegal urban settings. Second, I analyze the cultural rationalities and unwritten rules that shape people’s participation in Villa Chaquimayu general meetings. Third, I analyse how general meetings are used for legitimizing the actions of communal leaders. Fourth, I discuss the main characteristics of people’s agency within these meetings. Finally, I analyse the role of conflicts and affections in the dynamics of communal meetings.

### **The Analysis of Meetings in Illegal Urban Settings**

Villa Chaquimayu is a neighbourhood located in the southern zone of Cochabamba. The urbanization process of this neighbourhood was mostly promoted by a series of land traffickers who sold land and houses without title deeds in order to satisfy the housing requirements of poor people, thus this area is considered an ‘illegal settlement’ (*asentamiento ilegal*). Similar processes of informal urban development can be found around the world. According to Mukherjee and Chakraborty ‘capital has had a tendency of appropriating resources that seem to be vague in terms of ownership. So, appropriating resources that do not have a defined individuated right acquires legitimacy’ (Mukherjee and Chakraborty 2016: 78). For instance, in her analysis of post-communist Albania, Prato (2017a) has shown that informality leads to the creation of dual cities characterized by differences between legal and illegal areas. Cochabamba is a dual city where formal and informal zones are clearly segregated. Villa Chaquimayu belongs to the informal part of the city.

Given its legal status, the state has never directly taken the responsibility for providing potable water to Villa Chaquimayu’s citizens. The state, however, indirectly supports the work of Villa Chaquimayu Water Committee through two mechanisms. First, the state labels V.C.W.C. as a ‘legal institution’, which facilitates the participation of this institution in bureaucratic processes. Second, the state has indirectly supported some of the Water Committee’s projects for providing potable water to the zone (Mantilla 2018). Simply put, this committee operates in an illegal neighbourhood, but it is recognized by the state as a legal institution. V.C.W.C., therefore, operates on the boundaries between formality and informality.

Authors such as Walnycki (2015) and Medina-Zarate (2018) have shown that the distinction between formality and informality in South American cities in many cases is unclear. For instance, Medina-Zarate (2018) in an analysis about the characteristics of entrepreneurship in Colombia, shows that labour exploitation transcends the binary separation between formality and informality. In his own words, ‘workers in both the formal and informal sectors face similar demands on how they can be desirable to the neoliberal labour market’ (Medina-Zarate 2018:

56). Similarly, Walnycki has noted that in Cochabamba the state regularly allows informal institutions to flourish in order to fill the absence of formal basic services (Walnycki 2015). The boundaries between formality and informality in Cochabamba, therefore, are weak. The case of Villa Chaquimayu also illustrates the difficulty of using binary oppositions to conceptualize institutions in South American urban settings. This neighbourhood is considered by the municipality as an illegal settlement, yet the state indirectly supports its Water Committee.

It is important to note that in Villa Chaquimayu the activities of grassroots organizations such as its Water Committee are highly regarded among the population. In other words, the legality of these institutions does not affect their legitimacy. Scholars such as Pardo and Prato (2018) and Atalay (2018) have shown that people often tend to separate the legal from the legitimate. In the words of Pardo and Prato, it is necessary to distinguish between ‘the philosophical concept of legitimacy — intended as the basis of authority, founded on ruling by consent rather than by coercive power — and a sociological analysis of its diverse sources; that is, of ideological views and everyday-life apperceptions [...] of legitimacy’ (Pardo and Prato 2018: 3). The fact that Villa Chaquimayu is considered as an illegal neighbourhood does not mean that its inhabitants perceive the actions of grassroots institutions such as its Water Committee as illegitimate; on the contrary, in this zone the Water Committee has a lot of legitimacy and symbolic capital, whereas other official bureaucratic institutions are poorly regarded.

Understanding the way in which people get access to water in illegal neighbourhoods such as Villa Chaquimayu requires novel methodological perspectives. Considering the characteristics of this neighbourhood it becomes necessary to think beyond the formal-informal and legal-legitimate dichotomies. As Pardo notes, often ‘the boundaries [...] between the formal and the informal are blurred’ (Pardo 2012: 33) thus it is imperative to move beyond these dichotomies. Medina-Zarate argues that in order to reach this goal, it is necessary to shift to an analysis based on people’s experiences, as they shed light on the relation between ‘socioeconomic practices, individual and collective identities and global macro systems’ (Medina-Zarate 2018: 57). Ethnography is the best tool to achieve the goals proposed by Medina-Zarate, as it provides in depth understanding of people’s experiences and practices from their own point of view (Krase 2018). In the case of Cochabamba’s Water Committees, the ethnographic analysis of communal meetings presents a unique opportunity to analyse people’s experiences and ideas, going beyond the formal-informal and legal-legitimate dichotomies. As it will be shown in this article, the analysis of communal meetings allows us to comprehend the unwritten rules, conflicts and affections that underlie the way in which people get access to water in illegal neighbourhoods. The analysis of meetings, therefore, is a useful tool to understand cultural dynamics, local politics and legitimacy in illegal South American urban settings.

### **The Unwritten Rules of Communal Meetings**

The anthropological literature shows that communal meetings are not random or unimportant events. On the contrary, the analysis of meetings is a powerful tool to understand and analyse

cultural rationalities (Bailey 2008, Nuijten 2003, Schwartzman 2013). According to Schwartzman (2013), an anthropology of meetings conceptualizes meetings as ‘communicative events that must be examined as they are embedded within a sociocultural setting [...] as both a constituting and constitutive social form’ (Schwartzman 2013: 35). In other words, the way people behave in these events is shaped by cultural rationalities and, at the same time, communal meetings also help to construct cultural patterns. Understanding this double helix process is essential for analysing people’s practices, activities and narratives during communal meetings. In this section, I focus on the study of the cultural rationalities and rules that shape general meetings at Villa Chaquimayu. I argue that these meetings depend on a series of unwritten cultural rules related to space, language and people’s participation.

Villa Chaquimayu is located in the District 9 of the south zone of Cochabamba, one of the poorest areas in the city. The inhabitants of this neighbourhood have different origins and cultural backgrounds, nevertheless, they share quite a few general characteristics in terms of traditions and language. For instance, local people are bilingual, speaking both Quechua and Spanish in their everyday life, traditional Bolivian rituals are commonly practised, and autochthonous Bolivian clothing is widely used in daily life by females (men usually use more westernised clothing). As in most peripheral Cochabamba neighbourhoods, Villa Chaquimayu has serious problems in infrastructure, sanitation, living conditions and access to basic resources. Indeed, schools and medical centres in the zone are not enough to meet the requirements of the population, there are high levels of pollution, most inhabitants do not have legal property rights over their houses or land, most roads are dirt paved and steep, and the public system of potable water distribution is not present in the neighbourhood (Mantilla 2018). In order to cope with the lack of potable water distribution, the inhabitants of this neighbourhood founded a Water Committee, a self-managed institution that currently provides water through a water well to around 140 households. The organization of Villa Chaquimayu Water Committee depends on a series of communal meetings.

In the contest of Villa Chaquimayu Water Committee, community meetings are a space in which the most relevant issues of this institution are discussed, communal leaders are held accountable for their actions, and decisions are taken. General meetings are usually held once every two or three months. Assistance to these events is compulsory for every member of the committee. These meetings are usually divided into five different sections. First, the Water Committee’s secretary reads an attendance list, as members who do not attend must pay a penalty fee. Some people attend these events just to avoid the fine, whereas other members send a relative in their representation.<sup>4</sup> In the second section of the meeting, the president of the Water Committee gives a summary of the activities developed by this institution during the last months. The third activity of the meeting is called ‘*Rendición de Cuentas*’ (Accountability). This section is intended to make community leaders accountable for their actions by requesting

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<sup>4</sup> To facilitate people’s assistance, these meetings are held early on a Sunday morning, when people are usually free of other obligations. In March, 85 members attended the meeting, whereas 55 were absent. This was considered a ‘good attendance’ (*buena asistencia*), which is important for the actions and the decisions taken during the meeting to be considered legitimate.

that they give a detailed description and justification of their activities. The fourth activity is the collection of the monthly and penalty fees that each member of the committee must pay. The final section of the meeting is denominated as *Sección Orgánica*. In this part of the meeting the most relevant issues of the Water Committee are discussed and voted on.

People's routines and actions during Villa Chaquimayu general meetings are not random or arbitrary. On the contrary, participants perform their actions following a series of unwritten rules related to space, language and people's participation. First, space is not arbitrarily used but it is an instrument to represent the power relationships that exist in the Water Committee. Indeed, during community meetings the leaders of the committee occupy the centre of the stage, whereas all the other members are dispersed throughout the field.<sup>5</sup> People considered as important persons, such as former leaders, also occupy central spots. Second, people's participation in these events revolves around the symbolic figure of the Water Committee's president. During the meetings, the president is the one responsible for conducting the event. People willing to participate must ask the permission of the president to talk by raising their hands. Third, language is a relevant symbolic element. In the meetings, the Quechua language predominates, and Spanish is used just occasionally. This, however, has not always been the case. In the past, Spanish was the predominant language in these events. The switch from Spanish to Quechua follows a trend of revitalization of the Quechua language and identity that came after the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia (Hentschel 2016, Gustafson 2017). In this context, people in Villa Chaquimayu constantly interpret rules regarding what is possible and what is not in the context of communal meetings. In other words, there are certain cultural barriers that prevent regular members from occupying the centre of the stage, conducting the event or speaking solely in Spanish.

### **The Meeting as a Formal Game**

In the academic literature, the political implications of communal meetings are a constant subject of debate. According to scholars such as Wolford (2010), nowadays most communal meetings are based on an ideology of governance which privileges ideas of deliberation, equality and democratic decision-making processes. In this sense, communal meetings would be a space for democratic deliberation, in which every member of the community potentially has an important role in decision-making processes. Other scholars, such as Bailey (2008) and Nuijten (2003), have nevertheless shown that communal meetings are not necessarily spaces of democratic deliberation, as decisions are usually not made during the meetings but before and after these events. In this context, meetings would be a 'formal game' not centered in democratic decision-making processes but in performative practices designed to give

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<sup>5</sup> It is important to note, however, that during the *Rendición de Cuentas* section, the meeting follows slightly different rules. While the distribution of space in the general meeting reinforces the power relations between leaders and other members of the committee, in the *Rendición de Cuentas* this distribution of space does not reinforce power relations, as people who are in peripheral spots can freely criticize the work of community leaders and even request the dismissal of a leader. During the *Rendición de Cuentas*, therefore, the spatial distribution temporarily inverts the power relations existent within the Water Committee.

legitimacy to the organisations and to the people who participate in these events (Nuijten 2003: 53). Following Nuijten, I argue that Villa Chaquimayu's communal meetings function primarily as a 'formal game', where performativity, symbolic elements, and affective ties are used to legitimise the actions of community leaders.

First, the meetings of Villa Chaquimayu's Water Committee are supposed to be a space of democratic decision-making processes, where each member of the community is able to freely participate, criticize and vote. This system tries to emulate the practices of Bolivian miners' organizations, which are supposed to be democratic-based institutions. In practice, however, most decisions are taken solely by community leaders before the meetings. For example, during March's general meeting a debate took place about whether the water well's pump should be replaced or not. During the meeting, the president of the Water Committee explained to the other members the benefits and costs of replacing the old pump with new hardware. After a brief discussion, a voting process took place and the president's motion was approved by the community. In reality, the leaders of the committee had already arranged all the necessary details to replace the pump a couple of weeks before the general meeting took place. According to some community leaders, replacing the pump was a priority for them, given that the flow of water coming from the well had been diminishing. The main purpose of the debate and voting that took place in the meeting, therefore, was not to democratically decide what actions should be taken, but to legitimize the decisions taken by community leaders outside the meeting. The work of community leaders is legitimised by projecting an image of meetings as a space of deliberation and democratic decision-making processes.

The unwritten cultural rules that shape these meetings prevent leaders' decisions from being seriously contested. The importance of general meetings in Villa Chaquimayu, is therefore not only associated with the decisions that are taken during the meetings, but mainly with the fact that the activities and performances of these meetings give legitimacy to the decisions taken by community leaders outside these events. Simply put, the general meeting is a space used to consolidate and legitimise the work of community leaders. In this sense, Villa Chaquimayu's general meeting has several similarities with what Nuijten (2003) has called a 'formal game'. Nuijten (2003) shows that the meetings of *ejidos* in Mexico are usually a chaotic space, with little or no deliberation. Nonetheless, whenever members of external organisations attend these meetings people create a formal setting oriented to project a good image. Hence, the meeting itself becomes just a 'formal game'. In the case of Villa Chaquimayu, the general meeting is also a formal setting designed to legitimise the actions of community leaders in the eyes of the other members of the Water Committee.

It is important to note, however, that on rare occasions people can effectively participate in decision-making processes inside Villa Chaquimayu meetings. Indeed, people's voice is relevant during the *Rendición de Cuentas* section, when leaders are held responsible for their actions. This flexibility responds to a series of norms about what people can and cannot do during the meetings. The dynamics of the *Rendición de Cuentas* allow people the freedom to participate and criticise communal leaders. Villa Chaquimayu meetings are a formal game, which only on rare occasions allow people to participate freely on decision-making processes.

This point of view about communal meetings is quite relevant to the debate about the characteristics of local politics and governance in marginal urban settings in Latin America. Some scholars such as Lucia Linsalata (2014) argue that Cochabamba's water committees are very democratic institutions, as their organisation is the outcome of deliberations and democratic decision-making processes. In Villa Chaquimayu, however, these processes of debate and democratic decision-making are limited to rare occasions, as most of the decisions are taken directly by communal leaders outside the meetings. This does not mean that V.C. meetings should be labelled as chaotic or authoritarian events. As Youngs argues, certain forms of democracy that 'differ from prevailing Western norms should be encouraged rather than simply dismissed as a cloak for illiberalism or authoritarianism' (Youngs 2015: 140). Villa Chaquimayu's meetings represent a different form of governance which emphasize decisions taken directly by communal leaders outside the general meetings.

### **Meetings, Agency and Accountability**

It is important to note that although Villa Chaquimayu meetings are not a completely democratic space, the inhabitants of this neighbourhood are active agents who constantly try to find solutions to cope with the absence of potable water in the neighbourhood. People's agency, however, is shaped by some cultural rationalities that prioritize communal values over individual or democratic choices. People, in other words, have some degree of agency to change their living conditions, but this agency is shaped by cultural rationalities that prioritize communal work over individual choices and democratic decision-making processes.

The academic literature provides valuable theoretical concepts to understand this phenomenon. In his classic book *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, Giddens (1979) showed that agency is embedded within certain social structures. Ever since the publication of this book, the relationship between agency and structure has been a central element in academic debates. From a contemporary ethnographic perspective, the relationship between agency and structure has been studied through the microlevel analysis of social practices. In this regard, Ortner (2006) demonstrated that individuals have the agency to reach their goals regardless of social structures, but their goals are culturally-established and shaped by power relations. In recent years, scholars such as Lindsay (2018), Prato (2018) and Spyridakis, Dalkavoukis and Kokkinou (2018) have used ethnographic data about mundane practices to understand the complexity of social agency in contemporary urban settings. This type of data is a useful tool to understand the relationship between agency and structure from a microlevel perspective. In the words of Lindsay, the 'documentation of microlevel processes [...] extends our insights and allows controlled speculation on the processual relationship between agency and structure' (Lindsay 2018: 316). Following these authors and based on my own ethnographic data, I argue that people in Villa Chaquimayu have the agency to challenge certain social structures and cope with the absence of potable water in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, people's agency is still shaped by a set of different cultural ideas and rationalities.

One of the elements that better illustrates how agency works in Villa Chaquimayu meetings is the *Rendición de Cuentas*. This section of the meeting is specifically oriented to

hold community leaders accountable for their actions. During the *Rendición de Cuentas*, leaders have the obligation of presenting a report and a justification for their actions.<sup>6</sup> In March's general meeting, the treasurer was the first leader presenting his report, which basically was a description of the Water Committee's incomes and expenses over the last four months. The treasurer brought all the committee's money in cash to the meeting and made all his calculations manually in a book. Occasionally, other members asked questions and requested explanations, but, in the end, the report presented by the treasurer was accepted without major discrepancies. Once the treasurer's intervention ended, the president explained that the secretary (*secretaria de actas*) was not present in the meeting, and that she had been neglecting all her responsibilities by delegating her tasks to her daughter-in-law. This announcement was not well received among people, 'This is shameless, a complete disgrace', 'Each leader must work by himself *compañeros*. Nothing of replacements. If that's not the case, we should elect a new secretary', some said. The (delegated) secretary intervened to explain that her mother-in-law had asked her to take care of all the secretary responsibilities as a 'personal favour'. Then, she gave a brief report of the activities she developed as (delegated) secretary. The prolonged absence of the secretary caused discomfort among most members of the Water Committee, 'she has lost her authority as secretary, there is no more trust', 'According to our regulations if someone acts against our institution or the grassroots, she automatically loses her rights', other people said. Finally, the members of the committee agreed that a new secretary should be elected.

As can be seen, the *Rendición de Cuentas* is a space where regular members can express their demands and discomfort. It is even possible for people to request the dismissal of a leader who has not managed to fulfil people's expectations. Nevertheless, the *Rendición de Cuentas* is not only about accountability but also about processes of legitimisation. First, very often the reports given by community leaders are not a thorough explanation of their actions, but just a vague description. The treasurer's intervention in the March's meeting illustrates this point: even though he is the main person responsible for financial management, his intervention was quite short and vague. Second, in theory, all members of the committee have the right to question community leaders while they present their reports. Nonetheless, people usually take for granted whatever leaders say. Only in extreme occasions do people dispute communal leaders' actions. For instance, despite the fact that the treasurer manages the committee's finances manually (he does not use any software but brings the committee's money in cash to the meetings), people usually take for granted whatever he says, without deep criticism. Deep criticism is only present in certain occasions, for instance, when community leaders neglect their activities or are suspected of corruption. In these occasions regular members have the agency to change the structural conditions of this institution. Most of the time, however, people act in a collective way by accepting communal leaders' directions.

To sum up, from a microlevel perspective, people in Villa Chaquimayu have some degree of agency to change their living conditions, but this agency is shaped by cultural rationalities that prioritize communal work over individual choices. These reflections about agency are

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<sup>6</sup> The *Rendición de Cuentas* is only limited to general meetings. Accountability, in other words, does not take place in the field of everyday practices but in the formal setting of the general meeting.

important to understand urban governance in South American cities. According to Koechlin and Förster's definition, governance is related to 'relatively stable social spaces where actors, based on their respective agency, identify and address social problems through creative interaction' (Koechlin and Förster 2018: 365). In the case of Villa Chaquimayu, people's collective agency during meetings is what allowed for the construction and upkeep of the local water well. Urban governance and people's agency are closely interwoven.

### **Conflicts and Affections**

Communal meetings are not only limited to the meeting itself but also depend on a series of collective political practices and routines developed in the sphere of daily life. In the case of Villa Chaquimayu's Water Committee, meetings depend on the daily interactions and affective ties that members of this organization have before and after the meetings. Communal meetings, thus, are a form of everyday politics. In the academic literature, the notion of everyday politics is often used to analyse the daily activities that are somehow related to the control, allocation or use of resources (Vasudevan 2013). According to Kerkvliet, everyday politics involve 'people embracing, complying with, adjusting and contesting norms and rules regarding authority over, production of, or allocation of resources and doing so in quiet, mundane and subtle expressions' (Kerkvliet 2005: 220). In the case of Villa Chaquimayu, people's everyday politics encompass the activities that are directly related to access and distribution of potable water. This includes meetings, daily interactions and affective ties. In the following, I analyse the role of everyday politics in Villa Chaquimayu meetings.

One of the most striking events in the March's general meeting was the dismissal of the Water Committee's secretary and the subsequent election of a replacement. Since late 2016, the secretary started to neglect her obligations and stopped paying her monthly fees. During the March's general meeting, the absence of the secretary caused anger among most members of the Water Committee, as they considered that her actions did not match with the community service and self-sacrifice that is expected from neighbourhood leaders. Many people even suggested taking further actions against her, like cutting her water service and even suing her on the basis of fraudulent management while in office. The president of the Water Committee explained that her water service was already cut, but that she was possibly getting water through an illegal bypass. This announcement created more disconformity among people. Finally, the members of the water committee decided to dismiss the former secretary, giving her an ultimatum to present a report of her actions and return the Water Committee's money that was in her possession and electing a new secretary.

A couple of months prior to the March's meeting, the former secretary started to delegate all her secretariat responsibilities to her daughter-in-law, an 18-year-old girl. This fact can partially be explained because the responsibilities people acquire in communal institutions are not only assigned to individuals but also to families (Linsalata 2014). The secretary's replacement attended the general meeting. She explained that her mother-in-law asked her to take care of the secretariat activities as a 'personal favour', without giving her any explanation. The work of the secretary's replacement was well received by the neighbours. Some people thanked her for helping the community under the circumstances. Others even offered her the



position of secretary for good (she rejected the offer, stating that she was about to start classes at the university, so she could not handle the responsibility). A new secretary had to be elected. Two men were proposed as candidates for replacing the secretary. The first candidate was a former leader of the Water Committee who was eager to come back to office. The second candidate was a young man without any experience in neighbourhood politics. The election took place immediately, a show of hands was the voting mechanism, and neither of the candidates had the chance to speak or explain why they were the best candidates. In other words, people chose their candidate based only on their previous personal experiences with each contender. The result of the election was overwhelming. The former politician got only two votes, whereas the young man got the votes of all the other members of the committee. After being elected, the new secretary said that he did not have any experience related to this type of work. Some people responded that eventually he would learn. The new secretary and the former secretary's replacement held a series of meetings for the transition process.

When asking people why the results of the election were so overwhelming, the answers indicated that the former politician was very strict, meticulous and was not very tolerant of defaulters when he was in office. The new secretary, on the other hand, did not have any experience but he had a reputation as a good neighbour and as a tolerant man. The results of this election, therefore, show that neighbourhood politics in Villa Chaquimayu are widely determined by the affective personal ties existent between leaders and members of the committee. In her ethnographic study about the Sewöl ferry disaster in South Korea, Sarfati argues that there is a strong tendency to construct public opinion 'on assessments of morality, humanity and responsibility, rather than on legality and formal conduct codes' (Sarfati 2018: 71). The ethnography of Villa Chaquimayu brings out similar issues, as it shows that people construct their opinions based on affective ties. As one of my informants said, 'One must know how to deal with people. Here you cannot be very strict, because people would get mad at you. Politics is also about that'.

The affective side of politics has been well documented in the literature on local politics in Bolivia. For instance, Sian Lazar (2004), in a study about local elections in El Alto, found that when choosing a candidate, affective ties and personalist calculations are often more important than ideological positions or programmes of government. In a European context, Prato (2018) has argued that the legitimacy of rules cannot be reduced to a 'set of technical rules to be applied according to impersonal principles' (Prato 2018: 10); on the contrary, legitimacy depends on shared norms and values. In this context, 'the credibility of rulers builds on relations of reciprocal trust' (Prato 2017b: 118). In Villa Chaquimayu, family, friendship, cooperation and other affective ties among neighbours play a key role in neighbourhood politics. Local politics in Villa Chaquimayu's Water Committee, therefore, is not detached from the affective ties, practices and behaviour people have in their everyday lives.

This affective side of neighbourhood politics, for instance, plays a key role in the work of the treasurer and the technician of the Water Committee, as they are responsible for charging monthly fees and cutting water service to defaulters, respectively. In practice, these activities are not easily performed, as they can create conflicts and tensions between the treasurer/technician and other neighbours. These conflicts are not limited to the sphere of the

Water Committee, but they also have an impact on people's everyday relationships. In the words of the treasurer, 'If you try to do your job in a strict way, people get angry with you. They stare at you in a strange way when you are walking on the street'.

The results of the secretary's election also show that a neighbourhood leader can easily lose all his influence or popular support. In other words, the influential position communal leaders have inside the neighbourhood cannot be taken for granted. As Prato notes: the 'legitimacy of political and social order is not static; it is complex and changes over time' (2018: 13-14). In the case of the former politician who wanted to be back in office, his loss of support was determined by his rigorousness while in office. Due to his previous action as a communal leader, people were reluctant to have him back in office. In an article about politics and brokerage in Recife, Brazil, Martijn Koster has illustrated how a community leader can be 'burnt' or 'discredited for errors made in the realm of politics' (2012: 491). In the case of Villa Chaquimayu, it is also quite possible for a communal leader to 'get burnt' if he does not understand the affective foundations of local politics. Indeed, the election of a secretary clearly illustrates how dramatically communal support can be lost if a neighbourhood leader does not understand the cultural and affective links that surround meetings and communal politics in general. Friendship, family and other affective ties, therefore, are key elements in the way people in Villa Chaquimayu do local politics. Considering that one of the main challenges of current democratic systems is the 'increasing gap between rulers and the ruled' (Pardo 2018: 16), the case of Villa Chaquimayu illustrates that the academic literature cannot neglect the affective side of politics.

## Conclusions

The analysis presented in this article has focused on Villa Chaquimayu Water Committee's communal meetings in order to shed light on the dynamics and rationalities of access to basic services, local politics, legitimacy and governance in illegal urban settings. This article shows that the analysis of meetings is a powerful methodological and theoretical tool in understanding the intricacies and rationalities associated with communal politics, especially in areas where the binary separation between formality and informality is unclear, as the analysis of meetings allows us to understand people's perspectives and ideas about this phenomenon. While in the academic literature Cochabamba's water committees are often depicted as exemplary democratic institutions, through the analysis of communal meetings this article shows that the organization of Villa Chaquimayu Water Committee is far more complicated as it is influenced by a set of different cultural ideas and rationalities, which are not always directly related to democratic decision-making processes. Indeed, unwritten cultural rules, power relations, legitimization processes, conflicts and affective ties are often more important than individual or democratic values.

The social function of Villa Chaquimayu's Water Committee should not be neglected, as this institution plays a key role filling the gaps the state has left in potable water distribution. Indeed, people in Villa Chaquimayu use their Water Committee to find their own mechanisms to get access to this resource and cope with the absence of the state in potable water distribution. This article has shown that in Villa Chaquimayu communal meetings are a key element of the

way people organize their access to potable water. The analysis presented in this article shows that in Villa Chaquimayu meetings are shaped by four interwoven elements: First, a series of unwritten rules, practices and routines, which reflect both the power relations existent within this organization and macro processes such as the policies of the revitalization of the Quechua language. Second, community meetings function as a 'formal game' (Nuijten 2003), in which an image of meetings as a space of democratic decision-making processes is projected to legitimize the actions of community leaders. Third, people's agency within meetings is not individual or democratic, but collective. Finally, conflicts and affective ties among neighbours also play a key role in the way people do politics in communal meetings. Friendship and family ties shape people's expectations and actions both in and outside communal meetings. Neighbourhood leaders who do not consider these elements will lose their political legitimacy. In this context, Villa Chaquimayu meetings are an articulation of different political practices, performativity, conflicts and affective ties that enhance communal values and allow communal leaders to legitimize their decisions in the eyes of the rest of the community.

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## ***Formalities and Informalities Through Community Policy Forums (CFPS) and Social Networks in an Era of Transformational Politics in South Africa<sup>1</sup>***

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This article is about transformational politics in South Africa and the ways in which formal and informal communication, through ‘rule makers’ and ‘rule enforcers’, takes place by means of cell phone-based social and official networks. There is a recognition here that while the concept ‘informal’ has its origins in unlicensed trading in southern Ghana, its recent application brings out a more poignant aspect to its prevalence. I contend here that whether it is about setting up make-shift stalls amidst licensed shops or mobilizing resources as a survival strategy, stealing to survive, or forcing integration by building a shack in developed urban spaces, the common factor among them is that they generally serve as acts of defiance against the state. The evidence in this paper reveals the early anticipation, since 1994, of alleged rising levels of criminality in post-apartheid South Africa and for the need to formalize incorporation of urban residents into Community Policing Forums (CPFs). It is through an assessment of these factors that informal and formal discourses need to be analysed. What emerges here, through illustrations of formal and informal communications, are two issues juxtaposed to each other: racial strains and animosities of the past, implicitly resurfacing to show up the inefficiencies of service delivery in the post-apartheid state, and the inter-dependencies among the dominant racial categories.

**Keywords:** Community Policing Forums in South Africa, transformational politics, crime and criminality, formal and informal discourses.

### **Introduction**

In post-apartheid South Africa, since 27 April 1994, political transformation was specifically related to a radical shift away from White domination to broader inclusiveness, with the intention to embrace all previously repressed population categories on equal terms. South Africa’s racial hierarchy, legislated during the apartheid era through the Population Registration Act of 1950, constituted in descending order, Whites, Coloureds (people of mixed descent who had voting rights during most of the apartheid era), Indians (originating in India and without voting rights) and Africans (from nine ethnic categories without any voting rights).<sup>2</sup> Academic interest in post-apartheid transformation emerged in areas of macro-based issues such as the national transformational agenda (De Wee 2016), economic transformation and neo-liberalism (Bond 2000), transformation in higher education (Reddy 2006) and, among others, the role of trade unions in political and economic transformation (Budeli 2012). Policies and actions that emanated from institutions that framed and guided these

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<sup>1</sup> A draft of this article was first presented at the Conference on ‘The Informal and the Formal in Times of Crisis: Ethnographic Insights’, held at the University of Peloponnese, Corinth, Greece: 7-9 July 2017, co-organised by the International Urban Symposium-IUS, the IUAES Commission on Urban Anthropology and the University of the Peloponnese. I wish to thank Professors Italo Pardo and Giuliana B. Prato for encouraging and guiding me through the anonymous Reviewers’ comments.

