

"World City Formation: An Agenda for Research and Action"

*from International Journal of Urban and
Regional Research (1982)*

John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff

Editors' introduction

John Friedmann is one of the pioneering urbanists of the late twentieth century. Many of Friedmann's most important contributions to urban and regional studies were produced during his nearly three decades on the faculty of the Program for Urban Planning in the Graduate School of Architecture and Planning at UCLA, which he helped found in the late 1960s and where he is now Professor Emeritus. Friedmann is also currently Honorary Professor in the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. International recognition for his scholarship includes honorary doctorates from the Catholic University of Chile and the University of Dortmund. Friedmann's publication record includes 14 individually authored books, 11 co-edited books, and 150 chapters, articles, and reviews. Friedmann is currently involved in research on urbanization processes with special reference to China.

Goetz Wolff, who was a PhD student at UCLA when this article was written, is an independent researcher, teacher and consultant in Los Angeles. He also serves as Lecturer in UCLA's Urban Planning Department. His research and teaching interests center on industrial change and regional economic development issues, with particular reference to the Southern California region.

Friedmann and Wolff's study of world city formation was published in 1982 in a new radical journal of urban sociology, the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, and became an instant classic: it kickstarted an impressive outburst of research on this topic, including many of the contributions to this Reader. Building upon a broad range of intellectual sources – including radical international political economy, world systems theory, Marxian urban studies, urban systems theory and radical community studies – Friedmann and Wolff's "agenda for research and action" represented a genuinely original synthesis. Reminiscent of previous arguments by Jane Jacobs (1984), Friedmann and Wolff viewed cities rather than national economies as the motors of contemporary capitalist development. World cities, they argued, represented a new breed of global command and control centers within the new international division of labor (NIDL) associated with post-1970s capitalism. These cities, moreover, concentrated many of the contradictions and inequalities of the NIDL inside their own boundaries: they had to be viewed, simultaneously, as spaces of hope and as spaces of gloom, that is, as sites in which "citadel" and "ghetto" existed in uneasy proximity.

It was by no means accidental that Friedmann and Wolff wrote this article during a period in which Los Angeles was becoming what some would hyperbolically describe as the "capital of the 21st

century" (Scott and Soja 1996). Indeed, Los Angeles in the 1980s provided an ideal backdrop for the development of global city theory. For, as Goetz Wolff showed in another influential paper written in the early 1980s with Edward Soja and Rebecca Morales (Soja et al. 1983), Los Angeles exemplified many of the dramatic economic changes that were unfolding in the United States during that decade, as the Fordist industrial structure of the post-World War II years was increasingly replaced by an internationalized, more flexible and less stable regime of accumulation. More generally, many patterns of urban restructuring that would subsequently unfold in cities throughout the older industrialized world were already strikingly evident in the Southern California metropolis during the late 1970s and early 1980s (see Keil 1998; see also Reading 21 by Soja).

■■■■■

I
Our paper concerns the spatial articulation of the emerging world system of production and markets through a global network of cities. Specifically, it is about the principal urban regions in this network, dominant in the hierarchy, in which most of the world's active capital is concentrated. As cities go, they are large in size, typically ranging from five to fifteen million inhabitants, and they are expanding rapidly. In space, they may extend outward by as much as 60 miles from an original center. These vast, highly urbanized – and urbanizing – regions play a vital part in the great capitalist undertaking to organize the world for the efficient extraction of surplus. Our basic argument is that the character of the urbanizing processes – economic, social, and spatial – which define life in these "cities" reflect, to a considerable extent, the mode of their integration into the world economy.

We propose, then, a new look at cities from the perspective of the world economic system-information. The processes we will describe lead to new problem configurations. The central issue is the control of urban life. Whose interests will be served: those of the resident populations or of transnational corporations, or of the nation states that provide the political setting for world urbanization? Planners are directly engaged on this contested terrain. They are called upon to clarify the issues and to help in searching for solutions. Obviously, they will have to gain a solid, comprehensive understanding of the forces at work. And they will have to rethink their basic practices, since what is happening in world cities is in large measure brought about by forces that lie beyond the normal range of political – and policy – con-

trol. How can planners and, indeed, how can the people themselves, living in world cities, gain ascendancy over these forces? That is the basic question. Towards the end of this paper we shall venture a few observations about the tasks we face and their implications for planning.

