# VOCABULARIES FOR AN URBANISING PLANET

# VOCABU-LARIES FOR AN URBANISING PLANET

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# THEORY BUILDING THROUGH COM-PARISON

BIRKHÄUSER
BASEL

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# PREFACE

This book is the fruit of almost two decades of studies on urbanisation. During this time, the phenomena of urbanisation and the planet we live on have changed considerably. A wide range of urbanisation processes are developing across the world and urban areas expand and interweave. In this process, urban forms are constantly changing and new urban configurations are evolving, which are deeply disturbing conventional understandings of the urban. Simultaneously, there has been a remarkable development in critical urban studies in the social sciences and architecture. At the turn of this century, urban studies were still dominated by Euro-American concepts, and in many respects traditional conceptualisations and methodologies prevailed. This changed when postcolonial approaches called for diversified global urban studies: not only the paradigmatic cities of the West, but every place should become the starting point for urban research and theory building (see e.g. Roy 2003; Simone 2004a; Robinson 2006). Over the last decade, we have seen a plethora of publications covering all parts of the planet and all sorts of territories. At the same time, efforts to shift the epistemology of the urban have developed. Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, which had been rediscovered in the early 1990s, played an important role in these efforts. His visionary thesis of the complete urbanisation of society, formulated in 1970, gained a new urgency in light of rapidly advancing urbanisation, and invited us

to rethink how we could analyse urban territories (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]). His overarching theory, which can be understood as a general theory of society in time and space (see Schmid 2022), has strongly influenced novel theorisations. One of those is the approach of 'planetary urbanisation', which proposes a renewed epistemology for critical urban studies (Brenner and Schmid 2011, 2015; Merrifield 2014). At the core of this approach is the conceptualisation of an interrelated set of three modalities of urbanisation—concentrated, extended and differential urbanisation. This is intended to distinguish among centripetal urbanisation processes that generate urban agglomerations; processes of extension, transforming territories beyond the city; and urbanisation processes that create new differentiations and thus open new possibilities for alternative pathways of urban development (Brenner and Schmid 2015).

The research presented in this book developed through the various stages of this epistemological shift over the course of several projects. Some of them were directly related to the studies that ETH Studio Basel conducted from 1999 to 2018.[1] During this time, ETH Studio Basel developed a range of new concepts and methods that crystallised in a specific territorial approach to urbanisation (Schmid 2016). After publishing a path-breaking study of urban Switzerland (Diener et al. 2006), ETH Studio Basel conducted a series of analyses of urban territories across the world, exploring places with very diverse urban characteristics. To achieve this kind of analysis, it developed a range of new methods, especially the use of mapping as an analytical tool, and opened up a wide field for empirical research and architectural interventions in planning and urban design. The most important result of this research was the insight that every urban territory displays characteristic traits that underpin the production and reproduction of its own specificity, and hence the uniqueness of its material and social existence (Diener et al. 2015).

An opportunity to deepen this approach arose when ETH Studio Basel joined the research project Globalization of Urbanity.[2] Starting in 2009, the research team of Christian Schmid, Monika Streule, Pascal Kallenberger and Anne Schmidt explored the phenomenon of global urbanisation and made initial trials with a new qualitative methodology by analysing Mexico City, Paris and Kolkata. The team used a novel method of participative mapping in order to identify urban configurations; a method that had been developed in a research project on Havana (Peña Díaz and Schmid 2008, 2024). These experiences inspired the elaboration of a proposal for a larger comparative project.

The comparative analysis that is presented in this book started in 2011. The team of this new research project included Naomi Hanakata, Ozan Karaman, Pascal Kallenberger, Anne Kockelkorn, Lindsay Sawyer, Christian Schmid, Monika Streule, Rob Sullivan and Kit Ping Wong. These researchers come from

different disciplinary backgrounds, including urban geography, urban anthropology, sociology, architecture, architectural history and urban design. The team was also equipped with comprehensive language skills beyond English, ranging from Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Turkish, Spanish and French, to German. With this project, we expanded our initial sample of urban territories to a total of eight cases, including Tokyo, the East Pearl River Delta (Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan), Lagos, Istanbul, Mexico City, Paris, Kolkata and Los Angeles.

It was astonishing that such an ambitious and at the same time highly experimental research project became possible. It was realised in the context of the ETH Future Cities Laboratory in Singapore (FCL), in which the ETH Department of Architecture played a leading role.[3] We enjoyed a great degree of freedom to do unconventional and inventive research. The entire research procedure was planned to be open-ended, with the intention of clarifying various open questions during the research process itself; our project was inspired by ETH Studio Basel's approach, where only the general research question was formulated at the start of the project. The discipline of architecture has a long tradition of experimental and inventive approaches to research, in which—in contrast to most methodologies in social sciences—there are no rigid rules; instead, there is an open understanding of doing research.