<sup>2</sup> In the decade prior to 1994 the African National Congress (ANC) led the struggle against apartheid to unite Coloureds, Indians and Africans under the rubric of ‘Blacks’, subsequently reinforced in the Employment Equity Act of 1998, and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 2000. But the reality now continues with selective preference of Africans through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) policies for jobs and promotions.

processes continue to operate as key instruments of transformation at the formal institutional and legislative levels. Collectively, their aims are to entrench the process of democratisation on a non-racial basis. But beneath the veneer of this process there still prevail the challenges of integration and acceptance across ethnic and racial backgrounds that are better understood in terms of the informal relations among citizens of South Africa. What prevails at a formal level for public consumption is often not in sync with what prevails privately on the ground at an informal level. The ongoing dynamics between public and private in the context of formal and informal inter-racial relations in post-apartheid South Africa requires at least some interrogation.

The re-emergence of the informal-formal dichotomy over the last decade has brought forth more contemporary nuances that add to its earlier emergence in the 1970s. Keith Hart's (1973) provocative paper on the substantive migration of the Frafras from Northern Ghana into urban areas of Southern Ghana focuses on their entrepreneurialism outside of the registered formal sector. His ideas instigated significant debates globally and challenged some of the implicit notions that appeared to be inherent in his paper — such as whether the informal economy was independent of the formal economy, and whether the characterization was appropriate enough. Ray Bromley's (1979) editing of a collection of papers on 'the informal sector' facilitated an interesting array of ideas that lent itself to a challenging international discourse that stemmed from Hart's seminal paper. It raised a core issue about dualist notions of economies the world over as well as the integration and functionality of the marginalized masses to the mainstream national and international economies (Gerry 1979). Centring on economic activities, alternative concepts such as 'petty commodity production', 'unenumerated sector' and 'marginalization theory' revealed inaccuracies inherent in the dualist paradigms (Bromley 1979, Moser 1979, Gerry 1979). Collectively, these papers provide apt demonstrations of the interconnectedness between the formal and the informal. There is a somewhat juxtaposed resonance here in an earlier study by Becker (1963, cited in Müller 2015) on 'moral entrepreneurialism' — which introduced ideas on the 'rule creator' and 'rule enforcer'. The concept was revisited by Müller from 2010 onwards, culminating in a publication on cannabis dealers in Rotterdam, Netherlands (Muller 2015). More recent contributions to the formal-informal dichotomy adopt this perspective as well. But they serve as valuable contributions to the notion by focusing upon adherence or defiance by people to the political conditions that they encounter in varying situations (Gopfert 2012). This article adopts the view that whether people create a make-shift counter to set up an unregistered enterprise, or whether they build a shack in a squatter camp, such initiatives constitute acts of defiance against the harsh conditions that they have to live with.

Subsequent research by writers such as Pardo (1996, 2012) and Spyridakis (2012) place significance on the issues of localized patterns of 'moral entrepreneurialism' in at least two contexts. The first is of integration through acquisition of citizenship rights in Western European countries, and the other of an ongoing process of marginalization of the working-class people instigated by exogenously invested capital in places such as Naples and Piraeus. In these places there are different patterns of moral, social and spiritual capital upon which local inhabitants depend for their survival against either declining incomes or inhibited

through their statuses and negation of rights. While their informalities are often directed against the state as political defiance, it is the fabric of this tripartite resource base that provides sanction against the edging towards an anarchic state. Through protest actions in countries such as Italy and Greece, authorities have remained constantly engaged in reviews and correction actions to address these issues. Marginality in South Africa, as confronted by the marginalized, and as perceived by the materially well-off, has over the last two decades dithered over possibilities of anarchy, with race, privilege and exclusion being collectively posited as the defining factors within a state in turmoil. Such a perspective has become a defining factor in South Africa's post-apartheid (post 1994) transformation. Against the background of the concepts mentioned above, it is pertinent to view the state as the rule-creator, and to view the tax paying residents in suburban areas as an extension to the rule-enforcers — the police and Community Policing Forums with people from the informal settlements as those who transgress the rules by trying to enforce their integration in built-up residential areas through impermanent shack dwellings. But since 1994 in the post-apartheid state, public discourses and the written word were being radically transformed. However, within the context of informal communications and private feelings such resonance is neither axiomatic nor accessible to public scrutiny.

In a racially, ethnically diverse cum divided country such as South Africa, there are inherent expectations for characterisations and perspectives of 'the other' (outgroups) to be couched in formal and informal referencing. The formal and the informal are responses to social as well as legal expectations. What is projected as formal in public domains is what is expected of law-abiding and sensitive citizens, while what is spoken or written about through close-knit and private networks is viewed as informal. The problem, one among many, however, is a presumptuous position that there is unanimity in beliefs about the challenges to which South Africans are currently exposed. Formalities are defined here as adherence to acceptable norms and protocols, as set out by the rule creators, that may have legal implications or social repercussions if they are considered unacceptable deviations from legislated cum socio-political expectations. Cautionary measures are essentially around racial and ethnic sensitivities. In formalities that are governed by legislation in racially diverse populations, adhering to protocol remains a relatively safe mechanism that submerges the myopic, racist, ethnocentric or anti-social tendencies in individuals' personalized beliefs. They become compliant to rigidities that 'stick to the rules' and therefore remain out of the ambit of litigious possibilities. On the contrary, informalities are viewed as quite the opposite in that they serve as casually spoken words or written communication that portrays socially bounded in-group identities. In informalities, the in-group mentality among like-minded people create a space for issues such as the myopic, racist, ethnocentric or anti-social sentiments to be shared either as jokes, in casual conversations best understood among themselves, or seriously articulated as their reality. Dangers of being publicly exposed and falling prey to unconstitutional behaviour lay with wireless digital technology's social networking forums — where the casual sharing of information has the potential to create misplaced notions of sharing ideological views as well. In networks that accommodate a multiracial membership with conflicting historical experiences and ideological positions,



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there is unlikely to be unanimity in political beliefs and, for that matter, references to people in general. The innumerable cases served against people all over the world for offensive texts, posters and videos through forums such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter, for instance, provide testament to this. In South Africa, one such platform is the Community Policing Forum, made effective through social networking via cell phone technology. Criminality, in the form of house breakings, car hijackings, murders and sexual assaults are widely viewed in racialized ways, with Africans being branded as the most frequent ‘culprits’.

Criminality and violence are characteristic in an emerging democracy such as multi-racial South Africa, where impoverishment was an inevitable corollary of power, privilege and positionalities that were racially determined and legislatively sanctioned in favour of Whites. Other racially classified categories, in terms of the 1950 Population Registration Act (now repealed), were Coloureds, Indians and Africans, who were decreasingly privileged in this descending order (Puttick 2011;<sup>3</sup> see also, Schutte 2013, Le Roux 2016). However, the demise of such a system does not necessarily mark an abrupt end to the role and responsibilities that were held by people who were most favoured during apartheid. Their expertise in management of resources and projects are the outcomes of years of skills training within an ethos of systemic processes that were and remain racially biased. Such privileged statuses have the inherent tendency to reproduce socio-economic segmentation and continuously polarize societies. It is when such privilege visibly contrasts with material depravity in marginalized communities that neighbourhood crimes begin to escalate.

Over the last decade, the middle-class to upper-middle class suburb of Westville, a borough in South Africa’s east coast city of Durban, has experienced a rapid escalation in criminality. House break-ins in the absence of their occupants have ‘advanced’ to violent home invasions in the very presence of their owners, and vehicle hijackings in driveways have become characteristic patterns of neighbourhood crimes in the suburb. However, Westville is no exception to South Africa, since similar crime levels are now rampant in most of the country. Their frequency has grown to more severe types of violence in attacks, particularly against those who have tended to either react defensively or escape to hide from criminal attacks. Criminal attacks in South Africa are calculated to take place within five minutes of its initiation since private security reaction time is between five and ten minutes. Neighbourhood reaction time occurs within a similar time frame, facilitated through android mobile phone social networks. Escaping to hide is tantamount to informing the neighbourhood social network, or alerting private security company, thereby endangering the criminal operation and enforcing a greater sense of desperation to ‘rob and run’. Improved reaction times by private security firms, local social networks and (to some extent) the South African Police Services, have exacerbated violence by criminals. This has given rise to a two-fold complementarity of heightened awareness and paranoia — towards outsiders walking or driving through the area. But the awareness and paranoia are overwhelmingly against Blacks (Puttick 2011), since statistics reveal that perpetrators are predominantly from this broad category.

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<sup>3</sup> Puttick’s thesis has a substantive reference list on White privilege in South Africa as well as relevant material on contemporary references and social discourses.

The perception was internationalised through the case of South African Brandon Huntley, who received refugee status in Canada in the year 2010. With greater enhancement, it exposed the divided perceptions of crime across race and class. While Huntley's lawyers had convinced an immigration review board in Canada that 'the ANC government was failing to protect the white minority from criminal violence perpetrated by black South Africans', at least 142 academics signed an open letter to Canada's Charge d'Affaires in South Africa denouncing their decision. They stated:

The outrageously distorted representation of contemporary South Africa does not square with the realities in our country, by any factual measure. While the crime rates in South Africa are high as a consequence of numerous interrelated factors — many of which are the working through of the past brutalization of our society by the system of white supremacy, and none of which relate to inherent criminal tendencies in black people — it is simply untrue that white people are being targeted disproportionately. Black South Africans are much more likely to be victims of crime, largely because they are less able to afford the protections and security measures which most white South Africans, as still privileged citizens, are able to acquire (reproduced from: Silber and Geffen 2010: 1).

The academics' response to the Huntley case is given credence by a South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) report, derived from the Department of Correctional Services survey of 2007-2008. In an ironical twist against the popular perception, the SAIRR statistics revealed that members of the so-called coloured population are incarcerated at a rate almost double that of their black compatriots. Evidence suggested that the higher prison rate could be attributed to the prevalence of gangsterism. The notion of gangsterism in South Africa includes extortion, violent tendencies towards local residents, and organised thefts — stealing cars, stealing from houses and businesses — as well as alcohol and drug abuse. In October 2007, around 80 percent of the South African prison population was made up of Africans, who also made up 79 percent of the entire South African population. The SAIRR stated, however, that the coloured population was incarcerated at a rate of almost 651 per 100,000 people. Significantly, this was almost twice the imprisonment rate of the African population, which was 342 per 100,000 people in 2007. White and Indian populations were incarcerated at the same rate of around 60 per 100,000 people (IOL 25 November 2008).

It is, however, the frequency of African-dominated squatter camps amidst established White and Indian dominated middle- and upper-class residential areas that forces people to view the situation through Black and White lenses. This is a mind-set that is essentially a carry-over from the social insulation that apartheid created through the 1950 Group Areas Act.

### **Transformational Politics and Changing Urban Landscapes**

Apartheid's demise was about destruction of the inhibitive constrictions that forbade the Black majority from freedom of movement and upward political and economic mobility. In the negotiated settlement that was reached between the ruling National Party (NP) and the

African National Congress (ANC), amidst other smaller political formations, there was enthusiasm that South Africa held the promise of a peaceful and hopeful future. The months immediately before and after the first general election were akin to a period of ‘political springtime’ — in which even the most conservative pro-apartheid forces within and outside South Africa were subdued by the sheer positivity that the negotiations had generated. But the euphoria of post-apartheid South Africa was short lived. After the first watershed general election of 27 April 1994, hope and enthusiasm about the future began eroding at a rapid pace as criminal activity was perceived to have rapidly risen. A major contributing factor to this was, in hindsight, the several measures that the post-apartheid state adopted to placate the expectant marginalized masses throughout the country, especially Africans. The ANC’s adoption of their populist Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP)<sup>4</sup> turned infamous within the first few years of their election. Firstly, the programme was too urban based, and the phenomenal costs were realized only after its introduction. Secondly, the Minister responsible for the RDP unwittingly found himself becoming more powerful than the country’s first democratically elected State President, Nelson Mandela, because the demand for urban housing and employment fell within his portfolio. Thirdly, the sudden draining of people from rural to urban enclaves meant severe challenges to service delivery expectations from a government that was only learning about the management of service delivery. Squatter camps became a serious threat to civil order and political stability over time, as social protest movements began demonstrating this. The RDP was thereafter gradually abandoned, although not openly through any form of public declaration.<sup>5</sup>

As the proliferation of squatter camps became more visible in urban landscapes, a concomitant belief began consolidating with the view that increasing criminality was a direct result of the post-apartheid state. Mark Shaw (2002) commented on the impact of policing and the high levels of crime in South Africa’s transformative state. In an assessment of the book by the publisher, Indiana University Press, it was stated that Shaw ‘shows how an increase in violent crime shapes society, police and government, and discusses possible solutions for the current crisis’.<sup>6</sup> Yet, fourteen years later in a joint paper with Aine Kriegler, Shaw (Kriegler and Shaw 2016) denied that there really had been an increase in South Africa’s crime rate since 1994. In a captivating article for the Mail and Guardian, South Africa’s leading investigative weekly tabloid, the denial through the caption alone was explicit: ‘Myth busted: Facts show South Africa has not become more violent since democracy’ (Kriegler and Shaw 2016). Their graphic representation of the murder rate from 1911 to 2015, for instance, was used to illustrate convincingly the point:

‘The murder rate did not begin rising in 1994 — exactly the opposite. There was a steady increase to the 1950s, a slightly more rapid rise to the 1960s, some years of relative stability, and then a massive spike to a peak in 1993.

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<sup>4</sup> A special Ministry of Reconstruction and Development was set up to deal with urbanization and transformational issues. They also produced a document called ‘The RDP’.

<sup>5</sup> Rampant corruption in state departments continue to impact negatively upon service delivery in South Africa.

<sup>6</sup> See: [http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=21249](http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/product_info.php?products_id=21249)

Then things turned around. From 1994 onwards, the murder rate fell by an average of 4% a year. Raw figures dropped from about 74 murders a day in 1994 to 49 a day in 2015, despite a population grown by about 40%. Internationally, trends this dramatic are rare and attract major research and theoretical attention. No one has yet noted or done much to investigate it in South Africa.

Murder rates today are not higher than ever. They have returned to about where they were in the 1970s. About 20% of the spike from the 1980s has been estimated to be directly attributable to political conflict. Periods of political and social upheaval tend to raise rates of all crimes, not just political ones. Recorded rates of other crimes like robbery and rape rose rapidly at the same time as murder did.'

A crucial question emerges from this assessment: Why do such perceptions about crime in South Africa, especially with Black Africans as the culprits, still prevail? The answer to this question is at least twofold. Firstly, it lies with the radical alteration of the urban landscapes brought about through an unbridled proliferation of African dominated squatter camps. Squatter camps are essentially about land invasions and holding landowners and the state to ransom by sheer force of numbers in their settlements. Intrinsic to this recurrent feature is the demand for free services, such as piped water, sanitation and electricity. Their relocation is a result of the absence of enabling rural development policies by the post-apartheid state, causing the impoverished African masses to relocate in huge numbers to urban areas. Most settlements are close to established working class but especially middle-class Indian areas. It is in these well-endowed neighbourhoods that employment and food is deemed to be readily available. But it is in the absence of free services, employment and restricted access to food that organised public violence often erupts and in which criminality has its roots. Such circumstances often serve as justifications for housebreakings, car hijackings and violent attacks against residents. These are the issues that feed into what is posited here as the second reason for the endemic violence in South Africa. People of all racial backgrounds rightly believe that criminality in the country is generally high. But during apartheid criminality was a recurrent and endemic feature in mainly working class and underclass areas, where living in the interstices of apartheid capitalism brought forth with it higher levels of tensions and violent contestations for scarce resources.

While the marginalised continue to live under the constant threat of attacks, as the letter of protest (mentioned earlier) to the Canadian authorities attest, the White, Indian and Coloured middle classes had not known as much about the alternative reality that prevailed among their African and Coloured fellow citizens in the townships and rural areas. Parts of Indian townships, too, were known for being no-go territories to outsiders and the police. The criminality that the urban neighbourhoods currently face is essentially a transference of the anger and mistrust that was originally contained within the working class and underclass rural areas and impoverished townships. It is now directed against the 'others' (Whites, Indians, Coloureds [and Africans]), whose material conditions are often excessively abundant against the marginalised masses. The racially-protected social boundedness, effected through the

Group Areas Act of 1950, operated especially in favour of Whites, and since 1994 began to disintegrate. Even the South African Police Force (SAPF), renamed South African Police Services (SAPS) after 1994, could no longer carry out their duties with the same racially exclusive pomp and valour. In Shaw's earlier publication (2002), his claim was that SAPS was not as effective as their predecessors were through the SAPF. The alternative reality, of the working class and underclass areas, had extended into the precincts of the privileged suburbs. The alternative reality, here, is about racially divisive laws that impoverished entire communities, and where impoverishment caused them to turn against one another.

In a group discussion in the area, two opposing comments somewhat captured the political divide between the privileged who view the problems through racially tinted lenses and the privileged who argue around historical factors that have shaped and determined contemporary realities nationally. As the frustrations of living under siege against criminal elements were raised with intense emotions, one respondent echoed these sentiments: 'This is precisely why apartheid should not have been dismantled. These bloody people know no bounds in turning stable situations into utter chaos.' A more politically aware resident of the suburb retorted: 'There is a history as to why this is happening here and all over the country. The chickens have now come home to roost. We have to deal with the situation with carefulness, otherwise we will have a race war that we will be responsible for.'

The comment above was directed at both participants within the group discussion and the wider neighbourhood. In the bodily gestures and finger pointing about where criminals appeared to be emanating from, the directions were indisputably towards squatter camps in Indian dominated neighbourhoods. Such gesturing was imbued with symbolisms of the past, albeit unintentional in their referencing, where undeveloped land is often invaded and where squatter settlements increasingly sprout. Their prevalence is linked to criminal activities, although not restricted to them alone. Neighbouring African townships too are deemed to contain 'reservoirs of criminals' who enter middle-class areas for the sole purpose of stealing and car hijacking. Ex-President Jacob Zuma's alleged complicity to corrupt governance and pilfering from state coffers is often made as a reference point to petty and organized crime, which is understood by many as a justification by those who are inclined towards criminal activity. Even the ideologically opposed residents were in agreement about one issue: that ex-President Zuma's pointed and continuous reference to the scams during White minority rule were desperate attempts to divert attention away from his own inability to serve as a political leader. Zuma's alleged association with corruption often tallied with the high levels of crime in the country. Unanimously approved by the group, one of the respondents expressed his perception of the criminals' intent for their actions saying, 'If the politicians at the top are stealing so much why shouldn't we?' It is against this background that the Community Policing Forum (CPF) emerged. Apartheid had crumbled by 1994 and the concept of CPFs was legislated by 1996. Such a measure was only possible through prolonged discussions by relevant state approved committees, which has to follow protocols and processes before promulgation. Implicit in this argument is the awareness by the post-apartheid state that the erosion of the robust euphoria and emergent environment was soon to become obsolete.

## Policing Neighbourhoods

It is an accepted fact in South Africa that the SAPS is incapable of controlling criminality without the assistance of local communities, hence the establishment of CPFs. CPFs were introduced through ACT 108 of 1996, thereby encouraging a close partnership between SAPS and local communities. An appropriate appreciation for the establishment of CPFs is best achieved through the background of crime statistics in South Africa. The table below provides statistical information on at least 27 crimes in the year 2015. Overall, the stats paint a more negative outlook for crime in the country: of the 27 crime categories presented in the data, only 11 had decreases in reported criminal activity from 2014 to 2015.

Category	2014	2015	Change
Sexual offences as result of police action	4 720	6 340	<b>34.3%</b>
Truck hijacking	991	1279	<b>29.1%</b>
Carjacking	11 180	12 773	<b>14.2%</b>
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	118 963	129 045	<b>8.5%</b>
Robbery at residential premises	19 284	20 281	<b>5.2%</b>
Murder	17 023	17 805	<b>4.6%</b>
Attempted murder	16 989	17 537	<b>3.2%</b>
Robbery at non-residential premises	18 573	19 170	<b>3.2%</b>
Common robbery	53 505	54 927	<b>2.7%</b>
Drug-related crime	260 596	266 902	<b>2.4%</b>
Malicious injury to property	117 983	120 662	<b>2.3%</b>
Stock-theft	24 534	24 965	<b>1.8%</b>
Burglary at non-residential premises	73 464	74 358	<b>1.2%</b>
Shoplifting	70 487	71 327	<b>1.2%</b>
Theft out of or from motor vehicle	143 801	145 358	<b>1.1%</b>
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	182 333	182 556	<b>0.1%</b>
All theft not mentioned elsewhere	363 517	360 541	<b>-0.8%</b>
Illegal possession of firearms and ammunition	15 362	15 116	<b>-1.6%</b>
Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs	69 725	68 561	<b>-1.7%</b>
Burglary at residential premises	259 784	253 716	<b>-2.3%</b>
Theft of motor vehicle and motorcycle	56 645	55 090	<b>-2.7%</b>
Common assault	166 081	161 486	<b>-2.8%</b>
Total Sexual Offences	56 680	53 617	<b>-5.4%</b>
Arson	5 458	5 127	<b>-6.1%</b>
Commercial crime	76 744	67 830	<b>-11.6%</b>
Robbery of cash in transit	145	119	<b>-17.9%</b>
Bank robbery	21	17	<b>-19.0%</b>

Figure 1. Biggest increase to biggest decrease in crimes 2015.

According to Africacheck.org, because of the time periods between reporting the data and the financial year it covers, SAPS crime data is often at least 6 months out of date. The data for 2015's stats covers April 2014 to March 2015. Africacheck also points out that uncertainty hovers over crime data as many crimes go unreported, the SAPS data is unaudited, and there is widespread mistrust of the SAPS itself. Source: <https://businessstech.co.za/news/government/99648/2015-crime-stats-for-south-africa-everything-you-need-to-know/>

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Levels of criminality in South Africa must also be viewed against perceptions and records about SAPS. A total of 2.206 million crimes were committed in 2015, up marginally — 0.09% — from the 2.204 million reported in 2014. The United Nations Organisation for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP 1999) locates an escalation of drugs in South Africa in the 1980s, a period of extreme political turmoil and challenge to the apartheid regime. The problems of drug control and crime prevention are exacerbated by numerous problems within SAPS itself; they range from corruption to complacency, tiredness and acting out of frustration. In recent years SAPS reported a substantial annual increase in civil claims filed for damages as a result of actions or omissions by its officials, and an even larger increase in pending claims. The 2014/15 SAPS annual report showed that pending claims stood at over R26 billion (R stands for Rand), which is equivalent to over a third of the SAPS budget. In 2014, the minister of police said that he was not satisfied with the number of civil claims made against the SAPS, and that increased police professionalism, coupled with compliance with the law and the relevant policies in place, should reduce the number of claims made. He had also instructed the national commissioner to address the issue of mounting civil claims, and the national commissioner instructed SAPS officials to comply with the law when making arrests or detaining someone, in order to avoid civil claims. There is a profound history to this contemporary situation, as Rakgoadi (1995) had argued. Rakgoadi averred that the country's transition to democracy required a radical transformation of all state institutions. In restructuring itself, the police institution had adopted community policing as part of its new vision of policing in South Africa. This vision included setting up community police forums at police stations throughout the country. The implementation of community policing through the CPFs has brought to bear the complexity, dynamics and diversity of this process and of social and political relationships at both the provincial and local levels, particularly in South Africa's wealthiest province, Gauteng. This situation, in turn, brought the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) situation to surface, since most were facing major challenges in the post-apartheid society. NGO problems ranged from lack of human capacity (owing to the gravy train) to lack of funding which threatened their very existences. During the 1990s foreign funders directed their funds to the democratically elected Government of National Unity, leaving very little for the NGOs.

Communities were obligated to enter into partnerships with SAPS in their processes of mobilising themselves into neighbourhood watch groups.<sup>7</sup> The norm is to encourage two people at a time to do day and night patrols on a roster basis. However much a siege situation prevails, all protocols ought to be observed. The public was warned to abide by the law and avoid situations akin to emotive outbursts or mass hysteria. There should be no direct confrontation with suspects or identified criminals, especially since they have a reputation for reacting violently. Hence, citizens' arrests are forbidden. Their first action in noticing anything suspicious is to call SAPS — mobilizing help from the community should only be done after SAPS presence in the area, followed by private security companies that patrol the area. The increase in crime has given rise to a proliferation in security company businesses

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<sup>7</sup> A version of the CPF rules can be accessed on: <https://reviewonline.co.za/131625/ethics-a-must-for-cpf/>

(Botha 2015). Many of these businesses have extended their services to improvements in home-based security, such as CCTV cameras and electric wire fencing. Residents have simultaneously increased other areas of home-based security such as spiked and/or barbed wire fencing, keeping vicious dogs and strengthening their burglar guarded doors and windows. Their vehicles, too, are fitted with anti-theft tracking devices, which are now made mandatory by the insurance companies. And insurance of household contents has become an equally big business venture.

### **Community Chat Groups and Social Networking**

Social networking through cell phone technology is by its very nature a formalized construct. It is a medium through which people may choose to remain officious and act in strict accordance with constitutional requirements. But the same medium, albeit formal, may also be used to communicate in casual ways which ignore the officiousness that such forums may require. The community chat group, formed especially as a response to the increased levels of crime in Westville, has two main functions. First, it keeps residents informed about suspicious pedestrians and vehicles passing through their areas, day and night. Second, it supports and keeps patrollers and the neighbourhood informed during times of criminal activity. Against the background of properties that are an average of 2000 square meters per plot and are surrounded by high fencing and sanctified by the adage that ‘good fences make good neighbours’, Westville residents remain a generally bounded community with minimum neighbourly communication. Vigilance is therefore enhanced through cell phone technology, through which people get to know the neighbourhood residents by name, but hardly ever meet with them on a personal basis. Social networking through cell phone technology therefore enables seeing people on the network through WhatsApp profile pictures and Facebook. More importantly, it also enables photographs of suspects and places, and information on incidents of theft and attempted or actual house robberies to be circulated whenever the need arises. However, photographing someone walking or driving motor vehicles can be provocative, and circulation of photographs without prior permission has legal implications. Such acts are known to have jeopardized convictions because of the prejudice that such circulation of photographs carries with it.

With the rise of racially mixed neighbourhoods, formal and informal discourses are interspersed through these networks, often manifesting entrenched exclusivist social orientations of the past and present, much of which has to do with endemic crime. While post-apartheid laws encourage mixed neighbourhoods, resistance to them at suburban levels remains. Peculiar patterns of mixed neighbourhoods emerged since the demise of apartheid. In White dominated neighbourhoods middle- and upper-class Indians, and to a lesser extent Coloureds and Africans bought in such areas for at least three reasons: security is perceived to be better; police are believed to respond quicker and with more commitment than in working class areas; and properties in White areas are substantially bigger. In Indian and Coloured dominated neighbourhoods where the properties are literally half the size, averaging 1000 square meters, there are mixed feelings about police commitment to crime control, and



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African dominated squatter camps prevail in ways that do not feature in White dominated neighbourhoods.

The sight of African pedestrians during working hours and after early evenings in each type of neighbourhood created different reactions in the social network groups. In White dominated areas, the social network is abuzz with messages of warnings and caution when unknown African pedestrians are seen. In Indian dominated neighbourhoods, it is a regular sight and therefore not as hastily circulated as a cautionary measure.

Herein lies a perception widely connected to the divide that attributes crime in the country either to historical inequalities based on White hegemony or to the conservatively inclined perception that criminality in South Africa can only be viewed through racialized lenses. It is in these issues that the formal and informal social networking through mobile phones manifests itself. Samples of texts from two WhatsApp networks draw a clear distinction between the formal (Patrollers network) and the informal — a social network that deals with ‘anything’, but also advertently serve as an extension to the patrollers network.

#### *Samples of Formal Communication*

In the Patrollers network there is a formality that distinguishes itself through the etiquette of formalized patterns of verbal and written communication. The pattern is encouraged since patrol groups are linked to police stations and by implication to state appointed prosecutors who are responsible for effecting charges against the arrested. Patrol groups communications may be of significance in the compilation of evidence against the arrested in court appearances, and are therefore devoid of derogatory remarks. For instance, on the evening of 19 April 2018, a report was circulated on the network that was strictly for patrollers and news about possible criminality. At 22.05 a report appeared about a possible house break-in. The report below was cautiously worded:

19 April 2018 (22h15): ‘Police have just arrived. This is a perfect example of phoning 10111 before putting it on neighbourhood watch. Owner of house pushed alarm for ADT (private security company) when they saw the intruders on their property but then somehow neighbourhood watch was notified before police, allowing the suspects to possibly get away.’