II

Our argument is a relatively simple one. Since the Second World War, the processes by which capitalist institutions have freed themselves from national constraints and have proceeded to organize global production and markets for their own intrinsic purposes have greatly accelerated. The actors principally responsible for reorganizing the economic map of the world are the transnational corporations, themselves in bitter and cannibalistic conflict for the control of economic space. The emerging global system of economic relations assumes its material form in particular, typically urban, localities that are enmeshed with the global system in a variety of ways.

The specific mode of their integration with this system gives rise to an urban hierarchy of influence and control. At the apex of this hierarchy are found a small number of massive urban regions that we shall call world cities. Tightly interconnected with each other through decision-making and finance, they constitute a worldwide system of control over production and market expansion. Examples of world-cities-in-the-making include such metropolises as Tokyo, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami, New York, London, Paris, Randstadt, Frankfurt, Zurich, Cairo, Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong, Mexico City and São Paulo.

To
conveni
specific
ical res
determin
populat
consequ
A more
ways th
with th
aspects

1. The
(e.g.
local
exte
for
real
com
an
as a
2. The
city
con
it is
tion
nati
The
be
Urb
ma
of
cha
ecc
is a
hap
of
cer
ica
pre
the

First,
the w
over
trolle
trans
other
under
intern

To label them world cities is a matter of convenience. In each and every instance, their specific role must be determined through empirical research. Only this much we can say: their determining characteristic is not their size of population. This is more properly regarded as a consequence of their economic and political role. A more fundamental question is in what specific ways these urban regions are becoming integrated with the global system of economic relations. Two aspects need to be considered:

1. The form and strength of the city's integration (e.g. to what extent it serves as a headquarters location for transnational corporations; the extent to which it has become a safe place for the investment of "surplus" capital, as in real estate; its importance as a producer of commodities for the world market; its role as an ideological center; or its relative strength as a world market).
2. The spatial dominance assigned by capital to the city (e.g. whether its financial and/or market control is primarily global in scope, or whether it is less than global, extending over a multinational region of the world, or articulating a national economy with the world system). These criteria of world system integration must be viewed in a dynamic, historical perspective. Urban roles in the world system are not permanently fixed. Functions change; the strength of the relationship changes; spatial dominance changes. Indeed, the very concept of a world economy articulated through urban structures is as old as the ancient empires. Rome was perhaps the first great imperial city. One may think of Venice in its Golden Age, or of nineteenth-century London. While recognizing this historical continuity, we would still argue that the present situation is substantially different. What then is new?

First, we must consider the truly global nature of the world economy. Even imperial London, ruling over an empire "where the sun never sets," controlled only portions of the world. The present transnational system of space economy, on the other hand, is in principle unlimited. It is best understood as a spatial system which has its own internal structure of dominance/subdominance.

Following Immanuel Wallerstein, we may label its three major regional components as core, semi-periphery, and periphery. *Core areas* include those older, already industrialized and possibly "postindustrial" regions that contain the vast majority of corporate headquarters and continue to be the major markets for world production (northwest Europe, North America, Australia, Japan). The *semi-periphery* includes rapidly industrializing areas whose economies are still dependent on core-region capital and technical knowledge. They play a significant role in extending markets into the world periphery. Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Egypt, Singapore, Taiwan, and the Republic of Korea would be examples of semi-peripheral regions. And the *world periphery* comprises what is left of market economies. Predominantly agrarian, the people of the world periphery are poor, technologically backward, and politically weak.