At 22h20 a suspicion was aired: ‘They will try somewhere else if they didn’t get in there. We need to be vigilant.’

The very next morning at 08h03, a response to the above appeared: ‘As per your suspicions D<sup>8</sup> [...], it looks like those five suspects hung around Circle Drive, all night, and eventually got an opportunity this morning. Held up resident in the driveway and took his vehicle. Thursday nights remain one of the criminals ‘working’ nights, come rain or shine. Thursday night and Friday morning Patrollers, in particular, please be extra vigilant during your shifts.’

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<sup>8</sup> Full names are avoided as an ethical commitment to those who contributed to this research.

2 May 2018, 20h35: 'Report from a Chiltern East Resident: 4 suspicious males in brown Nissan Sentra at cnr of Duncan and Blair Athol... they driving slowly and did 2 u-turns [...] still hanging around [...] please be aware.thx.'

2 May 2018, 9h43: 'OPEN GATES PROTOCOL': Just a reminder of our protocol for dealing with open gates while on patrol: 1. Do not stop in the driveway as there might be an ongoing incident and you do not want to escalate it or put yourself in danger; 2. From your car observe the gate and motor for damage as well as the verge and as far as inside the property as you can see for any intruders; 3. If it appears safe walk to the gate but do not enter the property and use your flashlight to check for movement in the property; 4. If there is a bell or intercom press in to try and make contact with the residents; 5. If they answer, identify yourself as being from the NHW and indicate that their gate is open; 6. Wait a minute to see whether the gate closes. If not contact the residents again; 7. If you could not make contact with the residents via the intercom, please note that the security company boards on the property gate or fence and post a message about the open gate, property address and security company name on the Patrol group [...].'

In each of the texts before the last one, the syntax and choice of words remained neutral and without reference to race. Such a level of cautionary language was the product of a process that included constant badgering by the more enlightened in the community to avoid racialized referencing in the texts. In the quoted texts below, however, the provocation by the less careful stands out against what is quoted above. The last text above provides clearer insight into the formality that is required of an officially recognized group linked to constitutional requirements and law enforcements. It is indeed in these texts that formality and protocols are required, especially for the legal implications they may carry.

#### *Samples from Informal Communication*

In the social network of the same neighbourhood there is a tendency among residents to be less careful and pointedly racial about their references to pedestrians and suspicious occupants in motor vehicles. The pseudonym 'BM' stands for 'Black Male'. It has become an important catch phrase with reference to suspects and the need to be vigilant. The texts below for instance, amplify the attitudes of those still inclined towards racial categorisations:

25 May, 16h39: '2 young BM walking up Milton with what looks like beer cans in their hands and looking into properties'

29 May, 20h59: 'Drunk black male pitlochry/RH

29 May 21h42: '2 drunk BM walking up Milton, following [...].'

8 June, 21h36: 'Drunk bm in Aberfeldy rd in transnet uniform'

28 May, 11h57: 'Large group of teenagers seen walking down at Pitlochry at Clackmanan when seen.'

12h25: 'I saw them also walking pitlochry wearing slops and casual wear probably going to the match'

And then a harsh retort:

'I don't see why a group of teenagers walking down a road or being casually dressed becomes a security issue. If they invade your home or harm you in some way it's another matter but walking on the road is not a crime as far as I know. Let's be reasonable.'

The reference to 'black males' serves as an important indicator about mindsets, about the racial divides that persist in a country that is still, rhetorically at least, trying to transcend racial barriers, who are the expected suspects in the area, and the constant need to remain vigilant. There are two issues that therefore remain intrinsic but juxtaposed to each other: racial and class differences. While the neighbourhood is becoming increasingly multiracial, relational attitudes remains distinctly racialized. They manifest mainly during rituals, family gatherings and religious festivals. Opposition is steadfast against Black home-based celebrations (including weddings and parties) with loud singing and music, animal slaughter during the Muslim Eid Al-Adha (animal sacrifice feast) at homes and at least two evenings per annum of noisy fireworks during the Hindu festival of Diwali. These events have acquired emotive slandering and oppositional racial and ethnic politics between those who observe and those who do not. In reactions through the social network, provocative statements such as 'Surely these people can respect others right to a peaceful neighbourhood', 'residential neighbourhoods should not be turned into abattoirs and slaughter houses', and 'Aren't Hindus confused and turning the festival of lights into a festival of noise?' bring out the tensions that surface among people with misguided feelings of privileged segmentation. While Muslims lost their battle to slaughter animals during Eid Al-Adha, Hindus remain protected by law to continue with fireworks displays and the busting of crackers. Apart from such festivals and social gatherings the social ethos in the neighbourhood is one of avoidance relations, especially in inter-racial socialisation and inter-religious socialisation.

### **Theft as a Form of Wealth Redistribution**

In the dynamics between established residents and neighbouring squatters, as well as residents from neighbouring working-class African townships, the situation is largely, though not entirely, about undeclared contestations between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Middle class residents are generally so materially privileged that they have unwittingly changed their areas into resource bases for the marginalized. On one level, they provide regular employment for women as domestic helpers and make gardening and other 'unskilled' or semi-skilled employment readily available for men. For those who care to find employment, albeit often at sheer subsistence levels of payment, work can be available. However, among a sizeable segment of the marginalized, survival by theft or trading in stolen goods has entrenched itself as a way of life. Acquisition of electronic goods such as laptops, mobile phones and televisions should morally speaking be sought through purchasing them. But among the poorly paid, the unemployed or those who choose to remain unemployed, there remains an

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encrusted segment who justify theft and the circulation of stolen goods through reference to past and present inequalities.<sup>9</sup> While White hegemonic rule up to 1994 was consolidated through racially divisive legislation, the Black-dominated post-apartheid state, at national, provincial and local levels, remains tainted by perceptions and evidence of corruption through lack of service delivery. A culture of entitlement prevails through land invasions and their forced occupation, a demand for employment through affirmative action policies and a tacitly approved space for the circulation of illegally acquired goods in African townships, squatter camps, taxi ranks and market places. Such entrepreneurialism is justified as a legitimate form of ‘redistribution of wealth’.<sup>10</sup> But it also demonstrates impatience and defiance against the prevailing political order. Theft, through the numerous ways that it takes place, is often understood by the thieves themselves as an act of wealth redistribution. In home invasions and car hijackings they are known to have told their victims that insurances will compensate them for their losses. One of the respondents in a group interview narrated his experience when he was forced to confront the home invaders: ‘They told me not to be foolish and fight, because they would shoot me. One of them was quite blatant: “the insurance will pay you when you claim, so relax”. I read in the paper last year as well how the hijackers told the guy that if he wanted to live he should not identify them, and just leave the rest to the insurance company.’

In all the incidents the perpetrators were African, and the victims were Indian and White. Their recurrence serves to reinforce racialized perceptions of criminality and criminals in the neighbourhood, although the SAIRR evidence is a demonstration to the contrary.

## Conclusion

Against the background of criminals and criminality in most White and Indian dominated neighbourhoods, it is not unexpected that the perpetrator-victim dichotomy remains racialized. This is so despite the fact that integration of the residential areas constitutes a radical shift away from the racial exclusiveness of the past. Observation of the formal, through adherence to the rule creators in the country, forbids such attitudes, although among the rule enforcers, especially among residents and their informalities, reference to Black Africans remains condescending. But the national statistics reveal an ironic datum which defies popular belief; namely, that Africans are the most inclined towards criminal behaviour in the country than other population categories. When viewed against the prosecutions of every 100,000 people in the four main population categories, people from the category ‘Coloured’ outnumber Africans. It is for this reason that the Patroller cum CPF networks most closely connected to the police avoid a racial description of the suspects sighted in the area. But it is in the cell phone-based social networking that residents feel free to racialize their discourses about their fears and anxieties. Herein lie likely answers to dynamics of transformational politics in South Africa and to the ways in which the formal and informal patterns of social networking interconnect to the political and social orders of the past and

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<sup>9</sup> Several interviews with African workers have revealed this as an option. Some among them are self-declared thieves.

<sup>10</sup> A term used by one of the respondents who claimed to do a livelihood through stealing only.

present. The complexity of the prevalent power relations is intrinsic to where and how people live, either in materially well-off homes or in make-shift structures in squatter camps. Among the established residents there is the recognition that for the state they are a significant segment of the country's tax-paying base; but among the residents of squatter camps there is a recognition that they are representations of the frustrated majority whose votes are crucial to the survival of the dominant political party. What emerges, either in the ways people communicate through the social networks or in how frequently they steal, is the articulation between the material and non-material means of communication. In either aspect, there is a profound statement made against the state for not being able to maintain law and order or not being able to demonstrate concern about the plight of the marginalized. This effectively constitutes a defiant challenge to the political status quo and demonstrates wilful intent to defy the state in the socio-political re-engineering of the post-apartheid state. When White and Indian middle-class residents demonstrate disenchantment with the state through patrol groups and social networking, and when the African marginalized invade and occupy land close to the established middle classes, they also demonstrate a close resonance to Pardo's (1996) reification of the relation of agency to organization and structure at macro and micro levels. Pardo's analysis, like LaPalombara's (1987) concept of 'defiance of the political status quo' and Sartori's (1976) 'polarized pluralism', unearths the dynamics of the middle classes against their neighbouring squatter camps in Westville as well as the remainder of the country's middle-class neighbourhoods. Against the disorderliness and seeming self-destructive tensions in South Africa's expanding urbanism there is also a coexistence of cordiality and acceptance in an era of transformational politics, however disconnected they may be from contemporary realities. Both residents and squatters demonstrate their inter-dependence through the need for labour, and squatters are known (clandestinely) to lead both patrollers and police to the arrest of suspects. Hence, established residents and squatter camp residents have become inter-dependent resources for each other, albeit within perennial protests against an uncreative complacent state.

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## The Strategic Use of Heritage Representations: The Small Towns of Podlasie Province

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This article stems from a project researching good practices in the use and re-use by small towns of their cultural heritage. Heritage representations and related participative activities may contribute to urban renaissance, or completely fail if there are no favourable conditions. The selected case of Podlasie Voivodship, a Polish province on the border with Lithuania and Belorussia, represents a peripheral border region. Its settlement is to quite a large extent represented by small towns on the edge of the countryside. To test our hypothesis that towns in border regions across Europe use heritage in their development strategies and that these are comparable through the perspective of the use and reuse of the heritage, the representations of selected settlements were analysed: Tykocin, Supraśl, Hajnówka with Białowieża and Wysokie Mazowieckie. The authors are historians, and combine contextualization with observation of selected cases inspired by visual ethnography. In addition, the general public's understanding of heritage has been explored through the analysis of 248 questionnaires answered by a focus group of secondary school students from Wysokie Mazowieckie. The findings presented in the article contribute to the debate on the role of Creatives in towns from the historian's perspective.

**Keywords:** Small towns, Creatives in small communities, cultural heritage, development strategies, Podlasie (Poland).

### Introduction

The small towns on the Eastern borderland of the European Union are changing its outlook. They are now better furnished with sidewalks, roundabouts, benches and fountains, making the public places more comfortable. Despite these innovations, their rural urbanism remains distinctive, showing regional historical traditions.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it is promising to observe and compare the ways the cultural and historical heritage is being intentionally used, re-used and presented in combination with their self-identification and in strategic development plans. Also comparable are the activities of creative people in small towns.

This article is an offspring of a larger comparative project in progress.<sup>2</sup> In the core regions of Europe such strategies are usually linked with a town's adaptation to tourism and are accompanied by the very visible involvement of various stakeholders as well as public initiatives. We expected to find strategies articulated in published official texts and participatory activities carried out by groups of creative individuals in the peripheral border regions of the EU as well. To test this hypothesis, we chose the Podlasie Voivodship. It is not only close to the state border, but also in the border zone of Orthodox and Latin Christianity. It is a region

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where Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Greek Catholic and Old Believers' shrines can be found, along with small Tatar settlements dating from the seventeenth century. The architecture and urbanism of the towns visibly relates closely to the rural hinterland, particularly when compared with the south-west of the country. All this indicates that Podlasie does not correspond to stereotypical ideas about the Polish regions. On the other hand, with its multi-ethnic setting it has a lot in common with other border regions in Europe, particularly those on the edge of the European Union (Klusáková 2008). We expected to identify creative strategies in the instrumental use of the heritage of small towns and related participative activities.

Visual ethnography together with sensual sociology became the primary methodological inspiration in this article. These rather young research fields which have influenced urban anthropology — itself a sub-disciplinary late-comer (Prato and Pardo 2013: 80-87) — may be useful also for historians. For the perception of space, the senses are important, in the first-place vision. While sound and smell are inescapable, taste is one's own decision. Seeing is also a matter of decision, as one can choose what to look at and how to look at it. One can look, stare, view, gaze, or just take a glimpse. John Urry has shown how important the senses are, particularly the tourist's gaze, for the construction of the image of the city (Urry 2003: 388-397). Observation is the result of consideration, of a procedure taken in time, long or short term, single or repeated. Like Jerome Krase, we can find them all useful to get in touch with the place and the people (Krase 2012, 2018). Repeated short term visual observation in small towns is a rewarding exercise in a similar manner to that of the ethnic districts in large metropolises experienced by Jerome Krase. For a historian, however, the visual does not overshadow the importance of the text or of dialogue with an actor or stakeholder. Often the written source is analysed before the visual observation. In this article we combine the contents analysis of historiography, websites and official documents with equally important visual observations made by residents and the repeated short-term visits of an external observer. The authors benefited from informal conversations and discussions running on the internet, as in small and remote communities it was not possible to carry out formal interviews.

Small towns are defined in recent geographic and sociological studies by the number of inhabitants on the threshold of 20,000 (Kwiatek-Soltys 2017; Sztando 2017; Klusáková et al. 2017: 11-23). Together with this, one may use economic criteria of income or taxes, and urbanist criteria formulated by architects. A small town is 'midway between big cities and rural regions, constitutes a secondary centre whose role is to serve a variety of minor or similar settlements, and which lacks the typical infrastructure of a metropolitan or central urban area' (Del Espino Hidalgo 2017: 118). Such towns do not offer all the urban functions, and to settle certain issues the citizens have to travel to a town higher in the hierarchy. Yet another option is the self-identification of the place, based on self-evaluation by its inhabitants and its managers: how they feel and represent the town's urban functions or rural character, its identity and status (Mainet 2011). Such typology would consider their role in the micro-region, and their supra-local relations. Hélène Mainet recognizes two principal positions of small towns: 1) They are in the vicinities of large towns, which highlight that they are bringing all the countryside

benefits to the town: greenery, silence and small society. They function mostly as a dormitory, since the population commutes to work. 2) Small towns are located deeper in the region. They emphasize their function as urban centres for their hinterland, micro region or even a larger region. They offer various urban services: administration, commerce, social and cultural activities, health care, schooling, entertainment and supralocal connections. Mainet built her arguments on French experience and related identification to the attraction of the place, while Andrzej Sztando pointed to the importance of supralocal influences and relations (Sztando 2017: 110-120; Mainet 2011: 75-89). In our article we combine these perspectives, although the town's own self-evaluation as a small town is primary.

### **Case Studies**

In this empirical part of our article we first introduce the chosen region, Podlasie Voivodship, its capital Białystok, and then observations through visual ethnography and contents analysis of images and texts on the small towns we have selected to represent the case: Tykocin, Supraśl, Hajnówka with Białowieża in the coterminous primeval forest and Wysokie Mazowieckie. In order to protect the anonymity of our informants, we do not, in the following case studies section, include excerpts from interviews and conversations. In the case of a relatively small regional society where everybody knows everybody and where heritage is very sensitive, it is virtually impossible for the statements to be rendered anonymous.

#### *Podlasie Province: A region of small towns and of multi-ethnic heritage*

Podlasie is one of 16 voivodships established in 1999 after the administrative reform. It is situated in the north-eastern part of Poland and borders Lithuania (an internal European Union border) and Byelorussia (an external EU border). The province is organized in three 'urban' counties (Białystok, Łomża and Suwałki) and fourteen 'rural' counties, each of which has its principal urban centre. Podlasie is one of the largest provinces in Poland (with over 20,187 square kilometres) and one of the least populated (about 1,200,000 inhabitants). More than half of the population (over 700,000) live in cities and the largest urban areas, mostly in Białystok, Łomża, Suwałki and Augustów. Agnieszka Kwiatek-Soltys identified 685 small towns (reaching the threshold of 20,000 inhabitants) in the whole of Poland for the year 2012, of which thirty-one were in Podlasie, while the province's urban network creates forty towns in total (Kwiatek-Soltys 2017:25-240).

Podlasie can be perceived as offering traditional life in harmony with nature and respect for the landscape. The panorama is rather flat with an abundance of forests, rivers, ponds and lakes. There are four national parks in the province (Białowieża, Narew, Wigry and Biebrza), three landscape parks (Suwałki, the Knyszyńska Forest and the Lower Narew River Valley), eighty-eight nature reserves and fifteen protected landscape areas. It is not surprising that it is named the 'Green Lungs of Poland'. The landscape attracted photographers and filmmakers, who co-created the image of the region. Among them, the most prominent artist specializing in landscape photography was the late Wiktor Wołkow (1942-2012), who dedicated his life to the

exceptional beauty of the region. He created over 100 photography exhibitions, as well as many photo albums, of which the best known are 'Podlasie', 'Supraśl', 'Forest' and 'Stork'. His 'Magical Podlasie' exhibitions received many awards at home and abroad. Thus, he contributed to the growth of tourism.

The Podlasie Province (Voivodship) challenges the stereotype of Poland being a country only of Catholics. Numerous places of interest, both sacred and secular, mark its history and give an insight into the area's cultural and religious diversity, which reflects the many changes and territorial divisions the region has undergone. Churches, both Catholic and Orthodox, wayside shrines and crosses, wooden manors and peasant houses preserve the authentic spirit of the old eastern borderlands as a visual image. The local people cultivate its traditional folk handicrafts; for example, artistic blacksmithing, pottery, sculpture, willow-weaving, lace-making and embroidery. The region is also famous for its Easter traditions of weaving Easter palms and ornamenting eggs (*pisanki*). It has created an exceptionally vibrant cultural mosaic and characteristic climate of openness and hospitality. Visitors are always amused by the local traditional wooden architecture, particularly on the route from Białystok to Hajnówka and Białowieża with its beautiful churches and houses ornamented with sophisticated wooden carvings. The town of Hajnówka and its county — as a gate to the Białowieża forest — is distinguished by its wood products, handicrafts, herbs and forest fruits. Podlasie is nowadays well known for its cultural diversity displayed in a landscape dotted with many sacral monuments and cemeteries of all faiths: beautiful, impressive and significant Christian churches, representing various architectural styles. The amazing eighteenth century former Carmelite Monastery on Wigry Lake and a Jesuit complex in Drohiczyń, to name just two Catholic shrines, attract many visitors. Supraśl Monastery, the Holy Mountain Grabarka, and the *Trail of Orthodox Churches*, with the exceptional beauty of its wooden architecture, are unique. Poland's only historic mosques are here (Kruszyniany and Bohoniki), and a few rare well-preserved synagogues (one of the oldest in Tykocin) and — not so famous, yet quite amazing — the molenna of the Old Believers (Wodзилki, Gabowe Grądy).

The urban network of the forty towns revolves around the seat of the province, Białystok, which is a fairly young city, as its municipal history dates back to 1692. Historically, Białystok has always played an important role in this region, mostly because of its location on the borderland of the East and the West. Since the beginning of its existence, and especially after receiving its municipal charter, Białystok has been taking advantage of its peripheral location, but at the same time struggling with it. Its role has been changing — it functioned first as an important aristocratic residence, later became an industrial centre in the Russian Empire and finally the administrative, economic and scientific centre of this part of Poland.



Figure 1. The main square in Białystok is furnished with benches, flower pots, a fountain and statues, and above all an abundance of outdoor cafés and restaurants (June 2018).<sup>3</sup>

While walking through the streets of Białystok, one can perceive through plaques, street names and information signs that for centuries a multi-national and multi-linguistic community of Poles, Russians, Jews, Byelorussians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Germans lived here together, as in all Podlasie, in symbiosis and peace but also, depending on the time, in tension and conflict. One by one, churches and temples of different faiths were built, often side by side, and today four necropolises remain: Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Jewish. At the end of the nineteenth century the industrious town became a sort of Biblical Tower of Babel — mixed, colourful and vigorous, with people speaking Russian, Polish, German, Lithuanian, Byelorussian as well as Yiddish and Hebrew. Białystok was a ‘crossroads’ of these different languages, nations, religions and races. On many buildings, shops and institutions there were signboards in Russian, Yiddish and Polish. A mixture of several languages was heard on every corner as well as in the factories and various business offices. Białystok was also the cradle of the Zionist movement and became well known as a centre of Jewish culture, social activities and philanthropy. This greatly affected Ludwik Zamenhof (1859-1917) from his early youth. As a student, he had the idea of formulating a universal language and dreamt of a world in which all nations would reach better understanding and equality through this tool. It is not surprising that he constructed Esperanto in this very place (Wiśniewski 1987: 74).

The two world wars had a heavy impact on the city and the region, and destroyed most of what would be today its tangible and cultural heritage. The Jewish community was annihilated by the Germans after the Ghetto uprising and almost disappeared from the local community. Decades after the Second World War, Białystok was rebuilt and reconstructed as a modern town with a fully functioning infrastructure. Nowadays the city, with its urban area (about 300,000 inhabitants) is the largest cultural and scientific centre of the region with theatres, a Philharmonic Hall and a brand-new Opera House (by the prominent architect Marek

<sup>3</sup> All the photographs were taken by the authors of the article.

Budzyński), museums, two universities and several academic institutions. An interesting case of the re-use of the architectural heritage is represented by the Arsenal Gallery which operates in an old power station, but whose main venue is housed in the arsenal in the palace area. Although its main task is to present contemporary Polish art, educational programmes get equal attention. The Arsenal Playground invites every generation to participate and learn about culture and art in dialogue with artists.

The towns of Podlasie have recently been described in a volume by the regional historian and journalist, Adam Czesław Dobroński, who has presented all forty towns whose urban status is now recognized officially (Dobroński 2014). Each town has its own entry, in which we learn about its history and present situation. While Dobroński looked at them historically, he provided an opportunity at the end of each chapter for the towns' mayors to share their views on the towns and their strategies. This represents a unique collection of statements of equal, although limited, value for analysis and subsequent typology. The mayors single out the strong points related to their towns. Their choice is personal, even though they are speaking officially for the town. Thanks to their position, we can take them as a representative group authorised to speak for their towns. They use different styles; some are more descriptive, some more expressive. They are generally proud of their cultural diversity and the inheritance of several religions, and appreciate the multi-ethnic society. They highlight the authentic nature, specific climate and excellent conditions for tourism. They invite investment, sponsors and new residents. Historicity, the cultural and natural heritage, local heroes and monuments are for them important values, even if several towns acknowledge that they have obtained urban status only recently. On the other hand, the mayors are proud of recent achievements in building new infrastructures to make the towns comfortable places for their citizens to live in. With the exception of Białystok, all the towns are presented as small with two types of identification: 1) the town offers a quiet environment with urban comfort close to the countryside and at the same time close to a large town (meaning Białystok); 2) the town is central to its '*mała ojczyzna*' (small homeland), offering services (schooling, healthcare, administration, business opportunities, market, cultural institutions/events) to the hinterland. This second type has two sub-types — one stresses the rural, agricultural character of the town and of the hinterland, with its impact on services offered; the second links its rural quality with very modern industries — tourism, spas, wellness and rehabilitation. There are very few mayors who do not need to highlight the historicity of their town or its hinterland; mostly they see their town as newly established and very small, focused on modernity and the development of infrastructures.

The interest in historicity, in cultural diversity or its absence, was the main motivation for the selection of the cases through which we wish to explore what types of heritage representations can be identified among the towns of Podlasie. As we have shown, Białystok has a very central function in the region. To explore and display the situation in small towns, we have chosen on purpose five very different examples at different distances from Białystok, and with variable perspectives on heritage: Tykocin, Supraśl and Wysokie Mazowieckie are more or less within commuting distance of Białystok; all three are historical towns, but with

different types of heritage. Hajnówka and Białowieża are relatively young places, located deeper in the region, linked to a natural heritage of globally recognized value. Each town has a vision about the use of the heritage in the future, and a specific way of its presentation and commodification. While Tykocin, Supraśl and Białowieża are well-known among tourists, Wysokie Mazowieckie and Hajnówka are in opposite situation.

*Tykocin — Multiple heritages in one small town*

Quite rural in outlook, the town welcomes us with a large rectangular square surrounded by wooden houses a maximum of two storeys high with small gardens, dominated by a Baroque church. Only an expert recognizes the inspiration of Renaissance urbanism in Tykocin. Founded in 1425, it has kept its special significance mainly due to its surviving monuments and architectural heritage of past centuries. It is situated on the Narew River, between two national forests and then parks (Narew and Biebrza), twenty-seven kilometres from Białystok. Tykocin lost its town privileges in 1950, but regained them in 1993. The town (with about 2,000 inhabitants) is best-known for its complex of historical sites.



Figure 2. Tykocin's main square is dominated by the Catholic Church, recently reconstructed. It has become a favourite location for various competitions and festivities (June 2016).



Figure 3. Not far from the opposite end of the square is the Great Synagogue in Tykocin-Kaczorowo (June 2016).

The most famous are the seventeenth-century Synagogue and the Talmudic House from the eighteenth century situated in what used to be the town's Jewish district — Kaczorowo. Visitors find it thanks to the numerous signs. Other beautiful and equally old monuments of the town are the Catholic seminary, operating continuously since 1643, and the impressive Holy Trinity Church. The great attraction of the town is the recently reconstructed (or rather built from scratch) sixteenth-century castle, destroyed in the mid-seventeenth century during the Swedish Deluge. The castle in Tykocin was erected between 1550 and 1572 and was the largest fortress (the so-called 'arsenal') in Poland at that time. Now, the impressive restored complex of the red brick castle houses a historical museum in its basement, discovering the supra-regional value of the place. The rest is used as a restaurant, ballroom and hotel facilities. (Maroszek 2012)

Out of all monuments in Tykocin, the impressive synagogue built in 1642 in place of a fifteenth-century wooden temple is a special historical treasure. This is the type of synagogue that developed at the beginning of the seventeenth century in the south-east part of the Polish and Lithuanian Commonwealth. The synagogue, featuring rich Renaissance decorations, is the second in size and the oldest after that in Kraków. It is assumed that the design of the Tykocin synagogue was based on the fortified Pińsk synagogue, built in 1640. The massive stone building in the late-Renaissance-Baroque style follows a rectangular ground plan. Initially, the synagogue had a concave roof with an attic, but it burnt down in the eighteenth century and was replaced with a mansard roof in the Baroque style (Wroczyńska and Lechowski 2004: 1-40).

Before the Second World War, nearly half the population in Tykocin was Jewish. Almost all of them were murdered by Germans in August 1941. During the occupation the Germans partially devastated the synagogue, using it as a warehouse. They also stole some of the rich and valuable furnishings. After the war, a fertilizer warehouse was located in the building. In 1965, part of the building was destroyed in a fire. Luckily, its value was recognized in 1977, when the Provincial Conservator of Monuments undertook comprehensive restoration work of the Synagogue and the Talmudic House. It was among the very first reconstructions of Jewish

sites in Poland in the post-war period. Afterwards, they were allocated to the District Museum in Tykocin, which is a branch of the Podlaskie Museum in Białystok.

The impressive architecture of the synagogue and the many restored inscriptions painted on the massive walls in the interior are the real beauty of this amazing site. It houses a permanent exhibition of Judaica and a rich collection of Jewish memorabilia and other items connected with the history of the town, and remains as a memorial to the former residents. In the low tower, an interior of a typical Jewish house has been reconstructed. The museum organizes temporary exhibitions and staged observation of Jewish holidays, as well as concerts. As there is no longer a Jewish community in Tykocin, the curators — who are not in fact Jewish — come from Białystok. Nevertheless, the town's Jewish heritage became a 'pilgrimage place' for Jewish youth and many tourists from Poland, the United States, Israel and other countries from around the world.

Tykocin's heritage is both intangible and tangible. It is the memory of Jewish citizens and their tragedy, their culture, plus a substantially reconstructed architectural heritage. This concerns not only the Grand Synagogue and Talmudic House, but also the Catholic Church, the wooden houses around the square and the Town Hall. The Castle is a new construction legitimized by arguments supported archaeologically through excavations.

The town administration has created a Project of Strategic Development 2015-2020, which is mainly focused on the improvement of infrastructures, intended among other things to enhance tourism.<sup>4</sup> Tykocin is believed to have considerable potential through its natural and cultural heritage for tourism development. The main goal is a new promenade along the river Narew which should beautify the centre and link it with riverside. Architectural structures, together with the castle, are listed as heritage in the argumentation of the Project without challenging their authenticity. They are all presented as having the same potential for raising historical consciousness and stimulating identification with the town.



Figure 4. The newly built model of the 16th century castle in its imagined form. Tykocin (June 2016).

<sup>4</sup> See Projekt Strategii Rozwoju Gminy Tykocin na lata 2015 - 2020, 2015: 83 -90, 98, 103. <http://bip.um.tykocin.wrotapodlasia.pl/Strategia/>. All electronic sources were accessed 11.8.2018, where the date is not indicated otherwise.



The website of Tykocin County focuses on practical issues for the comfort of citizens. Tourists have to look for information on history and sightseeing on pages devoted to the Jewish heritage. Information is almost exclusively in Polish. Although it is not easy to track it down, there is important participatory activity going on. The foundation called *Centrum badań nad historią i kulturą małych miast* [Centre for Studies on the History and Culture of Small Towns], seems to be an important factor in the heritage promotion together with the people who created TyKoCin24, an information webpage mainly for local citizens. Their main target group are the owners of historical houses, while the 'shtetlroutes' are for tourists.<sup>5</sup>

### *Supraśl — Transformation of identity*

A visit to the Orthodox Monastery with the defensive Church of Annunciation, the most important cultural treasure in the town of Supraśl, provides one with a very strong visual impression. Supraśl, with over 500 years of fascinating history, is located in the vicinity of Białystok (about sixteen kilometres away). Nowadays approximately 4,500 inhabitants are settled in the town. Orthodox monks came here in 1503 and began the construction of the fortified church of unusual architecture, merging Byzantine style with Western European Gothic. The Church was famous for its frescoes, which were painted in the sixteenth century by a group of painters under the direction of 'Serbian Nectarios the painter'. Their style resembles Serbian monumental painting. The monks gathered a priceless library of prints and manuscripts (for example, the Supraśl Codex of the eleventh-twelfth century) in the monastery. In 1609 the Supraśl Monastery was forced to accept the Union of Brest and became an important Uniate cultural and religious centre as the seat of the Uniate bishopric (until 1807). In 1695 monks started a monastery print shop there, and in 1711, the first paper mill in eastern Poland. During the partition of Poland, the Russian authorities transferred the Supraśl Monastery back to Orthodox monks (Mironowicz 2012, Charkiewicz 2005).

After the First World War the abandoned monastery passed into the hands of the Roman Catholic Church and during the Second World War the complex was considerably destroyed. The church was blown up by the Germans in 1944 and only small fragments of the murals were saved, and are currently a great attraction at the Museum of Icons. One of the main sources of their acquisition is the Białystok Customs Office, which confiscates pieces from smugglers.

After the Second World War an agricultural school was established in a remaining building of the Monastery complex, while the regional museum was installed in another part. The ruins of the defensive Church of Annunciation were a visible sign of abandonment and neglect for decades. The Monastery was ultimately transferred back to the Orthodox Church in the 1990s. In following years, thanks to the generosity of private donors, believers and Poles of

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<sup>5</sup> <http://bip.um.tykocin.wrotapodlasia.pl/Strategia/>; <https://tykocin24-online.pl/events/category/fundacja-centrum-badan-nad-historia-i-kultura-malych-miast/>;  
<http://shtetlroutes.eu/pl/tykocin-karta-dziedzictwa-kulturowego>

all confessions, as well as of foreigners, the Polish government and the European Union, the whole complex was nicely and completely reconstructed.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 5. The recently reconstructed Orthodox Church and Monastery also houses a Museum of Icons. The places of worship visibly document the multiconfessional — in Podlasie also meaning the multiethnic — nature of society. Supraśl (August 2012).

In the first half of the nineteenth century the monastery village in Supraśl was given the status of a town (with about 3,000 citizens) and became a flourishing textile industry centre in the Russian Empire for decades to come. Wilhelm Fryderyk Zachert, an entrepreneur from Zgierz, built a farm settlement for his workers. Nowadays there are remnants of the living quarters of the houses of weavers and the Buchholtz Palace, which was built in 1892-1903, as the seat of one of the famous manufacturing families. Currently, the building is used by the Art High School. Nearby there are two churches: Holy Trinity (Catholic, 1861) and the Evangelical-Augsburg Church (rebuilt in 1885, now also Catholic). The old cemeteries of all faiths and the well-preserved beautiful Buchholtz Chapel also testify to the multi-confessional history of Supraśl.

The community is very active in various cultural initiatives and projects promoting its history and cultural heritage. Supraśl is the seat of the Wierszalin Theater and the Cultural Association 'Collegium Suprasliense' (since 2001 publisher of the *Acta Collegii Suprasliensis* on small towns), actively promoting the culture, history and heritage of the town and its neighbourhood. The Archimandrite Palace has housed the Museum of Icons (the only one in Poland) since 2008, admired by Polish and international visitors, and since 2014 the *Muzeum Sztuki Drukarskiej i Papiernictwa* (Printing and Paper Museum).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See <http://basniowysuprasl.pl/klasztor-supraslu-kartach-historii>

<sup>7</sup> See the Supraśl Town Hall website: <http://www.suprasl.pl/index.php/suprasl/historia-suprasla>; <http://suprasl.pl/turystyka/index.php/pl/>; <http://suprasl.pl/index.php/strategia-rozwoju-miasta-i-gminy-suprasl-na-lata-2016-2022>.



Figure 6. Traditional wooden rural architecture used to be common in all the towns, even in Białystok, from where it is slowly disappearing. It remains typical for small towns. Supraśl has the image of a garden town, and thanks to its proximity to Białystok became a good address for those who like calm and greenery while still working in a large city (August 2012).

Although Supraśl looks like a residential garden city, its past can be read under its appearance. Until the 1990s its identity was linked strongly with the wood-processing industry, replacing the formerly dominant textile tradition. What we have observed in the last thirty years are essential changes in the town's orientation: the reconstruction of the Orthodox complex, the establishment of the Museum of Icons, together with the discovery of the charms of this place so close to the region's capital Białystok, makes it fit for commuting. Recently, Supraśl also became a popular centre for recreation and tourism. The town, situated in the middle of the Knyszyn Forest Landscape, took advantage of its location and obtained a Spa Settlement in 2001. The Lowland Climatic and Peloid Therapy Health Resort is one of the most recently established health resorts in Poland, attracting more and more patients and visitors. Thus, the successful transformation of the town's functions and its identification as a cultural centre of key importance was completed.<sup>8</sup> Unlike the locally oriented Centre for Study on Small Towns based in Tykocin, the initiative started in Supraśl is carried on by scholars exploring small towns in Podlasie and elsewhere in Poland. Prof. Mariusz Zemło describes how it grew and resulted in a series of scientific volumes presenting research on small towns carried on in every type of cultural, scholarly and academic institution. These participatory activities established a network of experts interested in small towns and reached beyond the borders of Podlasie (Zemło and Czyżewski eds 2001).

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<sup>8</sup> See Strategia rozwoju miasta i gminy Supraśl na lata 2016–2022: 69; available at: <http://www.suprasl.pl/index.php/strategia-rozwoju-miasta-i-gminy-suprasl-na-lata-2016-2022>



Figure 7. Rivers, ponds, lakes, meadows and endless forests. That is what represents the natural heritage of Podlasie (July 2018).

*The Białowieża Primeval Forest — A brand of two communities, Hajnówka and Białowieża*

Some sixty kilometres south east from Białystok are the edges of the most famous place in the Podlasie Province: the Białowieża Primeval Forest, which is Europe's last ancient forest complex, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a World Biosphere Reserve (1977).

Białowieża is also the name of a small settlement in the midst of woods, which identifies and builds its image on the global fame of the forest as natural heritage. The forest keepers settled first in Hajnówka village. Recently upgraded to a town, it looks mostly like a recreational resort, located on the forest edge on the route from Białystok. Some twenty-two kilometres further, Białowieża village was one of their settlements. It is quite an interesting and famous place with ambitions to be named a town. It builds its identity on its old history, its cultural and natural heritage, and particularly on its role as the scientific centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences, gathering some new residents and renowned scholars from the world. Its unique landscape and modern Natural History Museum attract more and more visitors every year.

The history of Białowieża Forest unwinds from the fourteenth century, when it became a part of the royal property of the Kingdom of Poland and came under the special rule of the royal forests. In 1795, after the third partition of Poland, the forest became a part of Russia and the property of the Tsars. The Orthodox Church was built by Alexander III in 1894-1897 and later Nicholas II constructed his hunting residence in the forest.

Nowadays Białowieża, mostly because of its cultural diversity and natural habitat, is one of the most important tourist attractions in eastern Poland, where some remnants of its history and monuments from the nineteenth and early twentieth century have survived. The Orthodox Church is quite interesting and a visible testimony of its past, and of its cultural and religious diversity. It is traditionally Russian in shape and has a unique ceramic altar, the only one in

Poland. Although the village looks like a 'garden city', it follows the plan of an 'ulicówka', where the main road becomes the main street with houses on either side. The nineteenth century Orthodox shrine and the Catholic Church built in the mid-1920s for the villagers and visitors of the two confessions stand in symbiosis at the end of the main street.

Białowieża Forest suffered very severely during the First World War because of extensive commercial exploitation by Germans. Białowieża National Park, the oldest national park in Poland, was established in 1921. After the Second World War the whole forest was divided by the border into an eastern part (belonging to the Soviet Union) and a western side (Polish), where in 1947 the Białowieża National Park was recreated.

While Białowieża village lies in the midst of the forest, Hajnówka is located on the main road from Białystok, on its edge, as its gatekeeper. It is a young town, its community being very much focused on tourism development, which needs to have appealing attractions. These they find mainly in the forest, and share with Białowieża village.<sup>9</sup> In the context of forest management a conflict of interest becomes visible between the wood industries on the one hand and the hoteliers and tourist agencies on the other, both threatening the integrity of the natural heritage, as we often read in the news, quoting the reports of inspections by UNESCO. The noisy debates focused on nature, which undoubtedly should be protected, but do not question the locals - the inhabitants of Białowieża and Hajnówka - who are connected with both the cultural and natural heritage, nor do they take their opinion into account (Blicharska and Angelstam 2010).

*Wysokie Mazowieckie — A town which prefers ecology to historical heritage*

Wysokie Mazowieckie is a town reaching 9,590 inhabitants, located on the main road to Warsaw, in commuting distance from Białystok. Unlike the other towns in the selection, this town has a webpage which offers information about the town's history and cultural activities. Like all the towns in the set it has its strategic plan for development. The officials presenting Wysokie Mazowieckie are rather sceptical about the town's history. There is little to show and little to be considered as architectural heritage and, in their view, it has weak potential for the development of tourism. The town is surrounded by fields and rural countryside with excellent soil. This sets limits to other investments and tourism development.<sup>10</sup> The city rose presumably in the thirteenth century (Kalinowski 2015: 37); however, this fact is not of paramount importance for its administrators or even for its inhabitants, as we will see later. Organized Mazovian settlement in today's territory of Wysokie Mazowieckie started on a larger scale at the beginning of the fifteenth century (Maroszek 2013: 30). The city and its surrounding region are inhabited by descendants of the impoverished nobility which in the past was involved in patriotic actions (Gloger 1878: 209, 494). The cultural heritage of this area lies in their heritage.

<sup>9</sup> <https://sztetl.org.pl/pl/miejscowosci/b/665-bialowieza/96-historia-miejscowosci/67062-historia-miejscowosci> ; <http://www.gmina-hajnowka.pl/>; <http://www.gmina.bialowieza.pl/>

<sup>10</sup> Strategia rozwoju gminy miejskiej Wysokie Mazowieckie na lata 2016–2022: 13-14; [bip.um.wysmaz.wrotapodlasia.pl/resource/file/.../id.../attachment.1](http://bip.um.wysmaz.wrotapodlasia.pl/resource/file/.../id.../attachment.1)

However, various activities which were aimed at its popularisation were left to another town. Wysokie Mazowieckie itself is the centre of many district and communal offices. Hence, it took over the administrative role. As presented by its mayor, it is the town of future, focused on ecology and on building a new infrastructure. Moreover, he does not highlight its historicity or heritage value (Dobroński 2014: 367). This attitude towards the past of the town is quite unusual and raises many questions which deserved to be answered with the help of combined anthropological and sociological research. This consisted of a questionnaire, a focus group and observation carried by historians.

The questionnaire was conducted in spring 2018 among the pupils of the King Kazimierz Jagiellończyk Secondary School; the Stanisław Staszic Vocational School Complex; and the Centre for Vocational Training. The analysis of the 248 questionnaires indicated certain regularities concerning the subject of cultural heritage and knowledge of the particular students. Due to unclear answers, one percent of the poll was not analysed. The focus group consisted of residents not only of the city itself, but also of the neighbouring villages. Nevertheless, they come to the city on a daily basis (compare Zemło 2016: 495).

The group of people participating in the study are entering adulthood, and were told their family histories. They are familiar with the functioning of search engines and move freely in the internet environment. They have unlimited access to knowledge available online and in school and public libraries.

An interesting phenomenon is the fact that as many as 49% of the respondents have never heard of, or have not paid attention to the concept of cultural heritage. 51% of the respondents were able to list the elements of the material cultural heritage. The most recognisable and most frequently mentioned elements included: Catholic churches, monuments (as a general concept), the Jewish cemetery, roadside shrines, folk costumes, castles, old photographs and parks. The indication of very diverse elements is noteworthy, the collection including both monumental objects and those operating in the local and private sphere.

Very few of the teenagers — only 36% — have ever looked for information about the cultural heritage itself. The most frequently used source of information is the internet (44% of responses), then family (20%) and books (16%). Knowledge transmitted by teachers and museums is the least frequently used source of information. In 93% of cases, somebody interested in seeking information found it in the above-mentioned sources. It is worth noting how important the family is, especially the grandparents' generation, in relation to the other answers mentioned.

The students' responses highlighted significant issues. One of the most important is the weak scope of institutional activities in promoting knowledge about the cultural heritage. The lack of special presenters of cultural heritage in the local environment may be considered the main problem, according to the students' answers. Only 29% of the respondents could point out people working for the cultural heritage in their local sphere.

The general conclusion that emerges from the analysis of the research conducted indicates a lack of responsibility for education aimed at young people. The lack of it is the fault of the

authorities and the cultural environment in the region. Summing up, it has to be noted that small towns need professional people involved in the promotion and protection of cultural heritage. Past experience shows that one person who organises work around cultural heritage can carry out his or her activities as effectively as an institution.

An example of such an action is the Facebook page ‘On a walk in Wysokie Mazowieckie’.<sup>11</sup> The social network site gathers several thousand actively participating fans. The administrator places archival photographs, sometimes unique, of the city on the website. He also organises actions related to the active care of monuments; for example, the regular cleaning of the Jewish cemetery.

The analysis of the surveys showed that young people unknowingly identify themselves with the cultural heritage. An example is a popular meeting place called in English ‘the Eagle’. It was the name for the square in front of the Polish Military Organization monument. The monument was crowned with the figure of an eagle, as a symbol of the Polish state, which was typical for interwar period monuments in the region. There were no official names noted in the students’ answers. Nonetheless, the Eagle was mentioned, the unofficial name used by the inhabitants.

Cultural events organised by the town can be promoted in any other place. The municipal cultural centre organised most of them: ‘Summer concert at the fountain’, ‘Outdoor cinema’ etc. Every historical or national anniversary is connected with a strongly patriotic event; for example, Independence Day (November 11) is organised near the Polish Military Organization memorial.<sup>12</sup>



Figure 8. Wysokie Mazowieckie – the military monument ‘the Eagle’ located on the main square (August 2018).

A regional historian perceives Wysokie Mazowieckie as a historical town which has a story to tell and presents it as the heritage of a small provincial town and its nobility (Dobroński

<sup>11</sup> See [web.facebook.com/Spacerkiem-Po-Wysokiem-Mazowieckiem](https://www.facebook.com/Spacerkiem-Po-Wysokiem-Mazowieckiem).

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.wysokiemazowieckie.pl/>

2014: 359-367). Surprisingly enough in this set, it represents towns which are focused on ecology and building new infrastructure. Their representations do not highlight historicity or heritage values. They do not have enough tangible heritage to support a historical story, though not all the town's inhabitants share this attitude of neglect.

The analysis of the answers of the students from Wysokie Mazowieckie offers an important perspective of the heritage user. It suggests that the local citizens are not well enough informed. We can only speculate whether this town is a unique case, or whether there is a more general gap in knowledge.

## **Conclusion**

We could identify several attitudes towards heritage: the long lasting and permanently recognized heritage of the Białowieża forest and of the foundation of Tykocin, as well as of the Orthodox tradition and of the printing workshop in Supraśl. Tykocin discovered its Jewish past relatively recently and its non-Jewish citizens identified with its cultural heritage. The history of the local Jewish community is also a dark war heritage of the Holocaust. While historians recognize Wysokie Mazowieckie as a town with its roots in the Middle Ages and the heritage of the local nobility, in official representations it looks as though the heritage was absent or ignored. We can also imagine other situations, when for example a heritage is lost for various reasons, like a natural catastrophe, or its simple translocation. This would have been the case of the monastery of Supraśl, if it had not been reconstructed. The castle in Tykocin, although there were archaeological excavations, was built in an imagined shape and is close to the type of invented heritage. Through the reconstruction of the town square yet another value was highlighted: the cultural transfer of the ideas of early modern Italian urbanism. Urban historians have known this for quite a long time, but for the general public it is a discovery. The museum in the Castle's basement links local history with regional and national and develops the identification with a master narrative. In the Tykocin Development Strategy the castle is listed as local heritage together with the Synagogue, Talmudic house, Church, etc. The reconstructed objects in both towns are appropriated as authentic without any hesitation.

With the involvement of creative people — local academics and élites in their presentation — the self-identification of the small towns follows the modes singled out by H  l  ne Mainet on the basis of research carried in France (Mainet 2011). The mayors represent a group of stakeholders: experts, who can influence the towns' heritage interpretation and presentation. They all praise the towns' natural environment, diversity and plurality of the religions, ethnicities and cultures, historical and cultural heritage, and they promote tourism.

They also have a say in the contents of strategic plans. These wish predominantly to develop essentially important infrastructures and much less funding is requested to promote and protect the cultural heritage, not to speak of its commodification. The towns need to develop the very basic infrastructure and the towns' furnishings. Even if they are aware of the value of cultural heritage in their region, there are no specific ideas in their documents about how to develop and use it.



If there is little in the official documents, we learn more about the historical and cultural heritage and revitalization projects through observation of the public discourse in public spaces. The questioning of students revealed alarming gaps in their knowledge. At the same time festivals, conferences, concerts and tourist trails are trendy in Podlasie's small towns, as they are all over Europe, and demonstrate the importance of supralocal influences and relations as suggested by Sztando (2017). The inquiry discovered traces of the work of creative people for small towns and the involvement of heritage users. This type of situation calls for further case studies and comparative perspectives. The large proportion of reconstructed and rebuilt heritage, specific for Poland as a result of Second World War destruction, and its appropriation as authentic, points to the crucial, psychological role of historical heritage allowing supralocal identification and self-presentation of local communities as important actors in national history.

Generally applicable conclusions concern first the strategic plans. They mirror the situation, the gaps in development and, consequently, the way the heritage is used. The second conclusion is about the importance of our main research question: what do the local people think about their place, what do they identify as their heritage and what do they do for its protection, use and reuse? In the cases studied, it appears that these questions are not raised, especially when it involves a conflict such as the one around the Białowieża primeval forest. The issue is sensitive as it touches the small community. It takes place in their area, but locals are kept outside the discourse, although such questioning would stimulate their participation in the search for a solution.

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## *Fabricating a Steel City: An Ethnography of the Illawarra Steel Industry*

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Certain core dimensions of urban de-industrialisation/re-industrialisation processes have been neglected in the discipline of anthropology. This article seeks to redress that under-examination by considering in an anthropological way the consequences for workers, urban activism and built environments of industrial policies directed towards the shrinkage of the steel industry in the Illawarra region. This article investigates how industrial policies have influenced the Illawarra's past, present and future.

**Keywords:** Industrialism, policy, ethnography, urban, steelworks.

### **Introduction**

In an anthropological study of the urban environment Low presented a number of city typologies, including the ethnic city, the globalised city, the divided city, and the industrial/de-industrialised city (Low 1996: 383). This article focuses on the last of these images through a study of the Illawarra, an industrial urban centre of Australian steel production. Its Port Kembla or BlueScope Steelworks has been in operation since 1927, transforming the region from rural district to urban centre. Eklund (2012: 3) argues that the history of Port Kembla highlights the *local* manifestation and shaping of powerful global forces, leading to his insight that industrial towns are places where local and global processes collide. In the past ten years Port Kembla has been transitioning into a de-industrialising city due to the decreased economic profitability and accompanying shrinkage of the BlueScope Steelworks. This article argues that industrial politics are a critical factor in the de-industrial process that is shaping the social landscape of the Illawarra.

Bluestone and Harrison (1982) were early innovators in the de-industrial paradigm using their research to examine social and community factors alongside economic and political considerations in industrial change. The anthropology of de-industrialisation has primarily focused on the consequences of factory closure and the effects of this on the surrounding community firstly through examining the impact of plant closure on individuals and, secondly, it has sought to understand the role of the state in relation to corporate decisions that can be described as de-industrialising (Lamphere 1985: 260). Here the de-industrial paradigm analyses the causes and impacts of industrial closure from a broader perspective that combines these two approaches. Newman (1985: 15) argued that the de-industrialisation process has real effects on everyday lives, as it ultimately affects family life, the ways in which people age, the extent to which their communities remain intact or fall victim to outmigration, and the very nature of the urban dweller's worldview. In the most general sense, the research on deindustrialization turns the urban anthropologist toward the social problems side of our informants' lives, since many of the pathologies of city life can be traced to the effects of economic dislocation.

Since the 1990s, urban anthropological research has variously recognised the ways in which regional diversity (cultural, social, economic and political) affects urban life.

Anthropologists have given primary attention to the following four aspects of urban life. Firstly, rethinking of theories of urbanisation and patterns of urban growth. Secondly, different patterns of urban social interaction and urban conflict in traditionally multi-ethnic states and ‘multicultural’ processes in Western cities. Thirdly, the ways in which people in different regions and under different political regimes respond and adapt to the demand of global policies for example post-industrial settings; and finally, the visibility and relevance of urban research, and anthropology generally, in the broader society (Pardo and Prato 2013: 97). The last two decades have seen an evolution of industrialisation studies with the emergence of two important edited editions: *The International Review of Social History* (Altena and Van der Linden 2002) and *Beyond the Ruins* (Cowie and Heathcott 2003). Both argue that the de-industrialisation literature and paradigm must broaden its examination of its social, cultural and political consequences. Cowie and Heathcott (2003: 1-2) note that the time is right to widen the scope of the discussion beyond prototypical plant shutdowns, the immediate politics of employment policy, the tales of victimization, or the swell of industrial nostalgia. Rather, our goal is to rethink the chronology, memory, spatial relations, culture and politics of what we have come to call ‘deindustrialization’.

This article seeks to widen the discussion on de-industrialisation in the Illawarra. The primary methodologies for this research were participant observation and interviews with Illawarra steelworkers, politicians and other community members impacted by the region’s steel industry. Participant observation inside the fiery pit of the steelworks, hearing the chants of activists fighting to save the steel industry, and helping former steelworkers pick their fruit trees gave a deep insight into the Illawarra’s steel industry. Ortner (1995: 175) and Abu-Lughod (1990: 50) both argue using ethnography as a method allows anthropologists to observe and demonstrate complexities within the field. Pardo is critical of studies of Neapolitan urban life with their imposition of theoretical models onto the ethnographic details they intend to explain. Pardo (1996: 3) argues that they ignore the basic requirement of ‘achieving an empathic grasp of the situation through prolonged interactive involvement in the flow of local life’. The ethnographic research I have conducted in the Illawarra demonstrates the complex role policies and politics have played in shaping the Illawarra’s past, present and future.

I proceed by first sketching out the historical development of the Illawarra’s steel industry throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, examining its rise and decline; secondly, I analyse the corresponding effects on the community; finally; thirdly, I investigate local and state political and social movements or forces and their influence over steel making in the region. The first movement that I discuss is the Save Our Steel (SOS) activist movement supported by steelworkers and the local community, demanding that the government should step in to create a steel policy to protect the steel industry. This movement led to the creation of the Steel Industry Protection Bill in March 2016 that mandated 90% of the steel used in Australian Government infrastructure projects must be Australian made. I continue to discuss political opposition of the Bill, and its ultimate failure. The final section of the paper discusses the Illawarra’s future, and whether the city can transition into a period where steel production is no longer its key feature.

### **Rise and Fall of the Steel City**

The steelworks were the creation of Broken Hill Propriety Company Limited (BHP), John Lysaght Pty Ltd, and Australian Iron and Steel Limited. The Hoskins Family formed the Australian Steel and Iron Works in Port Kembla in 1928. The opening of Blast Furnace No 1 in 1929 corresponded with the Great Depression and caused great financial difficulties for Australian Iron and Steel. BHP made an offer to buy all AIS ordinary shares, and the offer was accepted by the end of 1935. BHP provided the financial capital needed to expand the steel plant. Blast Furnace No 2 was completed in 1938 and while production in the Illawarra was less than in Newcastle, Port Kembla still made a significant contribution to the Australian armed forces during World War 2. When the war ended in 1945 Port Kembla was selected over Newcastle as the site where BHP would build a hot strip mill, bringing innovative technology to Australia's steel making industry. In 1962 the Steelworks were expanded again with the process of electrolytic tinning introduced. Ten years later basic oxygen steelmaking was brought into Port Kembla, and Blast Furnaces 1 and 2 could not handle the workload alone leading to the commission of Blast Furnace No 5. Further technological advances and demand for efficiency led to the commission of Blast Furnace No 6 in 1996, replacing the two smaller less efficient furnaces.

BlueScope Steel and BHP became separate companies in 2002 when assets were split, and BHP merged with Anglo-African company Billiton to become BHP Billiton. The next seven years until 2009 yielded mixed results for BlueScope, instigating the need to update and modify Blast Furnace No 5 with the relining process aimed to improve efficiency, making Australian steel competitive once again in an international market. In 2011 production at the Steelworks was halved with the permanent closure of Blast Furnace No 6. Operating with only one blast furnace essentially removed Port Kembla steel from the export market. It has been speculated that if Blast Furnace No 5 had not undergone its multi-million-dollar renovation, it would have been shut down as well, meaning steel making at Port Kembla would have stopped altogether. Despite many adversities, 2.6 million tonnes of raw steel are still produced at Port Kembla every year. BlueScope is a world leader in a coating and painting technology that has led to products such as COLOURBOND which are used on roofs, fences and building frames all around Australia.

According to Eklund (2012: 2-3), industrial societies created powerful national images that caused the stereotyping of industrial areas. Steel and heavy industries are major markers of economic development, transforming rural communities into urban centers and laborers into skilled workers. The role of steel in the development of cities remains as crucial as ever. Even well-established cities such as Sydney are constantly re-developing and re-shaping themselves to manage population changes and support community needs. These changes require the creation of new buildings, housing, transport, and infrastructure that use thousands of tonnes of steel. Similar concerns have been noted in the Greek ship building industry by Spyridakis (2017). The Greek economic policy regarding the secondary shipbuilding sector was generally categorised by weak adaption to international economic conditions. The Greeks fell behind the

so called ‘Asian Tigers’ (Korea and Taiwan) as these countries became leaders through integration policies of cost reduction, rational distribution of investment, the application of new technologies and strategies for diversification of the final product to meet market demand (Spyridakis 2017: 176). The situation of the Greek shipping industries is not expected to change anytime soon for a number of reasons. Firstly, a lack of necessary management structure and the industries’ failure to attract the business necessary for their economic survival. Secondly, the pace of the global economy has accelerated the need for rapid circulation of material goods and information. The shipyards are unable to meet this demand due to their ineffective administration structures that are burdened with old infrastructure. Thirdly, the shipyards are facing increased competition particularly due to lower labour costs. Finally, instead of developing bonds of cooperation they do not take any initiative for coping with the current crisis together (Spyridakis 2017: 176-177). The changing way in which resources and materials are used and transported around the world is why terms such as de-industrialisation have been criticised; especially as they imply that the grand epoch of heavy industry is over (Rodrik 2016: 1). The Illawarra’s steel industry shares similar concerns with the Greek Shipbuilding industry, particularly as regards competing with foreign markets producing cheaper steel at a more rapid rate than the Illawarra. In spite of these concerns, Eklund (2012) argues that Port Kembla is a unique urban environment, as social life and politics were shaped by industrial society like nowhere else.

According to Bill Shorten (leader of the Australia Labor Party), there are 30,000 plus jobs directly reliant upon steel production in Australia, not just in the Illawarra but right throughout Australia. There are 100,000 Australians (families, small businesses) who directly depend upon steel production and steel manufacturing and distribution.

One of these 30,000 is Michael Walters, who moved to Wollongong to study Materials Engineering at the University of Wollongong and complete the BlueScope Steel Cadet Program. In my interview with Mike, he recounts how the steel industry contributed significantly to the Illawarra, bringing thousands of jobs from manual labor work to high end technical and research positions. The flow on effects and support services are huge with thousands of contractors employed as a direct result, all with various levels of technical services (for example, Veolia, Shinagawa Refractories, Instrument Electricians, Pacific National Train services, Australian Steel Mill services, and a wide range of engineering and fabrication companies). Having such a wide range of employment needs requires a certain level of knowledge and skills that many other cities in Australia do not have.