This analytical scheme must be deftly handled. It is a first approximation to a deeper understanding of world city structure. Above all, it is an historical classification. Over the span of one or two generations, a country may change its position as it moves from periphery to semi-peripheral status (ROK, Spain, Brazil), from semi-periphery to core (Japan), and even perhaps back from core region status to the semi-periphery (Great Britain), or the ultimate decline into peripheral obscurity (Lebanon, Iran). What makes this typology attractive is the assumption that cities, situated in any of the three world regions, will tend to have significant features in common. As the movement of particular countries through the three-level hierarchy suggests, these features do not in any sense determine economic and other outcomes. They do, however, point to conditions that significantly influence a city's growth and the quality of urban life.

The world economy is thus no longer defined by the imperial reach of a Rome, a Venice, or even a London, but by a linked set of markets and production units organized and controlled by transnational capital. World cities are a material manifestation of this control, and they occur exclusively in core and semi-peripheral regions where they serve as banking and financial centers, administrative headquarters, centers of ideological control, and so forth. Without them, the world-spanning system of economic relations would be unthinkable.

This conception of the world city as an instrument for the control of production and market organization implies that the world economy, spatially articulated through world cities, is dialectically related to the national economies of the countries in which these cities are situated. *It posits an inherent contradiction between the interests of transnational capital and those of particular nation states that have their own historical trajectory.* World cities are asked to play a dual role. Essential to making the world safe for capital, they also articulate given national economies, with the world system. As such, they have considerable salience for national policy makers who must respond to political imperatives that are only coincidentally convergent with the interests of the transnationals. World cities lie at the junction between the world economy and the territorial nation-state.

Finally, the global economy is superimposed upon an international system of states. Nation states have their own political fears and ambitions. They form alliances, and they exact tribute. They must protect their frontiers against actual and potential enemies. Wishing to ensure their continuing power in the assembly of nations, or even to enlarge their power, they must provide for a continuing flow of raw materials and food supplies.

On the other hand, although transnational capital desires maximum freedom from state intervention in the movements of finance capital, information, and commodities, it is vitally interested in having the state assume as large a part as possible of the costs of production, including the reproduction of the labor force and the maintenance of "law and order." It is clear, therefore, that they would benefit from a strategy to prevent a possible collusion among nation states directed against themselves. Being essential to both transnational capital and national political interests, world cities may become bargaining counters in the ensuing struggles.

They are therefore also major arenas for political conflict. How these conflicts are resolved will shape the future of the world economy. Because many diverging interests are involved, it is a multifaceted struggle. There is, of course, the classical instance of the struggle between capital and labor. This remains. In addition, there is now a struggle between transnational capital and the national

bourgeoisie; between politically organized nation states and transnational capital; and between the people of a given city and the national polity, though this may be the weakest part.

There is, then, nothing inevitable about either the world economy or its concrete materialization in world cities. Capital is in conflict with itself and with the political territorial entities where it must come to rest. There is no manifest destiny. Yet the emerging world economy is an historical event and this allows us to formulate our central hypothesis: *the mode of world system integration (form and strength of integration; spatial dominance) will affect in determinate ways the economic, social, spatial and political structure of world cities and the urbanizing processes to which they are subject.*

What we describe is not a Weberian "ideal type" of a fully formed "world city." All that we intend is to point to certain structural tendencies in the formation of those cities that appear to play a major role in the organization of world markets and production. We have in mind a heuristic for the empirical study of world city formation.

III

In making the internationalization of capital central to our analysis, we focus upon a combination of complex processes that are indeterminate, contradictory, and irregular. There is little dispute about the fact of the worldwide expansion of market relations. But the cause – the driving force – of the internationalization of capital is debated: Is internationalization merely a working out of the internal logic of capitalism? Or has labor in the industrialized countries created a situation where capital now finds it more profitable to locate in the periphery?

We proceed under the assumption that both "windows" – to use David Harvey's felicitous image – contribute to the needed understanding of the global order. The contradictions inherent in the capitalist economy and the basic struggle which results from the domination of labor by capital are the major forces which account for both the spatial and temporal irregularities of the world economy. A city's mode of integration with the global economy cannot simply be understood by identifying its functional role in the articulation of

the system. Rather, we suggest that the driving forces of competition, the need for accumulation, and the challenges posed by political struggle make the intersection of world economy/world city a point of intense conflict and dynamic change. World city integration is not a mechanical process; it involves many interconnected changes that leave few aspects of its life untouched and create the arenas for concerted action.