Along with high standards of educating and training BlueScope has always sought to ensure that the steelworks are constantly improving with new equipment and technology. A significant part of the steelworks increasing innovation has been through updating the blast furnaces. The relining of Blast furnace No 5 at Port Kembla was designed to propel the steel industry forward by boosting productivity. The relined Blast furnace No 5 was expected to help BlueScope blast off into a more profitable space after reporting a \$66 million loss in 2009. Blast furnace No 5 is now more advanced and has a greater capacity.

This major capital investment was expected to improve efficiency, increase BlueScope's global reputation for quality and set new production records. A short two years later and the hopes of boosted production and profits have faded. Blast furnace No 5 produces 2.6 million tons of steel a year, covering local market demand. With what has been described as a global market failure, markets have been oversupplied with cheap steel, and the excess steel produced from Blast furnace No 6 was being sold at a loss. Blast furnace No 6 has been shut down. Mike recalled how in 2011 when it was announced that 1000 jobs were to be cut and several close friends of his in their mid-20s were made redundant, it was obvious that the company was not looking towards the future and was in survival mode.

Mike described to me the difficulty of seeing other workers who had helped build the furnace being made redundant, especially those who had families. Morale around the workplace was incredibly low and people began looking for new jobs before the furnace was drained and closed. Mike remembered three main events that occurred during the closure of the No 6 blast furnace.

'Wayne Phillips from the Australian Workers Union came around to talk to the workers. Everyone had their heads down and didn't want to talk. I usually don't like union people, but he was a comforting sight as he listened to the peoples' stories about how they will support their families, and people had put their heart and soul into the furnace when building it. Mike overheard one worker state that "he had helped build this furnace and it's the only furnace he was ever going to work at".'

The initial stages of Mike's recollection of the Blast Furnace No 6 shutdown gave me an appreciation of the passion and devotion gone into blast furnace six and the steel industry. The second significant event for Mike was an interview he watched on Nine Local News with a metallurgy manager who stated that, 'the shutdown had not affected any of the trainees'. Mike continued:

'This made me very angry, as it was hard to come to terms dealing with people who lost their jobs while I was secure and being able to empathise with them. She had obviously not talked to anyone involved in the process or know what it's really like to talk to people who lost their jobs and livelihood that meant so much to them. Finally, speaking to the metallurgy manager when it was announced, I asked about the method they were going to use to drain the furnace. He said the most labor intensive, but it takes months of preparation and fabrication to get specialised metal runners and drilling equipment to be able to empty the furnace in that way. It dawned on me that they had been preparing this for at least 6 months in secret. It felt terrible knowing that quite a few people knew what was going to happen before it all went down.'

Mike's anger towards BlueScope was evident in his discussion with me, as he had trusted them and he felt let down. Mollona (2009: 15) noticed similar occurrences during his fieldwork in Sheffield, suggesting that trust can produce inequality and exploitation particularly for young



lads starting their apprenticeships. While the closure of Blast furnace No 6 did slow the loss, BlueScope were not able to completely recover in the following years and were still leaking money. Port Kembla was not alone as Whyalla in South Australia was also losing money. These problems culminated with what was identified as ‘The Australian Steel Crisis’ in 2015. According to Dr Martin O'Brien, an economist at Wollongong University, for those who lost their jobs in the crisis of 2015, the prospect of finding other work was significantly less than it was in 2012 when 1100 steelworkers were laid off. The unemployment rate for ex-BlueScope workers was 40% (Power 2015: § 12). O'Brien went on to say that in 2012 job losses were offset by the mining sector boom. Now, with another significant round of job losses, a depressed local labor market and the end of the mining boom, it is highly likely that the unemployment rates will be much worse. He would not be surprised to see over 50% of the redundant workers remaining unemployed for a long duration (Power 2015: § 13). The effects of the 2015 crisis combined with impacts of the 2011 downturn have affected urban life in the Illawarra region.

The BlueScope steelworks is more than a physical space for employment and production. Mollona's (2009: 2) work in Sheffield demonstrates that the factory she studies is a physical, economic and political space located between society and state. Mollona argues that the state affects the politics of production in two ways: by determining the conditions whereby labour power is reproduced and by determining the conditions in which labour power is used on the production floor. Politics of the Sheffield steel plants that Mollona studied indicates the significant role the government can have over the production of steel and the workforce (Mollona 2009: 2). The role of politics in the Illawarra's steel industry became abundantly clear in response to the threatened closure of the Steel Industry. Local residents and steel workers rallied to save the steel industry, creating the Save Our Steel or SOS group that was instrumental in petitioning the creation of the Steel Industry Protection Bill that mandated 90% of steel used in Australian Government projects must be Australian made.

### **Streets of Steel**

The Illawarra has a long and proud industrial history, and fighting for workers' rights has always been an aspect of it. Many studies of de-industrialisation assume that these industrial communities are shaped by men and only affect men. The work and family changes for women during de-industrialising processes has been complex (Olson 2005). In the Illawarra women have played an important role on the steel industry. Christine Wilkinson led the ‘Beige Pants Rebellion’, becoming the first female steelworker at Port Kembla. The campaign and industrial relations battle went all the way to the high court, which the women eventually won during the 1980s as part of the larger Jobs for Women Campaign. While this article will not focus on the role of industrial women in the Illawarra, it is an area that should be noted and has the potential for future research.

The fight against the current steel industry crisis began 24 August 2015 when BlueScope suggested that the Port Kembla steelworks would be shut if 200 million dollars in savings could not be found. On 8 October 2015, the workers took the first steps to save the steel industry by

voting to keep the Port Kembla steelworks open, accepting pay cuts and wage freezes. The government responded in kind announcing 60 million dollars' worth of tax relief to ultimately save the steelworks. The community and government united again on 17 March 2016 when the Steel Industry Protection Bill was introduced into the New South Wales upper house, and by 25 August the Steel Protection Bill entered the upper house with support from all minor political parties. The aim of the Steel Protection Bill is to ensure that 90% of the steel used in government infrastructure projects is made in Australia. The community continued to lobby for its support until early 2017 when the Steel Protection Bill returned to the Legislative Assembly for a vote. On that day crowds filled the streets of Wollongong, the air was still, and the sound of static poured from speakers that lined the roads amidst the chants of the workers pouring through every window from Crown Street down to the harbour.

In *The Palgrave Handbook of Urban Ethnography*, Prato (2017: 53) argues that grassroots approaches to the city have been hijacked by political and corporate interests in attempts to satisfy national policies in the context of Pan-European programmes. Prato's two urban ethnographies indicate that if we accept that the future of our planet is intrinsically linked to our cities then urban policies should address the city in terms of urban community. She argues that this would be an ideal type in Weberian sense; that is, the city is conceived as a social body of citizens united by shared values and laws that demand the fulfilment of their civic responsibility for the common good. While Prato's work is centred in the Pan-European region, it is possible to see how her argument could be applied in Australia, particularly in the Illawarra. The Australian Workers Union (AWU) and the Labor Council argued that the Save Our Steel rallies sent a strong message to the government, to say that the community is prepared to mobilise on a plan to save the steel industry, as the community believes steel is critical to the future of the region. Similarly, community action echoed loud and clear at a public meeting to 'Save our Steelworks' on 5 August 2016. The Fairy Meadow's Fraternity Club was filled with hundreds of people voting for change in government policy to secure the future of steel making in Port Kembla and Australia. The vote called on all levels of government to mandate that federal and state infrastructure projects should use at least 50% Australian made steel. The meeting additionally asked for a steel summit involving steel producers, unions, and federal ministers to prevent the shutdown of steelmaking in Port Kembla. Australian Workers Union branch secretary Wayne Phillips said,

'It would secure this city and this region for the future. I don't think people understand how serious it is if this place folds up. Unlike many other areas, we don't have growing or emerging industries to take over if the steelworks finishes. The only thing that will grow here is unemployment and crime, and we just can't afford to let that happen.'

The AWU accuses Chinese companies of being responsible for global oversupply by dumping cheap steel on the international market. Steel dumping is regularly proposed as a reason for market concerns that the steel industry is facing and is referenced in a report by Arrium, the owner of the Whyalla Steelworks in South Australia on the state of the Australian

steel industry. In light of steel dumping from Asia, the Federal Government is facing calls to remove a special trade deal that allows China to dump cheap steel and aluminium in the Australian market (Ryan 2016: § 1-3). The most recent downfall of the Australian steel industry has been blamed primarily on oversupplied, overseas markets.

Palma's (2014) and Bluestone and Harrison's (1982) research allow us to go beyond these assumptions and investigate the underlying cause of de-industrialisation. Palma (2014: 8) discusses four causes of deindustrialisation: the fourth he calls 'Dutch disease', which is concerned with the increased trade of commodities that reduce the need for local production in regions such as North America, Europe, and Australia. Bluestone and Harrison argued that American industries were slowly killing their plants by failing to modernise equipment despite becoming less efficient. Businesses could make as much money from tax incentives as they could by producing products. Modernising machinery while being more efficient for businesses also automates jobs causing high unemployment rates. In July 2016 BlueScope informed 15 operators and 10 tradesmen that they would lose their jobs in the slab yard due to the automation of moving steel slabs and the Australia's Workers Union has concerns these numbers will continue to rise. BlueScope was helped by Government tax incentives in October 2015, not to modernise equipment but purely for the survival of the steelworks and to save 5000 local jobs. The first half of 2017 saw BlueScope's share price recover and profits margins increase with BlueScope's overseas investment in the United States being critical to the survival of the Port Kembla Steelworks. BlueScope Steel's decision to spend \$947 million gaining ownership of North America's most profitable steelworks just as United States authorities imposed punishing anti-dumping duties on steel imports from China delivered profit growth that is positioned to continue rising.

BlueScope CE Paul O'Malley described the anti-dumping policy in the United States as being 'on steroids' compared to the laws currently in Australia (Evans 2016: § 2). The United States authorities closed off the US market to outsiders with their tough anti-dumping measures to combat excess production from China and other countries. Industry experts say US prices of the hot-rolled coil were at least US\$300 per tonne higher than those in mainland China at the end of June (Evans 2016: § 3). BlueScope's North Star mill in Ohio which makes 2 million tonnes of steel annually for customers in the automotive and construction sectors generated a \$62 million increase in profits in the second half, compared with the first half of 2015-16. Mr O'Malley said he still could not guarantee that the Port Kembla steelworks in NSW would remain open in the longer term despite the revival in BlueScope's fortunes, proclaiming, 'it's game on, not game over' (Evans 2016: § 8). O'Malley conceded that Port Kembla operations would need to deliver solid returns over an extended period against a backdrop of volatile global demand and pricing.

Despite the fact that the SOS campaign gained the support of thousands of Illawarra residents and officials, there were still many in the community that opposed the SOS movement. Local MP Gareth Ward refused to speak in support of the Steel Protection Bill. Despite the Illawarra being responsible for the Steel Protection Bill, local Kiama MP Gareth Ward failed

to present the Bill to Parliament, and it was left to Kuringai MP Alister Henskens to do so. The lack of support from local MPs left the Illawarra community asking, ‘where was Gareth Ward?’ Mr Henskens (in Ward’s place) said the government supported the state’s steel industry but opposed the steel bill because it was not in the best interests of NSW, arguing that the bill would be completely unworkable in practice. Mr Ward was not in the chamber as he was meeting with the region’s nurses and the health minister about the public-private partnership at Shellharbour Hospital at the time, but this failed to make the community any less forgiving.

Mr Henskens’ statement appears to be contradictory, given he made no clear response to rework the Steel Protection Bill into something that might be more effectively used in practice. He attempted to cover up the government’s lack of support of the Bill by saying they supported the steel industry. Liberal MP Peter Phelps was more open about his lack of support, arguing that if BlueScope Port Kembla is forced to close its gates for good, then so be it (Humphries 2016a: § 1). Phelps spoke in the NSW upper house during a debate on the Steel Protection Bill. He argued that BlueScope had no responsibility to the local community or to the steel workers, with BlueScope’s only responsibility being to make money, and the steelworks should close if they were unable to compete financially. Phelps continued to say the tax-paying public had a right to demand and every right to expect that the money would be used in the most efficient manner possible.

Labor senator Kim Carr says a mandated percentage of Australian steel use in government projects sounds tempting but ‘doesn’t match the realities’ of the industry. Although having to use a percentage of Australian steel in government projects would ensure the survival of the steelworks in both Port Kembla and Whyalla, it is likely that neither would be able to produce the increased demand of up to 90% of Australian made steel used in projects. The use of steel in local projects sounds good, and it is good that the government is doing something, but a minimum use of Australian steel in government projects is largely overvalued. Whyalla in South Australia produces 1 million tonnes of steel a year and the contract for the Navy which they failed to get would have been for only 10,000 tonnes. In this case there may be little value in the steel protection bill. The main challenge for Port Kembla is to be competitive in the international market, particularly in Asian markets where over 70% of world steel production is occurring.

Government opposition to the steel protection bill appeared to grow when it announced that 500 new train carriages, some that would be used on the South Coast railway line that runs directly into Port Kembla, would be built in South Korea, costing the Illawarra hundreds of jobs. The Illawarra had a tenderer, Stadler, prepared to deliver 600 jobs at Unanderra, assembling new train carriages and maintaining them, with hundreds of apprenticeships for local kids, giving the future workforce much-needed experience. Mr Foley, New South Wales Labor Party leader (Humphries 2016b: § 2-4) said that the Baird government is completely disinterested in supporting local manufacturing and local jobs, and the people of Wollongong should now be very, very clear that this is a government that does not care about jobs in this

region, that this is a government that does not care about Wollongong and the Illawarra more broadly.

Vaccaro, Harper and Murray (2016: 3) discuss how the economic mechanisms of capitalism affect real people and places. The principle motivation behind these mechanisms is the growth of profits through market expansion, establishing favourable terms of trade or through the reduction of costs. In the Illawarra, however, there is an accompanying process of the disconnection of a community from the market. Vaccaro, Harper and Murray (2016: 4) create a framework to understand how places are affected by disinvestment after a period of capitalist integration. Bill Shorten made the promise on metal manufacturing in Australia that he and his Labor team would do everything they could to make sure that steel was made in Australia. Arguing that Australians have seen the car industry go, and mining industry jobs in free-fall in the last three years, he said:

‘Enough’s enough. Australians want a government in Canberra who will fight for Australian steel, and we are up for that fight. The question is not whether Australia should be making its own steel. Of course, we must. The question is what policies will secure our local industry’s long-term future.’

The Illawarra steel industry has clearly created a divide at all levels of government and within the local community. Prato (1993: 184) argues that the case of the Brindisi Power Plant highlights the complex issues of representation that characterise the gap between expectations and actions of ordinary people and the political programme, ideology and policy of local administrations, and of institutionalised politics generally. In spite of supporters and opposition to the power plant referencing their loyalty to and pride in the local tradition and identity the gap was not brought any closer (Prato 1993: 184). The Steel Industry Protection Bill victory of late 2016 was eroded in March 2017 when the bill failed to attain a vote in the Legislative Assembly and lapsed. The Steel Industry Protection Bill returned to Legislative Assembly on Thursday 9 March 2017 for what was expected to be the final day of debate on the bill, and a final vote. Each MP was given 10 minutes to speak but Gareth Ward was later accused of stalling tactics by asking for an extension on his speaking time, which would lead to avoiding a vote. The next sitting of the NSW Parliament would be 30 March 2017 long after the bill has lapsed. If the bill is to be reintroduced it will have to be done at a later date, and at the time of writing the bill is yet to be reintroduced. The future of the bill and of the steel industry remain unclear and is stoking a debate on how the Illawarra will progress with or without steel production.

### **The Future of the Steel City**

Throughout the Illawarra’s history, industrial policy has been geared towards increased production. Industrial activism has been key in attempting to secure policies that will aid steel production in the region. An alternative approach that has been used in other de-industrialised cities has been to transition the local economy to one that is not reliant on one economic source. The city of Sisak in Croatia is one example of a failure to diversify the local economy after the

closure of the Sisak ironworks. Much like the Illawarra community, Potkonjak and Skokic's narratives of Croatia's unemployed Sisak ironworkers revealed their hopefulness for the future and gaining assistance from the Croatian government (2013: 81-82). One difference is that while the Illawarra resorted to activism much of the Croatian residents' hope resided in the action of external forces. The Sisak ironworkers had little faith that the government would make policies allowing them to act regarding their futures. Potkonjak and Skokic (2013: 81-82) argue that the passive level of resignation expressed in ironworker narratives is a consequence of failing to transition economies in Croatia. They argue that as time passes the effects of deindustrialisation have become more apparent.

Pappas (1989) has identified similar issues in the once 'magic city', Barberton, Ohio. When the Seiberling tire plant in Barberton was closed in 1980, over 1200 jobs were eliminated. Drawing on extensive research, Pappas offers an incisive analysis of their responses to unemployment first detailing the ways in which the unemployed rubber workers have met their economic needs in the face of declining income. He next evaluates their success in re-entering the labour market, as he examines the job-hunting process, the unemployment insurance system, and workers' initiatives toward retraining and relocation. Finally, Pappas describes unemployed workers' responses to the loss of status, identity, participation in the community, and sense of time.

While the above cities have openly been seen as failures to transition post industry in Poland, steel-towns Nowa Huta and Csepel have been viewed as successfully transitioning after the closure of their steel industries. Trappman (2013) challenges the one-sided account of Poland as a successful transition case, by exploring the huge social costs for workers in terms of impoverishment and employment precarity. The ambivalent role of the European Union in the economic restructuring of Poland emerges through comparisons to earlier rounds of restructuring of steel in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and other parts of the world.

The key for de-industrialised communities is to find a way to transition into a local economy that is not reliant on any one economic source. According to Cowell (2014: 2), in America's Midwest developers believe that they can transcend the economic forces that have decimated communities. Urban planners use two forms of adaptive resilience that emphasise both recovery of people and of places that have experienced extreme stress. Economic resilience suggests a return to a former paradigm while ecological resilience presumes a movement from one economic paradigm to another. Cowell suggests that neither should be a return to normalcy after an economic crisis but rather part of a dynamic process of continuous development.

Müller's (2007) ethnographic analysis of East-West German industrial restructuring following German unification is evidence of adaptive resilience in action and, whilst it is an extreme case study, is one worth noting. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of socialism in East Germany released pent up ambitions while evaporating the myths of market economics. Müller (2007) captures this unique moment in history through a thorough examination of largely unknown informal mechanisms of power in enterprises of the planned economy and their transformation. The experiences of workers, managers and new owners tell a complex

story of adaptation and resistance to both systems (Müller 2007). The anticipated freedom for East Germans was tempered by new ideologies, lay-offs and loss of personal autonomy in the workplace.

There are many cases of industrial closure around the world, including Wollongong's sister city Newcastle, whose steelworks was abolished at the start of the millenium. Newcastle became the hero of the Australian Labor Party as they won the election in 1910 for the first time. The government used Newcastle to fulfil its nation-building role advancing the Australian economy (Metcalf 1993: 7). A great mistake was the belief that Newcastle could fill this nation-building role with unlimited potential as an industrial centre. Newcastle has had a number of 'reincarnations' over the years, with residents quietly brushing off coal dust for over a decade to reveal a city that sits on a pleasant harbour. Given a leg up by the Renew Newcastle project, according to the marketeers the centre of town has evolved into a destination of choice for foodies, vintage shoppers, market hoppers and culture vultures alike.

The transition in Wollongong's economy has been analysed with the release of Wollongong City Council's *Economic Development Strategy 2013 to 2023* (2014) document. Launched by Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, the document examines how the city evolved from an industrial powerhouse in the early 1980s to its current de-industrialising state. The *Economic Development Strategy 2013 to 2023* shows that 16,553 people commute from the Illawarra region to Sydney. This makes the Wollongong to Sydney route one of Australia's busiest commuter corridors. This reflects a number of factors including a lack of opportunities in Wollongong along with higher pay opportunities in Sydney. Mayor Bradbery said the city was emerging as an important business and financial service centre and was home to the University of Wollongong, one of Australia's leading universities. He argued that a resolution to unemployment required a united approach between all levels of government, the business community and residents.

Gary, a former steelworker and the OH&S manager, was forced into early retirement due to pressure from BlueScope to cut jobs in 2010. Gary owns his own house as well as an investment property and appears to live a comfortable life. As I looked around his back yard, I noted several garden beds all growing different assortments of fruits and vegetables. I asked if he had always had fruit and vegetable gardens: 'I only started once I retired,' he replied. 'I needed to keep busy, I usually grow quite a bit more than we could ever eat before it goes off, so I give a lot of it to my kids and their families.' I could see the pride he took in the fact that he was still a provider for his family, growing vegetables to plug the void that the steelworks had filled for over 40 years. The value of labour is discussed widely by Potkonjak and Skokic. The Sisak ironworkers were forced to conceptualise their lives without work, even as they often referred in interviews to a time when they were working (Potkonjak and Skokic 2013: 74). While economic, social and physical survival despite unemployment was important for the Croatian ironworkers, it also threatened their perception of themselves as valuable workers or as contributors to their community. Harris (1987: 3) argues that the understanding of what work means to duties of everyday life is connected with the cultural meaning people ascribe to their

daily actions — this ‘involves both an analysis of the complex factors that structure the situation for the individuals to get caught up in it and an attempt to understand the meaning of the situation for these individuals; the way, that is, that they understand it and how, in consequence, they try to manipulate structure’. In Gary’s case while he was clearly troubled by his lack of purpose after he left BlueScope he was able to more than just hope for a positive future. He actively searched for a new purpose to contribute to his perception of himself as a valuable member of the community. Gary’s response provides an exemplary example of the way the Illawarra must transform and reinvent itself if a dystopian future of urban ruins, social decline, and economic collapse are to be avoided.

John, a steelworker and Port Kembla resident of 40 years expressed similar thoughts to Mayor Bradbury surrounding the innovation of the steel industry but also using existing industrial infrastructure such as Port Kembla harbour to generate economic growth to the region. In my time with John it was clear that his narrative captured the struggle the Illawarra is experiencing trying to move from its industrial past. There is a deep local attachment to the steel industry, but it is obvious that the city must adapt to be successful in the future:

‘The steelworks closure would definitively hurt but nowhere near as badly if we had closed during the financial crisis in the 80s when basically the whole Illawarra worked here. People commute to Sydney and the far south coast daily now, and lots of people are moving to the region from Sydney and just taking the train. The university just needs to make sure it stays competitive to students now that there isn’t necessarily a clear progression path because I think that is the future of the Illawarra. That and tourism, for some reason the cruise ships like to come here. I guess we have the beaches and stuff.’

While it is clear through John’s interview that the city cannot rely solely on the steel industry anymore, it is an important part of its past and could still have a role to play in the Illawarra’s future if it becomes more adaptable. This indicates that the Port Kembla steelworks will not survive long into the future in its current state. If the steelworks can adapt, it can still remain as part of the Illawarra’s economic makeup along with a variety of new industries. This is important as it both helps preserve the Illawarra’s industrial heritage, and many current jobs in the steel industry while making Port Kembla’s urban environment a more vibrant space.

One such plan that is being backed by the State Government is a bipartisan plan by industry, unions and Wollongong University to gear the heavy-polluting manufacturers of the Illawarra towards renewable energy. The steel plant at Port Kembla can produce metal components for wind turbines, and be partially powered on site by recycling hot gases from its blast furnaces in a cogeneration energy plant. Eriksen’s (2018) study on the North Queensland city Gladstone demonstrates the difficulty in balancing industrial growth and the environment. Gladstone is surrounded by pockets of valuable natural gas and the largest living eco-system on earth, the great barrier reef. The delicate relationship between industry, the local community and the natural environment at Gladstone embody many contradictions: prosperous yet polluted, growing and developing, yet always on the precipice of crisis (Eriksen 2018). Under



the Green Jobs Illawarra Action Plan, the Illawarra could become a green job hub for Australia. Former Premier, Nathan Rees (Cubby 2009: § 5-6), said in a statement in 2016 that,

‘This strategy provides an excellent blueprint for regions that are traditionally supported by industries like coal and steel to build long-term plans for the future. What we’ve done is broken the back of the old jobs versus environment conundrum, if you can do that in Wollongong with our heavy industry steel and coal jobs, then you can do that anywhere.’

BlueScope Steel estimated that it would have to spend up to \$1 billion to develop fully a cogeneration plant at its Port Kembla steelworks, and shelved its plans during the economic downturn. According to the company, the proposed plan would not assist the steelworks long term in saving money and providing jobs, even if it would stop the release of about 1 million tonnes of greenhouse gases per year. BlueScope is responsible for 7% of the state’s total emissions. The reduced environmental impact of the government’s plan could have assuaged part of the Illawarra’s anti-industrial sentiment. The options posited by John and suggested by the NSW state Government are just some of the multiple futures for the Illawarra. It currently remains unclear if the Illawarra will move into an economical or ecological adaptation with both options being pushed by the local community and Government policy.

## **Conclusion**

Both the steel industry and its workers have faced adversity over their inter-generational life, with the industry’s beating heart threatening to flat line on many occasions. The lone furnace light may grow dim, but it continues to burn, producing steel. The aim of this paper has been to investigate how policies directed towards the steel industry, and relationships between local, national and global processes, have and are continuing to shape the Illawarra Region.

While the impact of the initial stages of de-industrialisation in Port Kembla has not been completely devastating, the impacts of this loss have still been dramatic. Numerous threats of immediate closure, including as recently as November 2016, have meant that the community is devoting considerable political energy both to saving the steelworks through the ‘Save Our Steel’ campaign and to the regeneration of Port Kembla. The ‘SOS’ campaign was vitally important to gathering the support of the government to change policy that had left the Australian steel industry vulnerable. Despite community support many Government officials have opposed the steel bill, as highlighted when the Steel Industry Protection Bill lapsed.

If the steelworks do shut down, they would most likely be replaced with a variety of smaller industries such tech jobs, further University of Wollongong expansions, and expansion of the port and harbour for passengers and more cars. BlueScope will face a crucial decision in 10 years as to whether to spend between \$300 million and \$400 million re-lining the No 5 blast furnace again. There will need to be a ‘business case’ made for its delivery of acceptable returns before the investment will be justified. Many of the Illawarra community believe this case will depend on the path senior management take. If BlueScope can focus on innovation, upgrading

their infrastructure, and continue to develop workers technical skills they can survive into the future.

Ethnographic research in the Illawarra is important now precisely because the steel industry continues. In other cities such as Newcastle there is no choice but to move forward as heavy industry has shut down. Is it possible for the community to maintain its industrial past while moving into the new, more 'agile' industries that the current Government publicises? There is much that can be learnt about the social, cultural and political landscapes of industrial cities around the world based on current and future research in the Illawarra area.

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## *Urban Restructuring in Rio de Janeiro: Creative Economy and New Perspectives of Development*

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The focus of this article is the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area. The key argument is that this process relates to a new phase of capitalism centred on the creative economy and the continuous search of the city for a new development model since 1960, when it ceased to be the capital of Brazil. Thus, the main objective of the paper is to analyse the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area, identifying its potential, limitations and risks in view of the valuing perspective of cultural assets as core elements of a new territorial development model. Through the interpretation of socioeconomic data and mapping of cultural facilities located in the area under discussion, we identify the enormous potential of the culture in playing a central role in the development of the city and the central area, but we recognize that merely the construction of new cultural facilities and infrastructure will not be enough to re-dynamise the local economy. Moreover, we point out the need to increase the residential occupation of the area without incurring in a gentrification process, as seen in many other cases of urban restructuring in cities around the world.

**Keywords:** Urban restructuring, development, creative economy, city centre.

### **Introduction**

Many authors devoted to the analysis of the evolution of cities agree that their forms and functions vary according to the phases of capitalism and, in this perspective, recognize that cities are both a product of capitalism and a condition for its reproduction (Harvey 1990, Scott 2008, Ferreira 2011). In other words, this literature highlights the historical relationship of interdependence between the development of capitalist relations of production and urban processes responsible for forging the different types of cities. Thus, each stage of capitalism is associated with specific types of cities and vice-versa. In addition to this idea, the anthropological literature, especially that referring to urban studies, sees the city as an essential environment to be analyzed, where citizenship, the democratic process and identity are constantly renegotiated, and where economic, political and cultural aspects interact (Prato and Pardo 2013).

The productive restructuring process triggered since the 1970s and 1980s has given rise to new forms of economic organization. We highlight three aspects relating to changes in the relations between cities and the contemporary dynamics of production: the intensive use of new information and communication technologies (Castells 1996), the process of production territorialisation (Benko and Lipietz eds 1992, Storper 1997) and the increasing convergence between culture and economy (Throsby 2001, Florida 2002, Landry 2008, Scott 2008). In this context, the differentiated insertion of cities in the global economy is increasingly related to the capacity of productive mobilization of territorial specificities; in particular, those listed in the non-material sphere (Storper 1994, Sassen 1994, Veltz 1999, Scott 2008).

Since the late 2000s, Rio de Janeiro has experienced an extensive process of reconfiguration of the urban space, with interventions in several areas of the city. More than the adequacy of physical space for holding major international events such as the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games, this ongoing process reflects the construction of a new city

project and opens the debate on the limits and potential of this unborn model of development in Rio de Janeiro, which has in the creative economy one of its axes. This transformation process takes place within a social, cultural, political and economic context that includes and combines processes of deindustrialization (Harvey 1990, 2014), of aestheticization of everyday life (Featherstone 1995) and urban intervention and gentrification (Leite 2002, 2006; Frúgoli Jr and Sklair 2009), which, especially in the last three decades, have transformed regions, cities and neighbourhoods around the globe.

We acknowledge that the central area of the city takes on a strategic role in this process both for housing one of the most ambitious urban restructuring projects — the Porto Maravilha — and for the concentration of cultural tangible and intangible assets that can be employed productively for development. Therefore, in this article we discuss the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area in view of the debate on the role of cultural and creative activities for development. The main objective is to analyse the process of urban restructuring, identifying its potential, limitations and risks in view of the value attached to cultural assets as core elements of a new territorial development model. It is not our intention to evaluate the success or failure of ongoing urban interventions. Our interest is solely to discuss how creativity and the appreciation of existing cultural assets can be mobilized to build the competitive advantages of a territory on the premise that the convergence of culture, economy and territory are increasingly determining the development trajectories in the current phase of capitalism.

The article is structured in three parts, alongside the introduction and the concluding remarks. Firstly, we discuss the meaning of the search for a new development model for Rio de Janeiro. We understand that the city has been going through a productive restructuring process since the 1960s, when it ceased to be the capital of Brazil. Subsequently, we present the debate on the interdependence between culture, territory and development in contemporary capitalism, looking to defend the existence of new development possibilities for Rio de Janeiro through the productive mobilization of its territorial specificities, as a way to reposition itself in the global economy. Lastly, we explore the changes that are taking place in the central area of the city, showing through maps and socioeconomic data the possibility of productive mobilization of cultural and creative assets in favour of a new perspective of development for Rio de Janeiro. Thus, the article goes through a general analysis of the new development possibilities that open up with the changes in contemporary capitalism, gradually moving towards an analysis of the urban restructuring, in this context, of Rio de Janeiro's central area.

### **The Meaning of a New Development Model for Rio De Janeiro in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Since the 1970s, the productive and urban restructuring triggered by the transformation of global capitalism has affected cities worldwide in different ways. Rio de Janeiro is no exception. However, the contours of the Rio restructuring had been previously determined by the loss of its position as the federal capital; as a consequence, an important dimension to be faced by the city in its restructuring process was added to the transition from the Fordist regime of accumulation to one of flexible accumulation. The challenge was to develop new economic

functions in an uncertain context of transformation of capitalism in the 1970s and of crisis of 'Brazilian developmentalism' in the 1980s and 1990s.

The transfer of the capital to Brasilia was a hard blow to Rio de Janeiro's productive dynamics (Lessa 2000), since it implied the loss of its central function in the national urban network. This loss evidenced many problems that had been engendered during the years when Rio as the Federal District had structured itself according to a model oriented towards the development of the country instead of its own space (Moreira 2001). This perspective had restricted the development of industrial activities in the city and isolated it from its immediate hinterland.

Although the genesis of Brazilian industrialization has close links with Rio de Janeiro, which until the 1920s was hegemonic in this productive field, the years that followed progressively marked the transfer of this hegemony to the Metropolitan Region of São Paulo, where the installation of the industrial complex of the Brazilian 'peripheral Fordism' was concentrated. On the other hand, the growth of Rio de Janeiro was related to the concentration of public services and to the fact that it was the consumption space of the élite. As a result, the city has developed as a highly urbanized space, but without a corresponding industrialization (Lessa 2000). The intense urbanization of the city of Rio de Janeiro dissociated from an equivalent industrialization transformed the city into a mainly consumerist space and without the presence of an industrial labour market, which was a key condition of the urbanization processes during the years of the Fordist accumulation regime in the world's largest cities.

Since Rio de Janeiro lost its federal capital status in 1960, many economic development plans were carried out in order to boost new roles for the city to play in the Brazilian urban network. Invariably, with a few exceptions, the economic solutions proposed were focused on the traditional discourse of industrialization. However, these initiatives achieved poor results in revitalizing Rio's urban economy, whose crisis expanded during the decades of 1980s and 1990s due to the structural collapse of the Brazilian economic development model adopted since 1930.<sup>1</sup>

If, on the one hand, the disintegration of the Brazilian developmentalism produced negative impacts on Rio's economy and its urban dynamics, on the other hand, it opened the possibility for building a model of development for the city directed by local interests and based on the identification of historically constructed territorial competences. In this perspective, a new organization of the economic space has become gradually consolidated in the state of Rio

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<sup>1</sup> Because it was the capital of Brazil, Rio's economic dynamism became dependent on federal investments, thus, the crisis in the Brazilian economy of the 1980s and 1990s produced significant negative effects for the economy of Rio de Janeiro. Old factories responsible for the growth of Rio's suburbs closed their doors definitively or were transferred to other localities; several economic development projects managed by the federal government were discontinued; the privatization of many state-owned companies in the city negatively impacted the generation of jobs and income in the short term. In addition, these decades also marked a continuation of the transfer of the bureaucratic functions to Brasilia, and of the services sector activities to São Paulo, especially the financial sector, marked by the closing of the Rio Stock Exchange and other activities such as advertising.

de Janeiro with the allocation of heavy industrialization in the countryside and the enhancement of the cultural and cognitive capabilities of the city of Rio de Janeiro.

This process has been decisively expanded since the 1990s with the formulation of strategic plans that have become the main guide for the government's actions aimed at increasing the economic competitiveness of the city. That decade marked the beginning of a series of actions that, with mistakes and successes, aimed for a new round of restructuring processes of the city in the light of the new production paradigms. In general, what we saw in the city's economic planning was the redirection of an industrialization perspective in the Fordist moulds for a targeted strengthening of intensive economic activities in cultural and cognitive competencies. In this sense, analysing the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area allows to reflect on the scope of the ongoing actions in the implementation of a possible new territorial development model.

### **Culture, Territory and Development**

Since the late twentieth century, the reflections on the role of culture and territorial specificities have been gaining prominence in debates about development in the context of criticism of the centrality of technological modernization and economic growth, which is associated with the crisis of the Fordist industrial paradigm. Beyond recognizing the lack of culture and territory and its specificities in development debates throughout the twentieth century, contemporary reflections began to consider these elements to be strategic for development in the twenty-first century. They reflections were stimulated internationally by the studies and actions of UNESCO such as the publication of the 'World Culture Report' and the 'Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity', advocating a development perspective centred on humanity rather than on the economy (UNESCO 1998, 2000, 2002). However, we can identify the roots of this debate in the research and political actions of economists such as Amartya Sen and Celso Furtado, who along with other social scientists contributed to the questioning of the centrality of the economy in the development debate. The expansion of freedom is the fundamental end and means of development, relating development to the expansion of human capabilities (Sen 1999). In turn, when analysing Brazilian development, Furtado (2012) argues that the Brazilian diversity (what we are) should be productively mobilized as the centrepiece of a new development model specific to Brazil, whereby culture is recognized as an end and the economy as a means to an end.

In the late 2000s, this debate entered the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which, through the publications of the 'Creative Economy Report' (2010), defended the idea that the traditional knowledge and cultural basis of a given locality are central resources for the productive sectors of the creative economy. In this perspective, cultural resources are increasingly becoming the raw material of cities and are forming their value basis, replacing coal, iron and gold (Landry 2008). Landry highlights the new development possibilities that arise for cities worldwide, since there is no urban place in the world that does not have any historical, social or cultural characteristic that could not be mobilized productively.



In this context, the territorial approach in an economic perspective<sup>2</sup> — which emphasizes the spatial dimension of economic relations, where the territory is seen as a source of resources and is incorporated in the clash between social classes and the capital-labour relationship — helps us to think of the relation of interdependencies between the various productive activities; in particular, the cultural and creative activities. Thus, we understand that the territory, through its technical (objective competences), social (subjective competences) and institutional networks, plays an active role as the locational factor of economic activity; specifically, in the level of competitiveness between firms. In this view, we can say that an activity is territorialized when its execution is conditioned by its location and by the existing territorial resources, which often cannot be easily re-created or moved elsewhere (Storper 1994). Therefore, the competitiveness of firms depends increasingly on their geographical inclusion in territories where the most important resources are public goods: the labour force (know-how), learning and innovation capabilities, and the relations among the local productive players structured by the institutional environment.

The increasing recognition of relationship between culture, territory and development engendered a proliferation of studies and actions questioning the traditional urban/regional development policies. This movement points to new horizons and practices that emphasize the role of knowledge, culture and creativity as important territorial resources capable of enhancing the construction of competences through differentiation (Veltz 1999).

If, on the one hand, it is right to say that the big cities have no other option but to compete with each other for economic attractiveness (Harvey 1990), on the other hand, we believe that besides the production of creative goods and services the appreciation of the local culture in favour of a creative specificity allows the attraction of investments seeking something ‘different’ — something ‘distinctive’, thus allowing cities to enter the globalization process through the productive mobilization of their subjective competences.

Currently, one of the most important physical evidences of this interdependence between culture, territory and development is the tendency of cultural and creative activities to materialize in the landscape of the metropolis in the form of clusters of specialized firms and skilled labour. In our previous works, the focus was to identify the territorial dynamics of the creative economy in the city of Rio de Janeiro, as shown by the data and maps below (Medeiros et al. 2011a, 2011b)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of territory has tradition in several areas of study such as geography, political science, sociology, biology, economics, anthropology and psychology. Therefore, just as there are several areas of knowledge that are interested in the study of the territory, there are several existing conceptions of this concept. Haesbaert (2004) groups these conceptions into four basic aspects: 1) political or legal-political; 2) cultural or symbolic-cultural; 3) economic; and 4) natural.

<sup>3</sup> According to the study made by the Federação da Indústria do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FIRJAN 2008), three major areas of the ‘creative industry’ chain are recognized: i) the core, which is basically an adaptation of the British study proposed by DCMS, comprising the segments: cultural expressions, performing arts, visual arts, music, film and video, TV and radio, publishing, software and computing, architecture, design, fashion and advertising; ii) the related areas, which involve segments of the direct supply of goods and services to the core activities, composed of industries and service providers that

Category	Jobs		Salary bulk		Average Salary R\$
	Absolute N°	Participation %	Absolute N° R\$	Participation %	
Total	2.338.581	100,0%	4.992.189.194,42	100,0%	2.134,71
Core	73.219	3,1%	248.374.583,60	5,0%	3.392,21
Related	174.990	7,5%	229.965.501,60	4,6%	1.314,16

Table 1. *Economic activities in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro in 2010*. Formal jobs, salary bulk and average salary, according to the core categories and related to the creative economy — Municipality of Rio de Janeiro 2010. Developed by the authors using data published by the Ministry of Labor and Employment/MTE, Annual Social Information RAIS.

In maps 1<sup>4</sup> and 2<sup>5</sup>, we observe on two different scales the pattern of spatial concentration of activities defined as creative according to the criteria used in the cited study. In the first case, the polarizing role of the city of Rio de Janeiro at state level is clear. In the following case, on the intra-metropolitan scale, we emphasize the differential character of the central area.

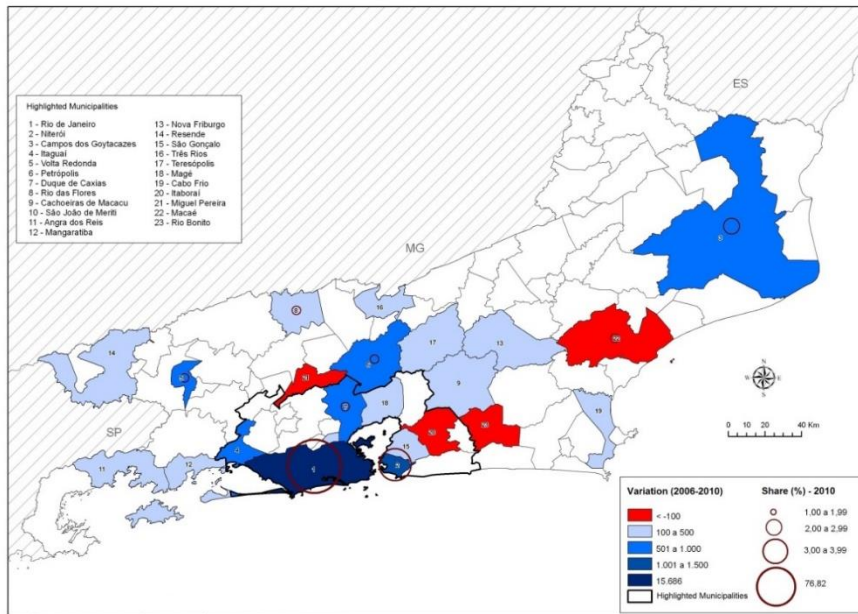
In agreement with Scott's analytical perspective (2000, 2005) on productive agglomeration, we recognize that the geographical concentration of skilled labour and specialized firms linked to the creative economy expands the possibilities of combinations and inter arrangements stimulating local creativity for the development of various products. Thus, territories of learning and innovation truly begin to emerge where culture, imagination and originality are forged into the territorialized productive system. Gains in know-how and benefits in work settings do not refer only to concrete and practical techniques, but also to the symbolic content of products.

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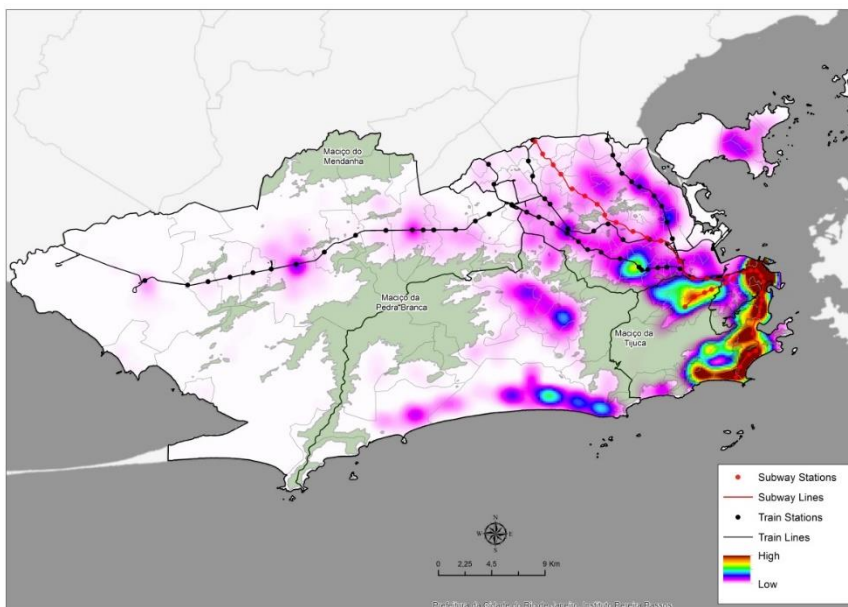
provide materials and elements crucial to the operation of the core; iii) more indirect support activities. We opted not to address this category, 'support activities', in the surveys and statistical analysis of the data, since our main interest is to analyze the dynamics of the segments and economic activities most directly linked to the core area of the creative economy. Thus, the data and information presented in the study refer exclusively to the core and related categories.

<sup>4</sup> We selected only those cities with: i) positive variation generating more than 100 jobs, and ii) negative variation with a loss of more than 100 jobs. We selected only the municipalities in which the participation percentage was equal to or higher than 1.00%. The RAIS covers the total of the formal labor market on 31 December of each year. 'The Creative Industry Chain in Brazil' (FIRJAN 2008) was used in the study as a reference for the identification of the economic activities mapped.

<sup>5</sup> Data on the number of establishments (licenses) include the period up to January 2011. The study 'The Creative Industry Chain in Brazil' (FIRJAN 2008) was used as a reference for the identification of the economic activities mapped.



Map 1: Absolute variation in the number of formal jobs (2006-2010) and percentage of participation in the total of jobs in the state of Rio de Janeiro in 2010 of the ‘core activities’ of the chain of the creative economy, according to highlighted municipalities - State of Rio de Janeiro. Developed by João Grand Júnior and published first in Medeiros Jr et al. 2011b.



Map 2: Spatial distribution of the ‘core’ establishments of the creative economy chain - Municipality of Rio de Janeiro - 2011. Developed by João Grand Júnior and published first in Medeiros Jr et al. 2011b.

The theoretical debate on the links between culture, territory and development associated with the physical evidence of the existence of productive agglomerations of cultural and creative activities in the city of Rio de Janeiro opens possibilities for new development policies. New territorial management proposals can be thought out as tools for the valorisation and enhancement of cultural and creative competences historically constructed in the city, which

would become core assets for development. It is in the face of this debate that we analyse the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area.

### **Urban Restructuring of the Central Area of Rio de Janeiro**

Our analysis of the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area aims to assess the extent to which the actions valuing the cultural and creative dimension of the city are defined as productive restructuring strategies that help to reposition the city in the global economy. Thus, it behoves us to question how cultural and creative activities can contribute to the process of urban restructuring and how we can evaluate this process, in which culture plays a growing role in urban restructuring.

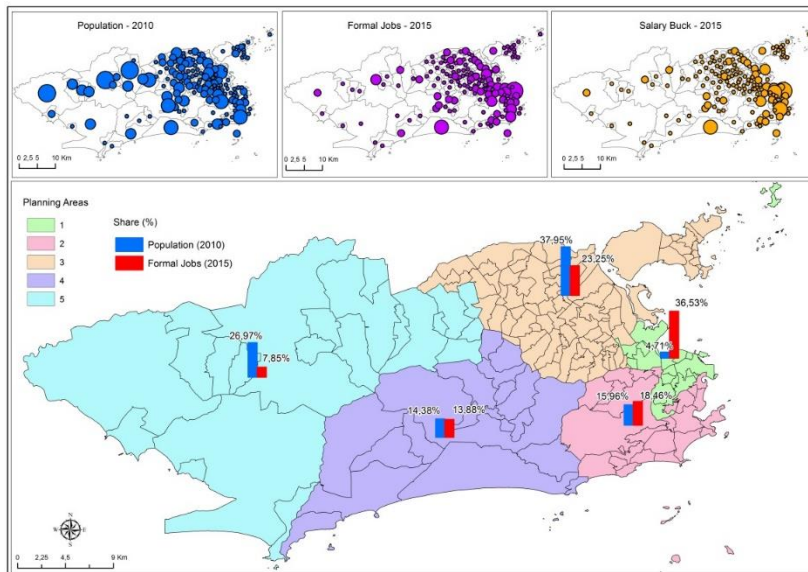
These questions have inaccurate answers. However, we should recognize that the contribution of arts and culture to urban life and to the economic development of cities is expressed in many ways (Throsby 2010): creating employment opportunities and social commitment for various social groups; attracting foreign investment through cultural facilities and a pulsating artistic life, which enhance the quality of life; contributing to the urban economy by encouraging the construction of cultural facilities that help the revival of the economy in deteriorated urban areas that become symbols for the local population and tourists; strengthening the cultural identity of the city through festivals and cultural events; stimulating economic agglomeration by encouraging the concentration of cultural and creative activities in urban environments.

Many actions were carried out in Rio de Janeiro's central area with an emphasis on the construction of important culture and leisure spaces aimed to strengthening cultural development policies such as the construction of the Museum of Tomorrow, the Rio Art Museum (MAR), the Rio Marine Aquarium (AquaRio), the Orla Mayor Luiz Paulo Conde, the regeneration of the José Bonifácio Cultural Center, the creation of the funding statutes 'Local Actions' and 'Cultural Territories', and so on. The next section briefly describes Rio de Janeiro's central area, so that we can proceed to the main purpose of this article, which is to analyse the restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area and identify its potential, limitations and risks in view of the value of cultural assets as core elements of a new territorial development model.

#### *Rio de Janeiro's central area and its urban restructuring potential*

The Rio de Janeiro's central area considered in this study falls in what the municipal government defines as Planning Area 1. In addition to the historical cultural value expressed in different landscapes, this area can also be analyzed from the perspective of the concentration of generic economic assets (business, jobs and wages generated in the city), specific resources and assets linked to cultural-creative segments (theatres, cinemas, museums and libraries) and various organizations producing cultural goods and services, such as cultural collectives, samba schools and audio-visual produce rs. On the other hand, this area can also be described in terms of a relatively 'empty' demographic, reflecting in part the zoning regulations

and occupancy strategies defined by the municipal government of the past (Ordinance No. 322 of 3 March 1976), which restricted the use of the land for residential purposes.

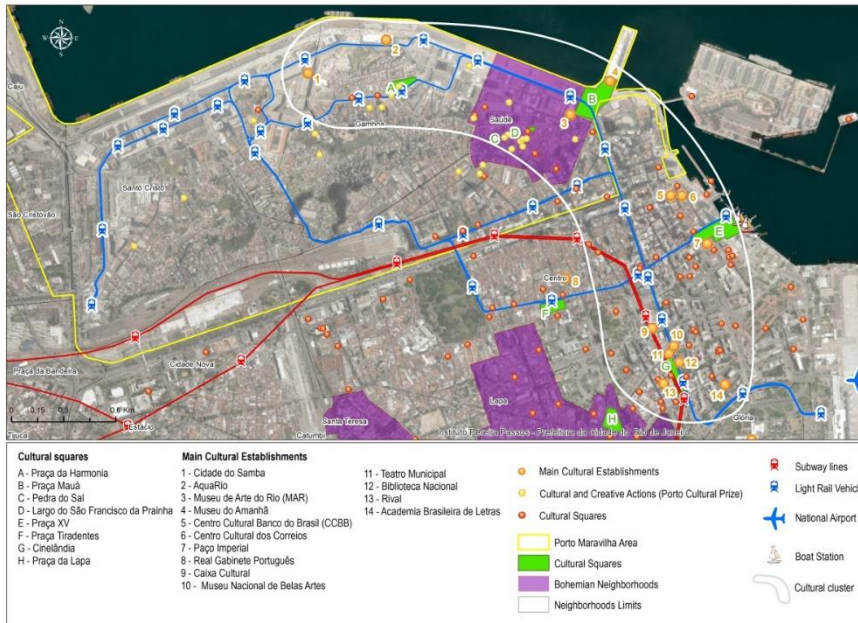


Map 3: Distribution of the formal employment and the population in the Planning Areas of the city of Rio de Janeiro - 2010. Developed by João Grand Júnior using data published by the Ministry of Labor and Employment/MTE, Annual Social Information–RAIS, and population data from the IBGE census 2010.

We accept the premise that the challenge of strengthening the creative economy in the city of Rio de Janeiro should be linked to another even greater challenge, the reduction of socio-spatial inequalities in the city. Map 3 shows the asymmetric distribution of formal jobs in respect to the population among the five planning areas (PA): PA 1 (Central Area); PA 2 (South Zone); PA 3 (North Zone); PA 4 (Baixada de Jacarepaguá); and PA 5 (West Zone). The biggest distortions are in PA 1, which includes only 4.7% of the city’s population but has 36.5% of the formal jobs; in PA 3, which includes 37.9% of the population and 23.25% of the jobs; and in PA 5 which includes 26.9% of the city’s population but only 7.8% of the jobs. While Map 3 reveals the spatial imbalance in the city in terms of distribution of the population and employment, Map 2 highlights the clustering of cultural and creative formal activities in a corridor connecting PA 1 (Central Area) and PA 2 (South Zone). In this light, the urban restructuring of the city’s central area should have as its objective the expansion of the residential use and a remodelling of the infrastructure aimed at attracting new residents to this part of town, which loses much of its vitality on weekends and at night, when the many workers that normally circulate in the area go to their homes elsewhere in the city.

In Map 4 we show the perimeter of the Porto Maravilha project and note how it fits in an area of the city that, although demographically empty, has a significant presence of cultural facilities and important historical and symbolic value. The approach of the municipal government to the region, expressed in the strategic plan for 2013-2016, is made quite clear in the following two goals: consolidate the region of the Porto Maravilha as a location for the promotion of culture, by promoting at least 15 important cultural initiatives by 2016; and enhance the urban landscape and cultural heritage of the historic centre through the recovery

and restoration of important areas such as the Tiradentes Square and Lapa. In addition, the expectation is to expand by the year 2020 the number of residents in the central area from the



current 40,000 to approximately 100,000.

Map 4: Main creative cultural facilities in the central area of the city of Rio de Janeiro. Developed by João Grand Júnior using data published by the Municipal Secretary of Culture; Instituto Pereira Passos.

We believe that the installation of the new anchor cultural facilities (MAR, Museum of Tomorrow and AquaRio), the restoration of important cultural town squares (Praça Mauá, Harmony Square, Largo do São Francisco da Prainha) and the installation of a new urban transport mode (Light Rail Vehicle), which integrates the central area with the national airport and the bus station, have great potential to strengthen the cultural-creative ecosystem of the central area of Rio, and thus contribute to an increase in residential occupation and a strengthening of the existing productive clusters of cultural and creative activities. However, we do not believe that the goal to reach 100,000 residents by the year 2020 will be achieved because the government’s emphasis on the construction of large cultural facilities and real estate initiatives on corporate buildings does not contribute directly to increasing the population density of the central area. The expectation that the restructuring of the physical infrastructure combined with new cultural facilities and urban amenities will boost the housing market has not yet materialized. To aggravate the problem, since 2015, Brazil has faced a deep political and economic crisis that has reversed much of the positive expectations for the economy of the country and of Rio de Janeiro.

Therefore, we argue that, on the one hand, the infrastructure has the potential to increase the contribution of cultural and creative activities to the urban life of Rio de Janeiro and to contribute in the development of the city. On the other hand, there is an important question that needs attention in the debate on urban restructuring aimed at promoting regional development in the context of valuing cultural and creative activities: Is the allocation of physical

infrastructure sufficient to support the development and strengthening of the cultural and creative activities in Rio de Janeiro?

*The limitations and risks of the restructuring of the central area of Rio de Janeiro*

To understand the limits and risks of the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area we engaged in the analysis of the territory from an economic perspective. From this point of view, our analysis emphasizes a dimension bringing together technical (objective skills), social (subjective skills) and institutional networks that forge the territorial characteristics responsible for the local dynamics of economic activities and the level of competitiveness of firms. Hence, the insufficiency of the technical infrastructure as an element capable of redefining the territory is fairly evident, although it is a fundamental part of the process. Equally important are the upgrading of the technical networks and the actions aimed at strengthening social networks and increasing confidence in institutional networks.

In terms of strengthening of social networks and enhancement of the subjective characteristics of the city and its central area, there are ongoing actions, such as, the city's entry in the World Network of Creativity Districts (Flanders DC) in 2010; the creation of the Rio Heritage of Humanity Institute, of the Rio Startup programme, of the creative Port District in 2015 and of the Creative Rio Incubator by the State Secretary of Culture of Rio de Janeiro; the expansion of the direct and indirect municipal promotion of culture (Notices of the Culture Points, the Local Actions and the ISS Act). This combination of ongoing actions has potential to transform the creative economy into a development axis of the city, impacting the urban restructuring of the central area through a relationship with the physical infrastructure. Yet, it should be noted that the real challenge 'is not to value the local culture, but a cultural production made up by local players (capable of dialogue, therefore, with the cultural production of the metropolis)' (Silva 2012: 187).

We have identified in the territorial institutional networks the greatest limits to the urban restructuring of the central area, due to their growing importance in the process of economic development; especially in a model centred on cultural and creative activities. In an institutionalist perspective, as North (1990) suggests, defining the rules of the game in society determines the pattern of economic, social and political interactions. In this sense, they are vital for the economic performance of cities and countries, and for the productive agglomerations characterized by a dense interplay among the players. Thus, it is important that the institutional environment produces a structure of interaction between companies and workers in the various industrial agglomerations of the creative economy which encourages the formation of networks and promotes the generation of externalities.

In this line, when analysing the organization of creative industries, the 'Contract Theory' emphasizes the importance of agreements that point to a certain conduct in economic transactions (Caves 2002). For Caves, de-verticalised production systems require a contractual pattern that encourages interaction among the productive agents, and the challenge is amplified in the extent that it increases the variety of professionals involved and requires different contractual terms. Such is the case of the creative economy. Consequently, it is expected that

the increased confidence and incentives for interactions and entrepreneurship promoted by the institutional environment, should strengthen the territorialisation process of knowledge and skills, turning them into public goods. This process is central to developing the competitiveness of a city guided by the creative economy, since the links of the production process are no longer found within the enterprises, but are contained in the territorial base and are supported by the institutional environment.

The process that we have just outlined emphasizes the need for new policies aimed at promoting economic development because the traditional provision of physical infrastructure and technology are insufficient in the face of the new relational paradigm of the modern economy, where the system of norms, rules and conventions and the condition of public goods is of utmost importance (Storper 1997), which increases the importance of social cohesion (Veltz 1999). Broadening this concern, we should consider that the spread of great optimism about the possibilities of urban restructuring through culture could reinforce the existing inequalities in the city, or could not help to minimize this problem inherent to the capitalist system. When looking to strengthening the creative economy, the implementation of basic principles of equality, justice and democratic participation are necessary conditions (Scott 2008).