IV

The world city today is in transition, which is to say it is in movement. Perhaps it has always been like this. Equilibrium is not part of the experience of large cities. Structural instability manifests itself in a variety of ways: dramatic changes in the distribution of employment, the polarization of class divisions, physical expansion and decaying older areas, political conflict. We shall have a quick look at all of these to render more specific how the formation of the world cities is affecting the quality of their life experience.

World cities are the control centers of the global economy. Their status, of course, is evolving in the measure that given regions are integrated in a dominant role with the world system. And like the golden cities of ancient empires, they draw into themselves the wealth of the world that is ruled by them. They become the major points for the accumulation of capital and "all that money can buy." They are luxurious, splendid cities whose very splendor obscures the poverty on which their wealth is based. The juxtaposition is not merely spatial; it is a functional relation: rich and poor define each other.

It is not a new story, and yet its particular features are new. As we attempt to describe the changes that occur as urban regions strive for world city status several things must be borne in mind. The characteristics we are describing are merely tendencies, not final destinations. Particular cities will exhibit particular features. Still, the account we give of conditions prevailing in urban regions as they become world cities may be regarded as the best current hypothesis. In every instance, we have tried to relate it back to specific aspects of integration with global economy. Not only are world cities in themselves not uniform, there

is no definite cut-off point with other cities that belong to the same system but are not so tightly integrated with the global economy have only a national/subnational span of control, or are integrated primarily on a basis of dependency. In a way, the world economy is everywhere, and many of the features we will describe may be found in cities other than those we are discussing here.

The world city "approach" is, in the first instance, a methodology, a point of departure, an initial hypothesis. It is a way of asking questions and of bringing foot loose facts into relation. We do not have an all-embracing theory of world city formation.

Economic restructuring

A primary fact about emerging world cities is the impact which the incipient shifts in the structure of their employment will have on the economy and on the social composition of their population. The dynamism of the world city economy results chiefly from the growth of a primary cluster of high-level business services which employ a large number of professionals – the transnational elite – and ancillary staffs of clerical personnel. The activities are those which are coming to define the chief economic functions of the world city: *management; banking and finance, legal services, accounting, technical consulting, telecommunications and computing, international transportation, research, and higher education.*

A secondary cluster of employment, also in rapid ascendancy, may be defined as essentially serving the first. Its demand is largely derived, and it employs proportionately a much smaller number of professionals: *real estate, construction activities, hotel services, restaurants, luxury shopping, entertainment, private police and domestic services.* A more varied mix than the primary cluster, its fortunes are closely tied to it. Although most jobs in this cluster are permanent and reasonably well-paid, this is not true for domestic services which is the most vulnerable employment sector and the most exploited.

A tertiary cluster of service employment centers on *international tourism*. To a considerable extent, this overlaps with the secondary cluster (hotels, restaurants, luxury shopping, entertainment), and

like that cluster, it is tied to the performance of the world economy.

The growth of the first three clusters is taking place at the expense of *manufacturing* employment. Although a large cluster, its numbers are gradually declining as a proportion of all employment. Some industry serves the specialized needs of local markets, while other sectors – in Los Angeles, for example, electronics and garment industries – are choosing world city locations because of the large influx of cheap labor which helps to keep the average cost of wages down. The future of manufacturing employment in the world city is not bright, however. The next two decades will see the rapid automation and robotization of many jobs. While factories will still be producing and earning large and perhaps even rising profits, they will be largely devoid of working people.

Government services constitute a fifth cluster. They are concerned with the maintenance and reproduction of the world city, as well as the provision of certain items of collective consumption: the planning and regulation of urban land use and expansion; the provision of public housing, basic utilities, and transportation services; the maintenance of public order; education; business regulation; urban parks; sanitation; and public welfare for the destitute.

Because of the uniqueness and scale of world cities, and because they are often considered national showcases, the government sector tends to be larger here than elsewhere. And because it is a political and, for the most part, technically backward sector, with uncertain criteria of adequate performance, it tends to be bloated, employing large numbers of people at relatively low levels of productivity and wages. Moreover, because the world city extends over many political jurisdictions that are contiguous with each other, there is much overlap and redundancy in employment. During periods of depression, government will often be the employer of last resort. Its internal rhythm tends to be counter-cyclical.

A sixth and, at least in some cities, numerically the largest cluster, embraces the "informal," "floating," or "street" economy which ranges from the casual services of day laborers and shoeshine boys to fruit vendors, glaziers, rug dealers, and modest artisans. Frequently an extension of the household economy, most informal activities require little or

no overhead (though they do require start-up capital). They demand long hours, and the returns are low and uncertain. They offer no security to those who work in them. New arrivals to the city often find their first job in the informal sector, and many of them stay there. When times are bad, some makeshift income earning opportunities can always be found in the informal sector for people who are temporarily unemployed. Although informal sector work may be a choice between independence and security for some, for many more it is the only way to survive in the city. The cluster of informal activities takes up the slack in the "formal" economy, and thus despite its marginal character, it tends to be tolerated by the state.

Some informal activities are not as "unorganized" or "casual" as they might appear. Perhaps increasingly, small businesses are subcontracted by large, frequently multinational corporations who in this way are able to lower their costs of operation. Informal businesses are usually beyond the reach of government regulation. They don't pay minimum wages and their labor is often self-exploited. Much of it is done by women and children.

But essentially the informal sector exists because of the large influx of people into the world city from other cities and from the countryside, people who are attracted to the world city as to a honey pot. They don't all find legitimate employment. A significant number drift into illicit occupations which perhaps more than elsewhere appear to thrive in the large city: thieves, pick-pockets, swindlers, pimps, prostitutes, drug peddlers, black marketeers . . . the list can be extended with endless refinements.

Finally, there is the undefined category of those without a steady income: the full-time unemployed, who depend on family and public charity for support. Excepting women, who manage their households but are not paid for this, and therefore do not appear in the official statistics; their numbers are surprisingly small in the order of 5–10 per cent of the labor force.

Social restructuring

The primary social fact about world city formation is the polarization of its social class divisions. Transnational elites are the dominant class in the

world city
their lives
cosmopol
sponding
affluence.
nantly m
Because
class well

The co
lation wh
the world
The unde
out little
they cam
centers o
queuing f
the prima
settle in it
personal
dirty wor
dependen
employm
legality; t
For all p
underclas

Many
different
they have
different
workers
"third wo
New Yo
Francisco
"nordesti
Algerians
Singapore

There
suited to
and need
Physicall
than the
of the po
of violen
security
victim o
repressio
for both
rise.

Racis
good de

world city, and the city is arranged to cater to their lifestyles and occupational necessities. It is a cosmopolitan world that surrounds them, corresponding to their own high energy, rootlessness, and affluence. Members of this class are predominantly males between the ages of 30 and 50. Because of their importance to the city, they are a class well served.

The contrast with the third (or so) of the population who make up the permanent underclass of the world city could scarcely be more striking. The underclass are the victims of a system that holds out little hope to them in the periphery from which they came but also fails them in the very nerve centers of the world economy where they are queuing for a job. They crowd along the edges of the primary economy – the "formal" sector – or settle in its interstices, barely tolerated, yet providing personal services to the ruling class, doing the dirty work of the city. The ruling class and its dependent middle sectors enjoy permanent employment, a steady income, and complete legality; they do not have to justify their existence. For all practical purposes, they *are* the city. The underclass lives at its sufferance.

Many, though not all, of the underclass are of different ethnic origin than the ruling strata; often, they have a different skin color as well, or speak a different dialect or language. These immigrant workers give to many world cities a distinctly "third world" aspect: Puerto Ricans and Haitians in New York, Mexicans in Los Angeles and San Francisco, barefoot Indians in Mexico City, "nordestinos" in São Paulo, Jamaicans in London, Algerians in Paris, Turks in Frankfurt, Malays in Singapore.