If the evolution of the urban restructuring project of Rio de Janeiro's central area does not consider the limits presented above and does not strengthen or develop tools targeting these issues, there is a great risk that the project will not achieve its goals. Thus the project would not promote the creative economy as a new development model for the city, which would involve turning the central area into a privileged area, with a positive impact on the number of residents, on the use of public space and cultural facilities and on the centrality of cultural and creative activities in the urban economy. Instead, the project could become a gentrification force of the central area, transforming it into a tourist consumption space.

The word 'gentrification', coined in the 1960s (Glass 1964), has been used in several studies according to Frúgoli Jr and Sklair to refer to the 'development of housing areas for middle and upper classes in neighbourhoods of central urban areas, articulated to processes of control or expulsion of sectors of working classes, in a process also conspicuous due to the performance of certain lifestyles and consumption [...]'<sup>6</sup> (2009: 120, our translation).

Concerning the possibility of gentrification in regions that undergo urban restructuring, authors such as Featherstone (1995) have already pointed out the development of new urban spaces and the return of a middle class linked to cultural industries to restored central and harbour areas. Subsequently, these areas are then reoccupied by members of this middle class and developed as tourist attractions and cultural consumption, while lower-income working class, which had previously dwelt in these areas, is expelled or relocated to other regions of the city. The Brooklyn district, as DeSena and Krase (2015) demonstrate, with its radical shift from a place regarded as urban blight in the last decades of the 20th century to a privileged and

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<sup>6</sup> In the original: 'criação de áreas residenciais para classes médias e altas em bairros de áreas urbanas centrais, articulados a processos de controle ou expulsão de setores das classes populares, num processo também assinalado pelo desempenho de determinados estilos de vida e consumo'.



popular tourist destination in New York City at the beginning of the 21st century, portrays this process, strongly perceived by its former dwellers that underwent the effects of gentrification. Regardless of its peculiarities, gentrification has reached urban spaces around the world. Frúgoli Jr and Sklair (2009) draw attention to the fact that the ongoing gentrification processes in Latin American cities have specificities, as these cities are notably different from each other and show different cultural, social and economic realities from those of European cities, where the concept of gentrification was originally employed, and from North American cities.

## **Conclusions**

This discussion aims to add to other recent studies (Passos 2014, Sant'Anna and Gonçalves 2015, Pinheiro and Carneiro 2016, Freitas and Mello 2017) on the urban transformations carried out in the central region of the city of Rio de Janeiro, mainly in the harbour area. Namely, those are studies that have pointed to the complexity that involves the restructuring of an urban space with diverse social agents and shown forms of appropriation and use of this equally diverse space. Hence, the social relations interwoven in the neighbourhoods that constitute the harbour area are multiple and have been disregarded by the forces of the political-economic articulation leading this urban restructuring project.

It is too early to perceive the results of the ongoing urban restructuring process in the central area of the city of Rio de Janeiro, since the interventions initiated in 2010 and planned to be completed in 2016 are still being implemented and considering that during the period 2015-2017 Brazil has faced a deep economic and political crisis. In any case, it is possible to establish some notes in the form of initial findings.

In general, after the loss of the federal capital status in 1960 and the tough crisis during the decades of 1980/1990, the city of Rio de Janeiro was once again faced with the question of its urban restructuring, but this time under the hegemony of new productive paradigm. Thus, the creative economy has been frequently pointed out as a possibility of revitalization of the urban economy of Rio de Janeiro, based on its cultural and creative competencies. Therefore, we believe that the current phase of capitalism leverages new development possibilities for the city. In this sense, territorial development policies must take into account these new productive dynamics of the cultural-cognitive paradigm over the old practices associated with the industrial paradigm.

In other words, the territorial management looking to strengthen cultural and creative activities has specific characteristics, distinct from territorial management practice in the context of the industrial-Fordist paradigm, since the productive links in the creative economy are located in the territory and no longer inside the factories. In spite of being aware of the myriad social agents involved, the complexity of the social dynamics and the variety of perspectives on the urban intervention process under consideration, we believe, like Landry (2008), that cities need leaderships that recognize the paradigm shift regarding urban development in the 21st century, in a process that should be anchored in local culture and identity, which in turn constitutes the trait that distinguishes a city from the others.

Therefore, we admit that the new cultural facilities installed in the central area have great importance, but do not carry with them the mark of Rio's identity. It is worth mentioning that in this same area is also located the 'City of Samba', a cultural facility that serves as a production space of the carnival parade of the best samba schools and which could be elevated to a central position in this debate on new development opportunities through the enhancement of cultural and creative activities, as it synthesizes one of the most important cultural and creative features of Rio de Janeiro: the samba and the carnival. In the same spirit, we must mention the debate for the construction of the 'Museum of Slavery and Freedom', which would be a memory and appreciation space of African cultures that have contributed so much to build the Rio identity. Thus, although the speeches and actions are moving in the direction of enhancing the value of cultural and creative aspects of the city, it seems there is an emphasis on constructions of large cultural facilities, which on its own will not be able to explore all the cultural and creative productive potential of the local.

From these empirical analyses, we believe that Rio de Janeiro's central area has enormous potential to play a strategic role in transforming the local productive system, and can function as a territorial development tool in/for the city. However we must recognize that the institutional environment and know-how constitute priority fields of the territorial management to strengthen the creative economy, after all, they are the territorial sources of competitiveness of companies operating in this production field. In addition, the new urban space under development and new urban facilities should enable the manifestation of the heterogeneity of the city, for it will be through these encounters that creativity will emerge and will tend to strengthen the urban environment in the form of productive agglomerations (Scott 2005). We agree that the city planning and management that bet on the strength of their cultures and creativity should favour the emergence of the unpredictable (Vivant 2009).

Naturally there is still much to study and perform; however, the possibility of transformation of the various cultures present in Rio de Janeiro in assets for development represents opportunities that did not exist for the city before, which now more than ever should consider socio-spatial segregation as a huge obstacle for its development, because it restricts the possibilities for encounters between the different cultural players.

Thus, policies that facilitate the creative potential of various social groups that make up the city of Rio de Janeiro are a crucial condition so that cultural and creative activities will definitively enter the heart of a new development model and will not become just another speech exclusively favourable to big businesses. Moreover, this would be a huge limit to the strengthening of cultural and creative activities, since its development is a direct consequence of the interaction between large and small companies, between hegemonic and independent projects, between professionals with very different knowledge and skills.

In short, we argue that the success of the urban restructuring of Rio de Janeiro's central area and its role in building a path of development grounded in the creative economy will necessarily depend on the democratization of access to means of production, the reduction of socio-spatial inequalities and the strengthening of local diversity. Therefore, although it is essential to consider that in urban intervention processes the uses of spaces focus on the ways

of daily representation and urban ways of life, as well as on the physical and symbolic access to these spaces (Leite 2006), the building of cultural facilities and the restoration of the physical infrastructure are preconditions for this process; its results will depend to a large extent on the government's ability to create the conditions so that the diversity in society as well as the different ways of life and cultures can configure themselves effectively into a source of creative work and talent.

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## **BOOK REVIEWS**

**Paul Chatterton**, 2018. *Unlocking Sustainable Cities: A Manifesto of Real Change*. London: Pluto Press.

According to the revised World Urbanization Prospects, 55 per cent of the world's population lives in urban areas. It is expected to increase to 68 per cent by 2050. 90% of this increase is going to take place in Asia and Africa (United Nations 2018). This trend of urbanization in coming years is crucial in order to manage successfully this urban growth and provide the inhabitants basic infrastructure (like housing, transportation), employment and services such as education and health care. Globally, one billion people live in slums, which is nearly one in every eight urban residents (UN-HABITAT 2016). In developing countries like India, one in six city residents live in slums, where they face lack of access to water, sanitation, sufficient living space, housing durability and security of tenure (Christ et. al. 2016). Moreover, persisting urban issues include pollution, traffic congestion and an overall crisis of drinking water, health and education.

It is undeniable that cities have become engines of growth but that this has induced inequality and a sense of fragmented citizenship is also a matter of contention. Hundreds of slums are demolished and residents are forcefully evicted in cities across the world. Many are stripped of their basic human rights. In such an alarming situation, Paul Chatterton succinctly underlines urban problems, searches for solutions and locates community-based initiative aimed to making cities inclusive, healthy and liveable for all. Chatterton focuses on small-level civic innovations

coming in forms of car-free days, parking activism, walk your city programmes, billboard activism, urban play boxes and urban consulates, which may not be immediate answers to rising urban inequality or climate change but represent a healthy and radical start to making cities sustainable. Most of the books I have read on cities seem to avoid such innovative approaches, rather seeking solutions from top-down models or radical- political- and policy-level changes. Instead, Chatterton's sees a constellation of connected experiments — from bottom-up to top-down.

Chatterton delves into the central question of sustainability. As he suggests, 'real sustainability can only be worked towards by embarking upon a deep and painful questioning, pulling apart, and reorienting of the dominant urban project of the human species during late capitalism's anthropocene' (p. 3). The book does not 'seek solution from top-down corporate-led, business-as-usual models, nor one that naively celebrates the power of small grass-roots projects, the power of resurgent radical local state or lone mavericks who can break through old paradigm. Rather, it seeks to explore the power of rapidly emerging constellations of connected experiments that sit between and within all of these' (p. 4). Chatterton skilfully fulfils his main goal of persuading the reader through a rich analysis of small-level civic innovations which he considers the key to unlocking the latent potential of cities to enriching urban life.

*Unlocking Sustainable Cities* consists of five chapters, each discussing a separate theme. In the first chapter, on Car-Free Cities, he examines 'a wealth of examples that point to unlocking a very different

approach to mobility' (p.12). In chapter 2, he explores 'Post-Carbon agenda beyond the geopolitical age of oil, gas and coal' (p.13). The third chapter on the Bio-City, addresses the 'lock-down of ecosystem degradation, resource depletion and commodification of nature and natural resources' (p. 13). In chapter 4, Chatterton discusses 'the idea of common city through innovations in community place-making, economics and democracy' (p.14). The fifth chapter, titled Think Big, Act Small, Start Now, offers 'some strategic reflections on issues of organization and questions of geography and scale' (p.115).

As a researcher of urban studies, I found this work especially intriguing. It should be mentioned that Chatterton focuses on contemporary issues that cripple the city, reorienting the urban project with the idea of equality, prosperity and sustainability, with an emphasis on educating people and strengthening the idea that a small action can make a big difference. He focuses on 'a new generation of civic leaders who are prepared to break from the status quo of big business, top-down politics, the corporate university and a withered civil society' (p. 117). Chatterton cites several examples from different cities, including Detroit, Vancouver and Athens, where people are responding to the urban crisis by creating, resisting and intervening in the urban processes of change in different ways: running cooperative community centres for refugees; establishing centres of social activism, solidarity and community self-management; recycling of unwanted goods and contributing to the public good, and so on.

While the cases discussed in this book provide excellent illustrations of the

importance of making cities sustainable through public engagement and a new kind of urban management, obsession with ideas like smart city, world-class city, business city limits inhabitants' participation in the making of the city. In this sense, Chatterton's book reinvents the meaning of governance and urban management. Chatterton addresses the risk that small level intervention would have a meager effect on the rapid trend of urbanization through ideas like common economy through civic democracy, extra parliamentary activities, civil disobedience and direct action to keep check on unjust laws. This is a significant contribution of this book. He says: 'History teaches us that the common has to be defended. The planet is riven by struggles to defend it; land occupations of Movement of Landless Workers in Brazil, the Zapatistas Autonomous Municipalities of Chiapas, Mexico, the South African Shack Dwellers Movement ... Moreover, struggles to create the urban common are evident in multiple of small moments of guerrilla or tactical urbanism, encompassing micro interventions such urban gardening, street art, road blocks, civic demonstrations, subverting or adusting corporate billboards, as well as more mundane everyday acts of kindness, social care and togetherness that form the basis for how commoners can enact the urban common in their everyday lives' (p.113).

Highlighting the importance of urban commons, social care and togetherness, Chatterton provides a baseline for an 'urban revolution'. He suggests that public participation in decision making and civic engagement strengthens the idea of building a city where the stress is on equity and

diversity. He argues for civic participation in economics and the democratic process.

Chatterton's book suggests interesting links between big-ideas like civic democracy or public resistance and small ideas. Small-level civic innovations, he argues, have the potential to strengthen public participation and civic engagement to achieve shared goals irrespective of one's place in the city. For example, making car-free cities requires barring the use of fossil-fuel but it must be backed through promoting different modes of mobility like cycle lanes, pedestrian routes, rapid transport, and so on. Similarly, he invokes the idea of common city, where the common is 'a social relationship between commoners who build, defend, reproduce and collectively own it' (p. 95). Through these insights, Chatterton's approach — 'be realistic, demand the impossible' invites dealing with the contemporary urban crisis.

In sum, by highlighting ongoing small civic innovations that address the urban crisis around the world, Chatterton's work gives hope to urban scholars, policymakers, researchers, practitioners and ordinary city dwellers and encourages them to start there to aim for the goal of tackling bigger urban issues. I hope that, as it places idea of social justice and equality at forefront, this book will encourage a great dialogue between cities on the question of sustainability. It shows how small innovations can bring change and can be integrated for the betterment of the urban setting. Making common city. My only reservation pertains the question, will acting small have potential to outpace the emerging urban challenges?

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**Judith Noemi Freidenberg.** 2016. *Contemporary Conversations on Immigration in the United States: The View from Prince George's County, Maryland*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

*Contemporary Conversations on Immigration in the United States: The View from Prince George's County, Maryland* was not an easy book to review. For me, it was a fascinatingly very detailed and focused report that places in a national context the detailed stories of 24 immigrants who came to the eastern suburb of Washington D.C., Prince George's County, between 1968 and 2009. It begins with a detailed discussion of methods and by framing the 'issue', as opposed to the 'problem' of immigration in America, and more specifically in the context of the history of Prince George's County going back to before European contact. Additional data was gathered via a survey, (instrument provided in Index 1., that was



administered to a larger sample of 70 of interviewees. Of consequence, is the fact that the book is the result, perhaps the culmination, of a research program at the University of Maryland on immigrant life which the author founded in the year 2000. Therefore, it also offers a kind of blueprint for replication of the program in other venues. In regard to this, I highly recommend this book to those who have the inclination and especially the university, or grant, support and resources to use multi-methods and trained staff. The author notes in her Acknowledgments that the project also resulted in a mobile exhibit to promote public dialogue on immigration which is sorely needed in the United States of America today. One other fact in the *Front Matters* which I discovered, was that Professor Freidenberg is herself an immigrant which, as she describes the research experience, gave her the ‘impulse’ to write the book, and, I imagine, to develop her important program.

Topics that emerge from her extensive research and literature reviews are immigrant life courses, networks, life in the country of origin, during the journey, and settlement in the county. We learn how these newer immigrants from places like China, Nigeria, and El Salvador mimic the experiences of those who came before them in much larger numbers in their occasional reluctance, to accept the American Dream on America’s term, but regardless of this acceptance or rejection do their best, despite the odds to move up the ladder of economic and social success

Another aspect which is important for my work is her attention to their creation of immigrant spaces that nurtures their cultural well-being. By allowing her subjects to speak for themselves, she is able to reveal

the complexities of the county’s immigrants diverse personal, social, economic, and political life-worlds, which also helps to deconstruct the view that they, indeed all immigrants, can be categorized as homogenous. She also demonstrates the impact of native-born acceptance impacts the experience of immigrant providing insight into how the social issue of immigration became a social problem. Freidenberg makes another contribution to the literature by demonstrating the importance of local contexts and individual experience. Another is the way that she brings together historical data together with immigrant voices and local, as well mass, media. For example, in Chapter 2’s *The Media Project* she asks ‘How are the foreign-born in the County discussed in the Media?’ Then, she looks at, and historicizes, 19 newspapers and the 14 radio and television stations that cover Prince George’s County. It is clear, in all her many descriptions and analyses that national and state policy-makers should more closely tailor immigration reform to individual and group experiences to increase their effectiveness.

As a visually oriented social science, I appreciate the, albeit minimal, illustrations included and the video link for *Immigrant Voices of Prince George’s County* in Appendix 2, but I feel the value of the study would be greatly enhanced, and attract more attention, if it included more historical and contemporary photographs to give more life to the otherwise rich narratives such as that of Okoro ‘Then I moved to Virginia ‘cause...[I had a close relationship to my uncle’s ex-wife and her son]. When ...she [my uncle’s ex-wife] insisted I come and

visit her...she found out I could cook, and she worked a lot...so she convinced me to stay in Virginia and pursue my education there.’ (p.109).

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**Erica Robb Larkins.** 2015. *The Spectacular Favela: Violence in Modern Brazil*. University of California Press.

Lawless zone, occupied land, movie set, or tourist trap? The national and international imaginations around Brazilian *favelas* have overdetermined how these sites are administered by the state and represented in the media. Colloquially, a favela describes an urban community with mostly auto-constructed housing, improvised (or absent) public utilities, often on abandoned or disputed land. Although the drug trade exists throughout Brazilian society (including elite neighbourhoods where drugs are often consumed), the favela is also the primary staging ground for violent disputes between Brazilian police forces and narco-trafficking organizations. As Erica Robb Larkins examines in *The Spectacular Favela*, Brazilian (and paradigmatically Rio de Janeiro’s) favelas loom large in the urban and national political imagination. While most favela residents carry out their daily activities such as school and work, Brazil’s middle and upper classes both fear and fetishize the violence they associate with the favela. In her book, Larkins argues that fear and fetish of violence are no accident. The ‘law of traffic’ that asserts an order to daily life in the favela is disrupted by militarized police

for middle class audiences. Repeating the oft-cited observation that violence in urban Brazil is pedagogic (Caldeira 2000), Larkins shows how violence in the favela is symbolic as much as it is material.

*The Spectacular Favela* is a community-based study in Rocinha, one of Rio de Janeiro’s largest favelas. Larkins takes the perspective of Rocinha residents who are under militarized state surveillance and the gaze of the culture industry. Larkins’s fieldwork took her to different sections of Rocinha, speaking with community members, traffickers, their intimates, NGO workers, and tourists. Although the book studies police interactions, Larkins had to study them at a distance, as she surmised that interacting with police would alienate and, in some instances, endanger her community contacts. Throughout the book, the author exposes the central tension as the favela is fashioned as a ‘state of exception’ by the constant low-intensity warfare between traffickers and state forces (police) and as a commodity for tourists and culture producers hoping to capitalize off of the favela’s reputation for danger. Larkins argues that treating violence like spectacle explains these contradictions. For the state, the trafficker is a pariah figure whose threat authorizes sustained violence made for the spectacle of middle-class belief in law and order. For global middle-class youth, the trafficker is a brand of rebellion. These images of the favela trafficker are at odds with the entrepreneurial self-fashioning of the traffickers themselves, who often participate primarily to acquire the kinds of goods that offer integration into lower middle-class life.

The chapter structure emerges out of the dual sides of the favela's spectacle. Chapters one and two on 'The Narco Traffic', and the 'The Penal Stat', examine the choreographies of violence, order, and spectacle between two sets of actors — the traffickers and the police. Larkins defines traffickers as violence workers, whose job descriptions are not unlike the police or soldiers who work on the socially legitimated side of social violence. Indeed, traffickers have complex career paths and are often former soldiers or local police. Her ethnography in this chapter revolves around 'Beto', a trafficker who is both realistic about his violence work but also expresses his desires for social mobility, marked by his new consumer goods and a girlfriend from a rich neighbourhood. In chapter two, 'The Penal State', Larkins's focus shifts to the police, which in Brazil are complicated affair. Police, as Larkins and many scholars of Brazil report, are divided into different units: civil police who investigate crimes, military police who maintain public order, and 'special units' (called BOPE in Rio de Janeiro), who conduct tactical operations. There is a cyclic character to the over-policing of Rio's favelas, argues Larkins. Military police who ordinarily patrol the community often engage in petty corruption and harassment. In this scenario, the traffickers offer order in the community. This détente between military police and traffickers is broken with the BOPE comes into 'clear' 'he area. Televised invasions of favelas searching for narco-traffickers (who have been tipped off and already fled) are a hallmark of the spectacular favela. In one of Larkins's most illustrative examples, fleeing traffickers leave a one-ton brick of marijuana is for BOPE, which is then lifted

out by helicopter for the television cameras to film. Such scenes fuel the cinematic imaginations that are the subject of the next part of the book.

In chapters three and four, Larkins shows how this violent relationship that the favela neighbourhood has with the state enters into the culture industry. While the traditional marketed stereotype of Rio de Janeiro are beaches and samba, the representation of favela violence has become the new stereotype of Rio. And this spectacle of violence is driving cinematic and tourist industries. Chapter three, 'Favela Inc.' interweaves readings of three fictional and two documentary portrayals of favela violence that have reached international fame. As a set, these films, Larkins shows, generate an aesthetic and moral grammar — distinguishing between 'good' traffickers and 'bad' traffickers, earnest and corrupt police, and lost childhoods of favela residents. Larkins also looks at the number of music videos and concert performances of U.S. musicians, who see the favela as an example of global black identity and resistance to racism. In a fourth chapter, Larkins addresses the much-hyped favela tourism. Organized tours of Rio de Janeiro's favela communities are now a staple of the city's tourist circuit. Owned by upper- and middle-class Brazilians to bring international tourists into these underserved neighbourhoods, scholars, activists, and journalists alike have critiqued this mode of tourism. Of the five companies operating in Rocinha during the author's fieldwork, some companies market a trip to the favela as a dangerous adventure, others market it as an act of solidarity. Larkins's ethnographic approach here is a refreshing addition to the largely

philosophical or text-based studies of the practice. The author's alignment with Rocinha's residents is clear, but her findings are surprising. Residents are frustrated with the linguistic barriers between them and the English-speaking tourists. They express to Larkins unease that tourists are being told false information about them. Alternatively, some residents express a genuine desire to talk with tourists and trade experiences. Discussing tourism from the standpoint of residents, Larkins flips the tourist gaze, and offers a rich portrayal as to how the favela neighbourhood is perceived differently by many actors.

In a fifth and final chapter, Larkins disentangles the tense politics of the favela pacifications before the Rio World Cup and Olympics. Beginning in 2008, the Brazilian government began a program of 'pacification' of Rio's favelas. Public distrust of corrupt police led authorities to bring in military units. In this last chapter, Larkins documents structural effects of pacification. While this chapter has the feel of 'the return trip' in ethnographic research, it provides a crucial update of how the violent reorganization of favelas continues to produce spectacular representations for Brazilian modernity and progress.

Published in the California Series in Public Anthropology, *Spectacular Favela* is a captivating read for undergraduates and for graduate students; a demonstration of how rigorous and ethical ethnographic research is done. This book-length study of the experience and representation of favela violence is a welcome addition to Brazilian studies. It is not easy to write about the place where violence and commodification meet, especially in urban Brazil. Longstanding tropes simultaneously paint

Brazil as tropical paradise (a racial democracy and sexual Eden) and as corrupt, ungovernable and violent. As the chapter on 'Favela Inc.' makes clear, such tropes have become the ideological stuff of national and international circulations. By leaning into the spectacle rather than trying to unmask it, Robb Larkins has given a vivid account of the half-truths about Brazil that Brazilians across the economic and racial hierarchies come to half-believe. *The Spectacular Favela* contributes most to growing literatures around violent policing and anti-blackness, while also asking Brazilian media studies to step up their game. The book also provides a solid read for an urban studies audience. Anyone interested in urban inequalities will see the clear connections between Rocinha and other under-resourced, and over-policed communities. North American audiences in particular will be keen to see similarities and differences in urban inequalities between the U.S. and Brazil.

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**Ugo Rossi.** 2017. *Cities Under Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ugo Rossi is not the first to probe the nexus of cities and capitalism, but he does so in a way that is refreshingly interdisciplinary and timely, bridging economic, political, and cultural approaches to theorization of the ruins of capitalism that haunt the urban landscape. Rossi's exploration is an

ambitious and wide-ranging dissection (and useful critical synthesis) of the origins, transformations and manifestations by and through which capital and city make and remake each other. The book weaves together theoretical debates from urban, cultural and economic geography, political economy, state theory, and other disciplines into a coherent tapestry that is both theoretically rich and approachable to readers from various disciplines.

Rossi presents the book's key question as, 'Why have the fates of cities and capitalism become so inextricable in times of globalization?' (p. 2). This question is so often taken as a given, but rarely disentangled, as Rossi successfully does in the book's ensuing chapters. The 'revanchism' of the city by capital and capitalists (in Neil Smith's 1996 framing) is much-explored, but the question of why the city has such a powerful pull for capital is often split into disparate conversations within different schools of geography (gentrification, political economy, political geography, economic geography, cultural geography, urban planning) and thus, Rossi's streamlining, bridging together, and updating of urban theory given recent global developments, is welcome.

Containing 7 chapters, the book is primarily a literature review, which has notable use as a teaching tool or a primer on the condition of (post)modern urban neoliberalism. The introductory chapter's review of the evolution of urban theory would be a welcome addition to any urban geography syllabus, given its approachability and legibility for both inside and outside audiences. Each of the book's chapters tackles particular moments

through which Rossi proposes cities have 'become enmeshed' in global capitalism.

These include the emergence of financial networks, entrepreneurialism, and cognitive capital (Ch. 1); the 'extensions' by which cities are linked to globalization and global processes (questions of relationality, networks and the advent of planetary urbanization), in Ch. 2. Chapter 3 ('continuities') explores neoliberalism and its 'immanence', or almost divine, omnipresent and self-perpetuating characteristics, such as the way neoliberalism has swallowed social phenomenon such as creativity and culture. Chapter 4 looks at 'diffusions' of capital through a postcolonial and comparative lens, things such as 'McDonaldization' or 'Disneyfication', those urban environments replicated and repeated albeit by and through site specific and context dependent processes — a sort of colonization. The fifth and final chapter looks at alternative pathways — the 'variations' of the global capitalist city in the contemporary era, both before and after the turning point of the late-2000s global crisis. These variations include the 'socialized city' (a post-Fordist workforce); the 'dispossessed city', a new normal where austerity becomes a permanent 'state of exception'; and finally the 'revenant city', in which life itself merges with the digital circuits of capitalism unleashed through 'Web 2.0', and urban residents become both the victims, and victimizers, in the process of survival.

Ascribing anatomical and even divine characteristics to urban capitalism, Rossi puts capital into motion, portraying it as space of flows (Castells, 2012) but simultaneously spatializing these flows by placing them firmly in the urban landscape.

Rossi challenges territorially-based explorations, but also notes the importance of territory, as sites of capitals' differentiation, variegation and daily operation. Rossi's language is frequently floral and poetic — for example 'urban Fordist cathedrals, such as Turin, Glasgow, Cleveland' (p. 4) — a welcome departure from the sometimes dry and jargon-filled rhetoric of economic and political geography. Rossi's metaphors, evocations and tableaux bring the topic, and the capitalist city, to life, and give some colour to technocratic phrases such as 'deep socio-spatial restructuring' (p. 4). The spectral and divine attributes ascribed to urban capitalism appear as unifying motifs throughout the work, concluding in the concept of the 'revenant city', brought back from the dead like Lazarus (or Leonardo di Caprio, in the 2015 film 'The Revenant', clearly on Rossi's mind at the time of writing).

By organizing the chapters as thematic, rather than historical or case-study based, Rossi joins past and present in a dynamic way. One of the pitfalls of this type of organization, however, is the overlap and repetition between chapters. For example, the 'cognitive-cultural economy' and the 'policy-mobility paradigm' show up repeatedly. This is perhaps a deliberate way of highlighting the linkages and bridges between capital, time, space and place, and as such is useful at the same time that it is over-repetitive.

Rossi may be reaching slightly in his opening claim that the 'close link between cities and capitalism is a relatively recent acquisition' (p. 1) — one might think of Jane Jacob's seminal *The Economy of Cities* (1969) as a highly developed and much

earlier linkage, or even earlier, the discussions on modernism and urbanity around 1900 (Georg Simmel, 2012[1903]) which made the link clear, even if not stated explicitly. But Rossi is right to re-assert this linkage given the reality of planetary urbanization. Coupled with the rise of digital technology's hyper-speed and hyper-scale, Rossi's exploration is timely and there is, indeed, a need for such a forcible presentation of cities and capitalism joined at the hip. Rossi understands global urban capitalism not as a linear trajectory as sometimes proposed in critical geography but rather an 'intricate process of spatio-temporal stratification, characterized by the juxtaposition of a variety of development pathways, hegemonic projects, forms of life and historical temporalities' (p. 13), drawing upon the Foucauldian notion of the 'history of the present' / 'present as history'. Rossi then, through this lens, presents what he refers to as the city-capitalism nexus at a 'time of biopolitics' (p. 14) where 'life is central to the dynamics of cities, capitalism and their mutual dependence' (p. 14). Rossi is right to note that 'in contemporary capitalism, the economic becomes inextricable from the cultural, the institutional, the social and the biological' (p. 16).