There is a city that serves this underclass, as suited to their own condition if not their preferences and needs, as is the city of the "upper circuit." Physically separated from and many times larger than the citadel of the ruling class, it is the ghetto of the poor. Both cities live under the constant threat of violence: the upper city is guarded by private security forces, while the lower city is the double victim of its own incipient violence and of police repression. The typical world city situation is thus for *both* the crime rate and police expenditures to rise.

Racism reinforces class contradictions, and a good deal of ethnic and racial hostility is found

within the working class itself. Under conditions of tight labor markets, "foreign" workers, whether undocumented or not, frequently occasion racist outbursts, as "national" workers (particularly among the underclass) struggle to preserve their limited terrain for livelihood. Street gangs of different ethnic origin, and the pitched battles between them, especially in the United States, are a major manifestation of this violence.

Yet racial conflict is only one facet of the general increase in violence that is brought on by class polarization. Terrorism, kidnapping, street demonstrations, and rioting are other common forms. There is an undeniable fascination with violence among residents in the world city which is picked up and amplified by the popular media. Yet for all the turmoil, world city conflicts are not a sign of an impending revolution. A good deal of the violence occurs within the working class itself and is a measure of its internal divisions. The world city is in any event immune to revolutionary action. Lacking a political center, it can only be rendered irrelevant – at the present time a rather unlikely occurrence.

Confronted with violence, the nation state responds in coin. Given the severity of its fiscal constraints, in the face of constantly rising costs, it resorts to the simplest, least imaginative alternative: the application of brute force. The response is acceptable to the new ruling class who generally prefer administrative to political solutions. But police repression can at best contain class violence; it cannot eliminate or significantly reduce it. Violence is here to stay.

Physical restructuring

Over the next generation, world cities can be expected to grow to unprecedented size. By the end of the century, the typical world city will have ten million people or more. Much of the increase will have come from migration. Obviously, a population that rivals that of a medium sized country by today's standards can no longer be considered a city in the traditional sense. It is an urbanized region, or an "urban field." In the case of Los Angeles, for example, the pertinent economic region has been defined as having a radius of about 60 miles (roughly 80 minutes commuting at

normal speeds); it represents the life space for more than half the population of California!

The urban field is essentially an economic concept. Although it does not respond to the traditional political concept of the city as *civitas*, it imposes its own logic on the vestiges of the political city which struggles to survive in this highly charged, volatile materialization of capitalist energy. The urban field is expanding, more rapidly in most cases than even the increase in population, but it is expanding unequally, regardless of whether one applies functional, social, or economic criteria. Underlying its kaleidoscopic spatial form is the ever-shifting topography of land values which quickly and efficiently excludes all potential users who are unable to meet the price of a given parcel of land. Of course, this method does not at all correspond to any social need, least of all to the need of what Joan Nelson (1979) has called "access to power."

The concentration of activities and wealth on a world city scale imposes extraordinary strains on the natural resources on which the continued viability of the world city depends. To feed its voracious appetite for water and energy (which tends to grow at multiples of the increases in population), the city must reach further and further afield, sometimes for hundreds of miles, across mountains and deserts and even national boundaries. As it does so, it comes inevitably into conflict with competing interests and jurisdictions.

At the same time, and considering alone sheer volume, the world city faces enormous problems of waste management. Pollution at levels of concentration dangerous to human health pose a constant and growing threat. Huge areas must be set aside for low-intensity uses of the land, such as airports, water-treatment facilities, solid waste disposal, agriculture and dairying, and urban mass recreation.

This enormously varied complex of activities must be knitted together through high-speed transport devices and linked to the outside world through a system of international transport terminals and telecommunications capable of serving the entire region. And of course it must have a basic infrastructure of utilities that serves the housing and industrial needs of the city. At a scale of 10 or 20 million people each, and an area of several hundred square miles, these common basic needs

of the world city can be satisfied only with the considered application of high technology. But high technology renders the city more vulnerable: the growing reliance on ever more sophisticated methods may be counterproductive in the end. Its costs will escalate even as the quality of its services deteriorates.

In its internal spatial structure, the world city may be divided, as we suggested in the preceding section, into the "citadel" and the "ghetto." Its geography is typically one of inequality and class domination. The citadel serves the specific needs of the transnational elites and their immediate retinues who rule the city's economic life, the ghetto is adapted to the circumstances of the permanent underclass.

With its towers of steel and glass and its fanciful shopping malls, the Citadel is the city's most vulnerable symbol. Its smooth surfaces suggest the sleek impersonality of money power. Its interior spaces are ample, elegant, and plush. In appropriately secluded spaces, the transnational elites have built their residences and playgrounds: country clubs and bridle paths and private beaches.

The overcrowded ghettos exist in the far shadows of the Citadel, where it is further divided into racial and ethnic enclaves; some areas are shanty towns. None are well provided with public services: garbage does not get collected, only the police in their squad cars are visibly in evidence. In many places, ghetto residents are allowed outside their zones only during working hours: their appearance in the Citadel after dark creates a small panic. With its dozens of apartheid Sowetos, South Africa is perhaps the extreme case of a country whose elites are gripped in fear of their underclass, but political manifestations of this fear are found to a degree in nearly all world cities. Not long ago, the papers in Los Angeles were filled with horror stories of "marauders" sallying forth from the black ghetto to the Citadel on the West Side to rob, rape and kill. They called it "predatory crime." The implication was clear: at night, ghetto residents belong to the ghettos. There, isolated like a virus, they can harm only themselves.

Political conflict

Every restructuring implies conflict. And when conflict occurs in the public domain, it concerns the

distribution
advantage
Focused c
tidimensio
as if all the
and the c
capital are
with that
of counter
destabilize
suddenly e

The em
motion tha
the econo
Economic
profit-moti
are territo
occupy, in
lives unfold
about. For
space, life
irrational r
Yet it can
Every econ
space, and
would peris
are collectiv
spaces, the
their physio

It is thus
two kinds
conflicts. I
currents be
conflicts are
they have a
in place, and
transmittal
it may not b
accurate to
turbulence.

There are
restructuring
from one pla
entirely new
for which old
racial and et
access to th
over jobs tha
abundant. Th
and the natio

distribution of costs and benefits, and who shall gain advantage for the next round of the struggle. Focused on the world city, political conflict is multidimensional; it is also at the heart of the matter, as if all the world's lines of force came together here, and the contradictions in the self expansion of capital are magnified on a scale commensurate with that of the world city itself. In the absence of counter-forces, complex feedback loops tend to destabilize the system, and localized conflicts may suddenly erupt into a worldwide crisis.

The emergence of world cities sets processes into motion that restructure people's life spaces and the economic space that intersects with them. Economic space obeys the logic of capital: it is profit-motivated and individualized. Life spaces are territorial: they are the areas that people occupy, in which their dreams are made, their lives unfold. They are thus the areas they really care about. For the dominant actors in economic space, life space is nothing but a hindrance, an irrational residue of a more primitive existence. Yet it can neither be denied nor circumvented. Every economic space overlaps with an existing life space, and without this, economic enterprise would perish. On the other hand, for people who are collectively the sovereign in their respective life spaces, the space of economic logic is the basis for their physical survival.

It is thus very clear that a restructuring of these two kinds of space is bound to generate deep conflicts. In practice, because so many cross currents bear down on them, the reasons for conflicts are often hard to isolate. Conflicts persist; they have a history and a future, they interconnect in place, and the system of world cities ensures their transmittal from continent to continent. Though it may not be very enlightening, it might be more accurate to speak of them as a form of social turbulence.