Thus, the book challenges some key preconceptions in urban theory. One is the perception that contemporary global [urban] capitalism stems from, or can be reduced to, the Anglo-American institutional framework (the policy-mobilities discourse), circulated outward. Rossi suggests the origins lie not in élites propagating market principles globally, but in individual subjectivity and biopolitics merged with specific institutional and

politico-economic strategies and moments. Secondly, Rossi takes the focal points of gentrification (Smith 1996, Zukin 2010); financialization (Harvey 2012); and the creative/cultural economy (Florida 2012) and puts them back on the bookshelf, organized into the larger, wider volume of capitalism itself. This is an attempt not to over-emphasize capitalism's multifaceted nature as manifesting any one of these areas, but rather, the way urban capitalism unspools in context-dependent, highly variegated ways, or the 'plurality of socio-economic forms characterizing global capitalism' (p. 16).

The very broad swathe the book attempts — mostly successfully — to cover in a single volume is a key strength, as well as a weakness. It is ambitious to cover the roles played by '...financialization, institutional capacity, innovative entrepreneurship, the housing sector, consumption, technology, and the cultural economy' (p. 15). Any of these could comprise an individual volume; woven together as such, explored with such force and rapid speed, at times reads like an over-stuffed buffet rather than a plated meal. At the same time, a key strength of the book is its willingness to engage across these areas, which often find themselves at distinct ends of geographic literature. David Harvey, though, offers one such multifaceted exploration of capital's anatomy in his 2014 'Seventeen Contradictions', a reference that Rossi seems to have surprisingly omitted.

The book's most novel theoretical offering comes in Ch. 5 with the critical engagement with state theory. In particular, Rossi seeks a middle ground between the territorially-restricted approaches to state-capitalism explorations ('methodological

nationalism') and moving too far away from state and territory. This approach brings into focus, and usefully builds upon, Bob Jessop's (1990) 'strategic-relational' framework in state theory as well as Agamben's (e.g. 2016) musings on being and 'forms of life'. Rossi's portrait of global urban capitalism, then, is one that is deeply attached to human beings and all forms of life, constantly mutating and attaching to various and variegated built environments; the digital realm; and the circuits in between. Enclosed is a deeper look at financialization and the degree to which capitalism has both instigated, and survived, recent global crises (pre and post-2008). This is a welcome recap of the past decade, a decade that continues to send theorists scrambling as the social, political, cultural and economic dust from the crises' fallout has yet to settle.

Despite Rossi's proposal to survey the 'global', he still draws largely (if not exclusively) upon Anglo-American and European authors, policies, examples and case studies (especially Western Europe and the United States). China and East Asia are referred to in passing, and Africa is completely missing. It would have been interesting to have read at least a few of Rossi's thoughts on the penetration of late capitalism into Africa's cities (grouped in the book into the broader category of the global south). Rossi is certainly not to blame for the lack of parity between women and men in mainstream urban geography (especially in Marxian literature), but it was still somewhat surprising not to see some seminal names mentioned (Doreen Massey on global v. local place/space; Loretta Lees on global gentrification and dispossession, just two gaps). Finally, the multi-directional

flows within the cognitive-cultural economy seem under-discussed: examples like K-Pop or the global proliferation of the Korean beauty industry, or even the way Southeast Asia's food scene has become a global capitalist imaginary, would have added some cosmopolitanism to Rossi's arguments and strengthened his critique of policy mobilities literature.

'Re-politicizing urban life along emancipatory lines is therefore essential' (p. 181), Rossi argues in the final paragraph. Rossi illustrates, convincingly, why such an emancipatory re-politicization is necessary, but leaves it to others to outline how that may occur.

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**A.K. Sandoval-Strausz and Nancy H. Kwak** (eds) 2018. *Making Cities Global: The Transnational Turn in Urban History*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

In the contemporary urban literature, cities are portrayed as the nodes of global trade, the sites of multi-national corporations and the many homes of the super-rich, and destinations for migratory flows of both educated labour and those fleeing countries in disarray. Enclaves of financial service firms, diasporic communities, and wealthy transnational élites are the geographic indicators that a city has attained global status. This globalization argument looks outwards to the world and, as importantly, inward to the many ways that transnational forces shape the economies, governance, and physical form of cities. Numerous questions subsequently arise as to what globalization means for cities caught in its web. To what extent does the purchasing of luxury homes by global élites distort the local market for affordable housing? How does international financing influence what infrastructure is built? What effect does circular migration have on civic participation?

In this edited volume, A.K. Sandoval-Strausz (University of New Mexico) and Nancy Kwak (University of



California — San Diego) have brought together ten urban historians who think about these types of questions. Rather than treating cities as wholly regional and national phenomena and confining their investigations to political and economic relations within these state spaces, they situate cities in a network of influences that pass over territorial as well as cultural and linguistic borders. Each contributor reveals how these influences have impinged on and transformed the cities on which they have landed. Of the eight empirical chapters, all focus either on the United States as a transnational force acting elsewhere (mainly in South Asia and South America) or highlight transnational influences in North America cities (specifically, Toronto, Los Angeles, and Chicago). The overall intent is to overcome the nation-state bias that often characterizes urban history.

The book's dominant theme is the urban built environment. After World War II, the U.S. government was fixated on the spread of communism and, as part of its foreign policy, directed housing assistance to countries where communism might take hold. Through the Alliance for Progress and the Agency for International Development, and drawing from lessons learned in Puerto Rico, the U.S. government channelled funds and expertise to national governments in countries deemed vulnerable to aligning with the Soviet Union. This assistance, however, came with the requirement that homeownership be prioritized over public housing. Through homeownership, people's need for shelter would be satisfied. Even more importantly, homeownership would engender a preference for political stability and regimes favoured by the United States.

Three chapters consider this type of U.S. influence. Amy Offner presents the case of the Ciudad Kennedy housing project in post-war Bogotá. There, self-help housing served both U.S. political goals and Colombia's fiscal constraints. Leandro Benmergui discusses U.S.-subsidized governmental initiatives in Rio de Janeiro in the 1960s designed to eradicate favelas and provide housing for displaced families. And, Nancy Kwak documents slum clearance in Greater Manila involving international non-governmental organizations, informal slum-dweller associations, the Filipino government, and the World Bank. (Kwak deftly explore these themes across multiple countries in her *A World of Homeowners: American Power and the Politics of Housing Aid*. University of Chicago Press, 2015). The overall impression is one of a U.S. policy more concerned with American values than local issues and foreign governments willing to accept U.S. aid despite its restraints.

Moving away from low-income housing, Margaret O'Mara explores high-tech corporate campuses and their adjacent middle-class suburban housing estates. She tracks the flow of influences from Silicon Valley in California to France and, via the Jurang Town Corporation (a spin-off of Singapore's Economic Development Board), from Singapore to Bangalore. Matt Garcia's chapter also has place as a focus. His case is the Mexican barrio of Arbol Verde in Pomona, California, on the edge of metropolitan Los Angeles. First established as a 'citrus colonia' in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it later housed many of the service workers for the adjacent Claremont Colleges. The Colleges' quest for international prominence and subsequent increase in international enrolments led to the

displacement of low-income Mexican households from the neighbourhood and their replacement by college professionals and foreign students. Last, as regards place, is Nikhil Rao's investigation of the development legacy of colonialism. Despite British attempts to export garden suburbs to India, the Indians rejected low-density, suburban development and substituted multi-family housing in high-density estates. They did, however, adopt land acquisition practices and cooperative housing from the British.

Shifting the built environment focus further away from housing, Erica Allen-Kim delves onto the origins and evolution of retail condominiums in metropolitan Toronto. Spurred by Chinese capital leaving Hong Kong and facilitated by Canadian immigration policy regarding minimum investment requirements for citizenship, the city's retail landscape diverged sharply from the traditional, North American mall. And, in a chapter focused on public space, Arijit Sen documents the many ways that South Asian parades in Chicago celebrate transnationalism while simultaneously strengthening attachments to the neighbourhood.

Three, additional chapters are essays rather than empirical studies. Carola Hein provides an overview of how multinational corporations, urban scholars, and migratory planning consultants spread ideas about urbanism. She helpfully points to how the word 'transnational' directs our attention to national boundaries and turns it away from linguistic, cultural, and historical boundaries. In his essay, Carl Nightingale encourages transnational historians to adopt the method of digital visualization. Doing so, he believes, could change the 'textural and authorial genres' of urban history. One

of his concerns, as with Hein, is the need to transcend the dominance of national borders as an organizing device. Lastly, Richard Harris argues for greater attention to the ways that words travel from one place to another and, once there, are rejected, transformed, or adopted for other purposes. He is particularly interested in the term 'suburb' as it has entered into professional, governmental, and vernacular discourses in India.

This is an outstanding collection. The transnational theme is emphasized throughout, providing consistency from one chapter to the next, and the quality of the research and the writing are high with each empirical case richly detailed. That said, I do have two, minor concerns. The first has to do with urban theory. All of the authors are historians and hardly obliged, as are urban theorists, to draw generalizations and set them within broad arguments. A number of the authors hint at theoretical generalizations. Still, a last chapter reflecting on connections across cases would have been welcomed.

The second concern is the dominance of the United States in this book and elsewhere in the urban transnational literature, Britain, Singapore, and China are mentioned here as sources of additional transnational influence, but the field of transnational actors is much larger. As we explore additional literatures, other countries come to light. The literature on colonialism gives us Germany, Belgium, Japan, France, The Netherlands, Italy, and Portugal. A glance into the world of development assistance uncovers Sweden and Canada. Going beyond countries (actually, national governments) to other transnational actors, we find a vast array of multi-national corporations, humanitarian and religious

organizations, professional associations, and even terrorist groups. Transnational scholarship needs to recognize both multiple boundaries and multiple actors.

The contribution of *Making Cities Global* is to point urban scholars to the extensive influence that transnational actors have on life in cities. This is a valuable perspective on globalization. We also need more of these studies and, along with them, more attention to thinking theoretically about the porous boundaries of the urban world.

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**Francesco Vecchio.** 2015. *Asylum Seeking and the Global City*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition by Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Given the current, and extremely contentious, refugee and asylum crisis on the southern border of the United States of America, Francesco Vecchio's excellently researched and written study *Asylum Seeking and the Global City*, which is centred on Hong Kong, ironically is very 'close to home'. In addition, given my own extensive visual research on immigration as well as migration around the world in both global and not-so-global cities, his close attention to ethnography that enhances our understanding and appreciation of data and insights gathered through other published sources was most welcome. Giving the reader sensitive, close-ups of those on the social margins of the city's vivid daily life, is one general example of ethnographic illumination. Within publications on immigration, readers are primarily treated only with mono-methodological and theoretical approaches that tend to avoid,

even ignore, other ways. More qualitative, ways of seeing what is happening on the ground. In my experience, the parallax of bird's eye views and worm's eye views is best for locating such complex research targets.

By doing so, Vecchio's ethnography firmly places his subjects within an intricate web of transnational asylum seekers and refugees who employ their own local and global migrant networks to develop mechanisms for maintaining themselves, for example, as informal workers or entrepreneurs in Hong Kong's multifaceted economy. His observations are of special interest to me, as one who has also researched how refugee as well as 'normal' immigration policy creates and effects local community life in Brooklyn, New York. In this regard, *Asylum Seeking and the Global City* clearly demonstrates how both local and global forces effectively collaborate through their often-harsh, and always insensitive, control policies to make their struggles even more difficult than they need to be. Hong Kong's economy needs, even demands, low-wage workers and, globally, irregular immigrants and other desperate newcomers are perfect victims for such exploitation. I should note at least one of the many especially interesting topics richly described and analysed by Vecchio such as the vast and extremely profitable electronic waste recycling that takes place in huge scrapyards in Hong Kong's northern New Territories. There vulnerable asylum seekers compete with equally desperate elderly Chinese residents for survival wages. In a way, Vecchio's previous NGO work experience in Hong Kong primed him for this empathetically insightful description and analysis of their struggles. Although being close to one's subjects is

often criticized in social sciences, it is in fact the only way to reach the core of the human experience. In this kind of work, empathic understanding (*verstehen*) is a major asset and not a liability. Also, from a practical point of view, Vecchio's legal aid experience allowing him to more accurately depict Hong Kong's legal landscape, that refugees and asylum seekers have to navigate, is a major benefit for students and practitioners.

My major suggestion for Vecchio's future works, but not a criticism of this one, is to note that his excellent treatise would have been even further enhanced with images. Related to my work on immigrant and other vernacular landscapes, I have photographed those in Hong Kong and nearby Shenzhen and think that for example, a few photos of the e-waste scrapyards and general residential spaces of his subjects would increase the value of his already valuable work. In general, I recommend *Asylum Seeking and the Global City* by Francesco Vecchio for all those scholars and students in the fields of urban studies, immigration, migration, and globalization. Finally, I also especially recommend it to those looking for examples of the value of multi-research methods on these and a wide variety of other related topics.

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**Corine Védrine.** 2019. *The Spirit of Capitalism According to the Michelin Company. Anthropology of an Industrial Myth.* New York: Palgrave-Macmillan

This monograph by Corine Védrine tells a story about two simultaneous processes;

that is, the birth (1832), development and evolution of the Michelin company which has grown along with the urban planning of the city of Clermont-Ferrand of France, in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region, with a population of 141,569 (2012). It is about an urban case reminding the classic analysis of Engels who was among the first scholars to argue about the centripetal tendency of capitalism; in other words, he put forward the view that where an industrial organization sets up, a population is established around it, creating the necessary workforce for it — a population which abides and succumbs to the organizational culture it creates. So, the book is not only or simply about a classic case of urban history; it is also about the life trajectories of those whose urban lives connected with it. Védrine examines not only the evolution of the relationship between the company, the people and their urban interconnectivity but also the ways in which the local economic activities have been transformed throughout the years and the ways in which local people accepted, rejected and managed the company's spirit of capitalism. The author examines the progression from one kind of urban planning to another, which has taken place in line with the transformation of local capitalism. Hence, she focuses on the progression from an industrial and disciplinarian town to an urban setting that encourages enjoyment.

According to Védrine, Clermont-Ferrand makes an interesting case study for urban anthropology because the city does not suffer from unemployment. Indeed, the reduction in available jobs has not caused any layoffs; those who are retiring or being retired are simply not replaced. Unlike other French cities, such as Saint-Etienne, Clermont-Ferrand has not been a victim of

deindustrialization. Instead, it bears witness to the evolution of capitalism. The Michelin Company continues to be the foremost local employer, property owner and taxpayer. The passage from a paternalist city marked by the Michelin industrial culture to the new spirit of capitalism has grown stronger throughout the years especially because it is based on an ideology that justifies capitalism by bolstering it with ethical arguments and evolves with it, giving the workers a reason to feel involved in the firm and remain faithful to it. In the Michelin Company, these reasons are economic, moral and social, while also including security. They are defended in a strict spirit and built around norms linked to secrecy and asceticism, as well as Christian moral values that are still guaranteed by a paternal figure, as incarnated by the founder, François Michelin. What does this spirit consist of? According to the founders of this concept, Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello (2005), it consists of an ideology that justifies people's commitment to capitalism, and renders this commitment attractive. The spirit of capitalism, far from being a simple adornment or a 'superstructure' (as Marxist ideology would have it), is central to the process of capitalistic accumulation that it serves because it applies constraints to this process. If one were to take these explanations to their logical conclusion, then not all profit would be legitimate, not all enrichment fair, not all accumulation (however significant and rapid) legal. Actors' internalisation of a particular spirit of capitalism thus serves in the real world as a constraint on the process of accumulation. A spirit of capitalism approach provides a justification both for capitalism and for the criticisms that denounce the gap between

the actual forms of accumulation and the normative conceptions of social order. In this framework, Védrine's study is an extremely valuable case study that shows how an industrial adventure forms people's lives in a culturally defined manner. Drawing on strong ethnographic, historical and on-the-ground data, the author offers an astonishingly subtle analysis that explains in great detail the local impact of the development of capitalism and its spirit along three main lines of enquiry. The first concerns the mobilization of heritage to reassess the industrial myth in a national and international perspective. The second examines the change of Clermont-Ferrand spaces throughout the evolution of Michelin history. The third addresses how, in order to attract and keep the new industrial forces which equal the new service class, the municipality has worked on its image in partnership with Michelin company. This study opens the way for further exploration of the new figure of worker or employee that is being formed and of the manner in which capitalism gains the ability to lift its face by renewing its 'spirit'.

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## **FILM AND VIDEO REVIEWS**

*Out on the Street*. Directed by **Jasmina Metwaly** and **Philip Rizk**. 2015. 71 min. Colour.

In a makeshift rooftop studio overlooking the city of Cairo, nine men gather for a workshop in which they enact ‘confrontations of everyday life, with the police and at the workplace’, as described in a synopsis on the film’s website (Outonthestreetfilm.com). *Out on the Street* opens with a trance-like segment of grainy footage of a gritty, dilapidated space that we are led to believe might be a disaffected factory. The film is a non-linear collection of scenes shot in a rooftop workshop, a series of fictionalized performances (or re-enactments of common scenarios). It also includes footage shot on a cellphone by a worker who intended to use it as evidence in a court case against his employer.

As the re-enactments seem to imply, the film is a deconstruction and re-piecing together of the struggles of working-class men in contemporary Egypt. The disappearance of jobs, the impact of neoliberal reforms, the aggressive management style of foreign investors, as well as relentless street-level police harassment (as seen in the first ‘confrontation’ that is described and simultaneously re-enacted in the film), are central themes in the film and in contemporary Egypt. To paraphrase one of the worker-actors in the film, the factory is presented as a microcosm of Egypt, a scaled-down version of issues that had been plaguing society as a whole before the 2011 revolution and that continue to do so.

Directed by Cairo-based filmmakers and writers Philip Rizk and Jasmina

Metwaly, *Out on the Street* premiered at the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival and was also included in the program of the German pavilion at the Venice Biennale that same year. In a statement that accompanied the film for its inaugural viewing at the Berlinale, the directors claimed that ‘the idea for this project started with a sense of limitation in the making of documentaries’ (Berlinale). As such, the film resists classification, toying with the blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction, openly displaying the theatricality with which it reconstructs real-life situations drawn from the men’s everyday struggles.

Metwaly and Rizk have a long history of engaging with social struggle in urban Egypt through visual interventions: ‘Over time we realized that filming, editing, and posting our material online or occasionally screening it in neighborhoods has its limitations in the audience that it reaches and the effect it has on people’ (Berlinale). Their stated goal with *Out on the Street* was to create a filmic artefact that could do more than turn struggle into spectacle, but also reach broader audiences as a result of its oneiric vagueness. The film does indeed present a litany of issues that touch the lives of the urban precariat worldwide. Given the global dimension of the struggles they evoke in the film, the directors hope that the lack of specificity presented by the film’s aesthetics make it translatable to labour struggles in other places.

It is the very absence — or perhaps the tantalizing but inaccessible proximity of the urban behemoth that is the city of Cairo — which seems to loom largest in the film, more so than the labour problems re-enacted by the workers. The city comes into view in brief moments, as if always

existing on the edge of the camera, glimpsed in fleeting shots of the sky above the rooftop, or as buildings visible only in outline against street lights at night. Nevertheless, it is present in almost every scene in the background hum and buzz of the street below and the honking of cars, sounds that seep into all the re-enactments as if to remind viewers that the struggles portrayed by the men are first and foremost urban struggles.

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*É o que guardo dele (It's what I keep from him)*. Directed by **Hugo Menezes, Iomana Rocha**. 2017. 25 min. Colour.

*It's what I keep from him* is an ethnographic movie directed by Hugo Menezes and Iomana Rocha, who worked with students from the undergraduate courses in museology and film at the Federal University at Pará, Brazil. The main subjects presented are material culture, affective relationships and the pain of the families of ten black youth murdered on the night of 4 November 2014, in Belém do Pará, the largest city in northern Brazil.

The movie does not clarify the reason for the slaughter. On the day of 4<sup>th</sup> November, a retired police officer, who was then head of a militia group, had been murdered. Known as Cabo Pet, Antônio Marco da Silva Figueiredo was killed in a flurry of 30 bullets. A few hours later, a slew of posts were issued on social networks by militia members ordering a curfew in peripheral neighbourhoods of Belém. All of the posts mentioned revenge. Before the night was over, black cars and

motorcycles were seen conducting shootings that killed ten people — the movie does not specify in which neighbourhoods.

According to the 2018 Brazilian ATLAS of Violence, murder is the leading cause of death of Brazilians between 15 and 29 years old — accounting for 50.3%. From 2006 to 2016, northern Brazil was the region with the biggest increase in murder rates. All of the Brazilian states with increases of over 80% in the murder rate were in the North or Northeast. The rise in Pará was just a bit lower: 74.4%.

The main aim of the movie was to respond to the counter-hegemonic challenge of creating a political space where the victims' families could present a different narrative about these young black males. The movie's strongest characteristic is making visible people who are usually invisible, highlighting one of the biggest social problems in Brazilian cities: urban violence against poor black people, mostly black youth. In the days after the slaughter, the popular local media presented the murdered youth as criminals and linked all of them to drug trafficking, violence and, by deduction, to the murder of the militia leader.

But a parliamentary investigative commission that was created to examine the case found that none of the ten murdered youth had any involvement with Cabo Pet's death, and not one even had a criminal record. This reveals a major problem in Brazil, the inability to make cities safe for everyone, regardless of race, gender or class.

Where did those young men die? Every day, why are so many black and poor young people killed in Brazil? *It's what I keep from him* offers us a good opportunity to consider urban violence as a

problem of social and spatial segregation. The movie depicts the political nature of the relationship between people and goods and thus reveals a highly unequal society. *It's what I keep from him* could be helpful to researchers interested in understanding how the colonization of urban Brazil operates in a contemporary era.

Although *It's what I keep from him* examines material culture and cultural heritage, it focuses on the daily urban experience of violence and exclusion in a city constructed to be unequal. The 'slaughter of Belém' addresses not only violence and crime, but the meanings of the logic of *distinction* in urban Brazil today. The ten murdered youth materialize killable bodies that reveal that the city is not a place for peaceful coexistence or encounters between the different.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### International Conference

#### *Urban Inequalities: Ethnographic Insights*

*Organized by*  
International Urban Symposium,  
Commission on Urban Anthropology,  
University of the Peloponnese: Department  
of Social and Educational Policy,  
Postgraduate Program of Social Policy.

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Corinth 20-22 June 2019  
<http://www.internationalurbansymposium.com/events/2019-2/>

This conference promotes an urgently needed in-depth understanding of entrenched forms of social and economic inequality that have come to the fore, and in many cases have become exacerbated, as a direct consequence of urbanization without (or with weak) growth. Urban sustainability and a transparent, responsible and efficient governance are the obvious casualties. Unemployment, informal employment, homelessness, intolerance, conflict, suicide, crime and citizens' loss of trust in the democratic process are among the disastrous consequences. This Conference will bring together a strong field of ethnographically-committed international scholars to address comparatively this cogent problematic in Western and non-Western settings in the context of the global economic crisis and the expanding gap between a privileged few and the rest of the population that mar contemporary society, jeopardising democratic life as they foster

social and economic forms of inequality and conflict.

Huge, mostly uncontrolled, migration from poorer countries and from rural areas to cities adds to the problem, as newcomers experience exploitation, little or no improvement in their lives and often modern forms of slavery. Large internal and international migration flows in conjunction with weak policy, double standards in the treatment of individuals and groups and inefficient or slanted governance have engendered new challenges to urban life.

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### CUA Panels at the IUAES 2019 Inter-congress

#### *World Solidarities*

27-31 August 2019, Poznań, Poland  
<https://www.iaes2019.org/>

**1) Title:** *Imagining and Practising Solidarities in Urban Contexts.*

**Convenors:** *Hana Cervinkova* (University of Lower Silesia, Poland) and *Giuliana B. Prato* (University of Kent, U.K.).

**2) Title:** *Solidarities, the Need to Belong and Social Disruption.*

**Convenors:** *Marcello Mollica* (University of Messina, Italy) and *James Dingley* (Queens' University, Northern Ireland).

**3) Title:** *From Waste to Resource. Anthropology of Recycling of Urban Scums.*

**Convenors:** *Corine Vadrine* (Laure-EVS/Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture de Lyon, France) and *Velislava Petrova* (Sofia University, Bulgaria).

**Discussant:** *Italo Pardo* (University of Kent, U.K.).

**4) Title:** *The Sunset population, Interactions, Bonds.*

**Convenors:** *Sumita Saha* (Presidency University, India) and *Amlan K. Ray*.

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## Series Editors

**I. Pardo, Ph.D.** ([i.pardo@kent.ac.uk](mailto:i.pardo@kent.ac.uk)) is Honorary Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Kent, U.K. and serves as President of the International Urban Symposium (IUS). Prof. Pardo, a well-known specialist in Urban Anthropology, is the author of several books and peer-reviewed essays.

**G.B. Prato** ([g.b.prato@kent.ac.uk](mailto:g.b.prato@kent.ac.uk)) is Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the University of Kent, U.K. Widely published in anthropology, she serves as Chair of the IUAES Commission on Urban Anthropology and as Secretary and Treasurer of the International Urban Symposium (IUS).

### Recently Published:

**N. Caldararo, 2019**  
*An Ethnography of the Goodman Building: The Longest Rent Strike*

**I. Pardo and G. B. Prato, Eds, 2019**  
*Legitimacy: Ethnographic and Theoretical Insights*

**C. Védrine, 2019.**  
*The Spirit of Capitalism According to the Michelin Company: Anthropology of an Industrial Myth*

**J. Rosbrook-Thompson and G. Armstrong, 2018**  
*Mixed-Occupancy Housing in London: A Living Tapestry*

**M. Spyridakis, Ed., 2018**  
*Market Versus Society: Anthropological Insights*

## Palgrave Studies in Urban Anthropology

Half of humanity lives in towns and cities and that proportion is expected to increase in the coming decades. Society, both Western and non-Western, is fast becoming urban and mega-urban as existing cities and a growing number of smaller towns are set on a path of demographic and spatial expansion. Given the disciplinary commitment to an empirically-based analysis, anthropology has a unique contribution to make to our understanding of our evolving urban world. It is in such a belief that we have established the Palgrave Studies in Urban Anthropology series. In the awareness of the unique contribution that ethnography offers for a better theoretical and practical grasp of our rapidly changing and increasingly complex cities, the series will seek high-quality contributions from anthropologists and other social scientists, such as geographers, political scientists, sociologists and others, engaged in empirical research in diverse ethnographic settings. Proposed topics should set the agenda concerning new debates and chart new theoretical directions, encouraging reflection on the significance of the anthropological paradigm in urban research and its centrality to mainstream academic debates and to society more broadly. The series aims to promote critical scholarship in international anthropology. Volumes published in the series should address theoretical and methodological issues, showing the relevance of ethnographic research in understanding the socio-cultural, demographic, economic and geo-political changes of contemporary society.

### Previously Published:

**I. R. Örs, 2018**  
*Diaspora of the City: Stories of Cosmopolitanism from Istanbul and Athens*

**J. Kruse and Z. Uherek, Eds, 2017**  
*Diversity and Local Contexts: Urban Space, Borders, and Migration*

**T. Kuldova and M. Varghese, Eds, 2017**  
*Urban Utopias: Excess and Expulsion in Neoliberal South Asia*

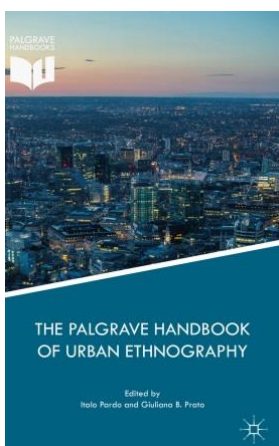
**M. Papp, 2016**  
*Shichigosan: Change and Continuity of a Family Ritual in Contemporary Urban Japan*

**A. Vailati and C. Rial, Eds, 2015**  
*Migration of Rich Immigrants: Gender, Ethnicity and Class*

**I. Lindsay, 2014**  
*Living with London's Olympics: An Ethnography*

### Forthcoming:

**M. Istasse, *Living in a World Heritage Site: Ethnography of Houses and Daily Life in the Fez Medina***  
**J. Kruse and J. DeSena, Eds, *Gentrification around the World*, 2 volumes**



**Italo Pardo and Giuliana B. Prato (Eds)**

***The Palgrave Handbook of Urban Ethnography***

1st ed.: November 2018, pp. XIX, 575, 26 illus

ISBN: 978-3-319-64288-8. DOI: 10,007 / 978-3-319-64289-5.

[www.palgrave.com/book/9783319642888](http://www.palgrave.com/book/9783319642888)

- Presents a range of topics, such as work, employment, and informality; everyday life and community relations; marginalization, gender, family, kinship, religion and ethnicity; and political strategies and social movements in historical and transnational perspectives
- Encourages reflection on the significance of the anthropological paradigm in urban research and its centrality to mainstream academic debates
- Points to new topical debates and charts new theoretical directions

These ethnographically-based studies of diverse urban experiences across the world present cutting edge research and stimulate an empirically-grounded theoretical reconceptualization. The essays identify ethnography as a powerful tool for making sense of life in our rapidly changing, complex cities. They stress the point that while there is no need to fetishize fieldwork—or to view it as an end in itself—its unique value cannot be overstated. These active, engaged researchers have produced essays that avoid abstractions and generalities while engaging with the analytical complexities of ethnographic evidence. Together, they prove the great value of knowledge produced by long-term fieldwork to mainstream academic debates and, more broadly, to society.

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