There are the conflicts over livelihood, as the restructuring of economic space draws jobs away from one place to resurrect them in another, or as entirely new kinds of job are suddenly ascendant for which older workers are not qualified. There are racial and ethnic conflicts, as workers battle over access to the few good jobs there are, and even over jobs that are less desirable but relatively more abundant. There are struggles between world city and the national periphery over the political auto-

nomy of peripheral regions, as the periphery sees its collective life chances systematically denied by the imperial interests of world city cores. There are conflicts over the spaces within the city, as people seek access to housing they can afford, defend their neighborhoods from the intrusion of capitalist logic, or merely struggle for turf to enjoy the freedom of following lifeways of their own. There are the political campaigns launched by concerned citizens to protect and enhance the quality of their lives as they perceive it: in struggles for the environment, against nuclear power, for child care centers, for the access of handicapped workers in public facilities . . . struggles and campaigns which are incapable of being separated from the peculiar setting of world cities. Or there are the bitter and tenacious struggles of poor people, workers who belong to one class fraction or another, for greater access to the conditions for social power: the right to organize, to demonstrate, to call to account, to gain control over the conditions of their work, to keep their bodies healthy, to educate their children and themselves to higher incomes, to sources of the means for livelihood.

All these struggles are occurring simultaneously. They are centered on the restructuring process and in the contradictions that arise from the interfacing of economic and life spaces. As such, they reveal to the astute observer the true forces at work in the world city and the actual distribution of power. Also, of course, they determine the ultimate outcomes we observe . . . not only the outcomes of the particular struggles being waged, but of the form and direction which world city development will take. For outcomes are not predetermined. Broad tendencies may be irreversible in the medium term, such as the integration of the world economic system under the aegis of transnational capital. But within that historical tendency, there are always opportunities for action. It is precisely at the searing points of political conflict that opportunities arise for a concerted effort to change the course of history.

Conflict between life space and economic space poses new questions for the state. More than ever, the state is faced with multiple contradictions and difficult choices. Some would say that the state itself is threatened by the dramatic appearance of transnational power. On the world periphery, the choice may be the relatively simple

one between complete dependency (with all that this implies in terms of uneven development) and stone age survival. In the semi-periphery, which has already chosen a dependent development path, the problems of choice are more complex. More highly articulated than in the periphery, the state reflects within its own structure many of the conflicts within civil society and the economy, as class fraction is pitted against class fraction, territory against class, working class against capital, and citizens against the state, and as these conflicts come together in successive waves of "turbulence" in the world city, the state is merely one more actor, trying to safeguard its own specific interests.

One such interest is the political integration of its territory. Semi-peripheral states are especially concerned with regional inequalities, focal points of regional revolt, regional resources development, and rural land reform. In countries such as Mexico and Brazil, regional issues have been major concerns of state action, and civil wars have been fought over them.

Regional questions recede in the territorially more integrated countries of the world core area. Here the more important conflicts tend to be between national and transnational fractions of capital, and the state becomes a major "arena" for the conduct of this struggle. Much of it is over specific legislation and the budget allocation. In all this turmoil, a major loser is the local state. Small, isolated without financial power, and encapsulated

within the world economy, it is barely able to provide for even the minimal services its population needs. And yet, instead of seeking alliances with neighboring cities and organized labor, it leaves the real decisions to the higher powers on which it is itself dependent, or to the quasi-independent authorities created by state charter that manage the infrastructure of global capital-system-wide facilities such as ports, airports, rapid transit, water supply, communications, and electric power.

REFERENCES FROM THE READING

- Jacobs, J. (1984) *Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life*. New York: Random House.
- Keil, R. (1998) *Los Angeles: Globalization, Urbanization, and Social Struggles*. Chichester and New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Nelson, J. (1979) *Access to Power: Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Countries*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Scott, A. and Soja, E. (1996) *The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Soja, E., Morales, R. and Wolff, G. (1983) *Urban Restructuring: An Analysis of Social and Spatial Change in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of California.

"The W Developm

John Friedm

Editors' intro

In 1986, buoyed by
formation, John Fr
set of analytical p
taxonomy has been
tion it created a po
of globalized urban
ther consolidated,
and, in some case
directly alongside F
the core contention
and even ventures

Manuel Castells (19
revolutionized the s
ated a period of ex
Only in recent years
been directly connect
new approach sharp
urban change; it als
spective of an econ
oblivious to nationa
is to state, as succin
that link urbanizati
nomic forces. The w
call these loosely jo
intended as a frame
a theory nor a un
cities, but a starting