While the project was still in its preparatory phase, it became clear that a profound change to our entire research approach was needed. ETH Studio Basel had developed its territorial approach to urbanisation by analysing extended urban territories, starting with the Canary Islands and the Nile Valley, and later including an entire series of large-scale territories (Diener et al. 2016). It had become clear that a thorough analysis of the urban has to go beyond the city to include the periurban hinterlands and even more remote territories to understand the dynamics of urbanisation. At the same time, Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid started their collaboration to explore the theoretical implications of these and related research efforts. Their fundamental critique of city-centric approaches and their proposal to employ a much more open, multiscalar analysis of urban territories made the notion of comparing cities untenable (Brenner and Schmid 2015). We had to go beyond any kind of urban border, and to give up the idea of a bounded settlement space whatever its definition and perimeter may be.

While new methodologies for the analysis of extended urbanisation were already on their way (for an overview see the volume *Extended Urbanisation* edited by Christian Schmid and Milica Topalović, 2023), we also had to rethink and reconceptualise processes of *concentrated urbanisation*—which turned out to be a major challenge. To do so we needed to fundamentally revise the entire research design, and not compare urban territories as

such, but urbanisation processes. This change in perspective was captured in the term ‘patterns and pathways of planetary urbanisation’ that we have chosen as the title of the project.

When the project finally started in earnest in the summer of 2011, we had first to develop a clear understanding of the project goals and research procedure. At the time, what would soon be called ‘new comparative urbanism’ (Lees 2011; Robinson 2011) was in its initial stage. It was characterised by experimental comparative endeavours, crossing the divides of areal typologies, bridging the various silos of urban studies and thus permitting the comparison of seemingly incompatible experiences in well-known and intensively studied western cities and the cities of the Global South, as well as all the cities that do not fit into either of these two categories.

It was a real jump in the scale and scope of our own research experiences to compare these eight huge urban territories. We found it demanded a research approach and methodology that was different from what we used in our previous studies, and required first of all a comparative design suited to this kind of qualitative research. We had learned from our earlier experiences how to use mapping as a tool to conduct thorough empirical analyses and also to integrate and synthesise different modalities of knowledge. We knew about the great value of guided discussions as instruments for exchange and collective learning and also for developing syntheses and concepts. Inspired by Robinson’s (2011) procedure of bringing different cases into conversation with each other, we organised team workshops, in which we constantly shared our research experiences and results from the field. We had started these comparative conversations at the very beginning of our collaborative project: in the first session we shared our knowledge about the different territories based on team members’ already existing expertise. These workshops constituted the very core of our comparative procedure; they allowed each researcher to reinterpret their findings in relation to other cases, and to develop a collective and comparative understanding of urbanisation processes. During the entire duration of the project, we organised a total of 12 workshops of one to two weeks each.

It then became a major challenge to conduct fieldwork in these territories. Each researcher had the task of developing an understanding of an immense, densely settled territory. We thus had to develop new methods of field research based on multi-sited ethnography, a revised method of mapping as well as a procedure for concept generation via comparison. This was a truly collective research, in which the entire team not only exchanged experiences and ideas, but also developed a new methodology and advanced conceptualisation and theory building.

Postdoc researcher Ozan Karaman played a key role for the entire project, particularly for the development and implementation of the comparative research design and the coordination

of the research team. He also contributed his extensive work on the case of Istanbul (Karaman 2013a, 2013b, 2013c, 2014) and research support for the Los Angeles case study. The PhD researchers had the double task of doing the comparative research and elaborating their dissertations and book publications on the individual territories: Monika Streule on Mexico City (2016, 2018), Lindsay Sawyer on Lagos (2016), Naomi Hanakata on Tokyo (2016, 2020), and Kit Ping Wong on Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan (2017). In turn, these studies greatly benefitted from the comparative approach, as it made it possible to put into perspective the individual cases and to go beyond their idiosyncrasies to identify the structural components that guided urban development. Anne Kockelkorn contributed significantly to the project with her profound expertise on the urban development of Paris and the histories of mass housing based on her PhD analysing a large-scale postmodern housing project in a ville nouvelle (2017). The insights of postdoc researcher Rob Sullivan on Los Angeles (2014) were crucial to developing our comparative concepts, adding yet another case study. Lara Belkind supported our research on Paris and contributed greatly to the text. Pascal Kallenberger contributed to our comparative research and focused on Kolkata. He pursued a career change mid-way through the project; we therefore had to omit the planned chapter on Kolkata in this book but still present those research results that were formative to the entire project.

In our comparative process, we generated two different types of analysis, both of which are documented in this book. On the one hand, the encompassing and novel analyses of these eight large-scale urban territories necessitated the periodisation of urban development and the mapping of urban configurations for each territory. The maps were originally used as working tools for geographically locating information gathered during our explorative mapping sessions, and then became an important analytical base for the entire analysis. Finalising these maps was a project on its own, one that we accomplished together with geographer and cartographer Philippe Rekacewicz and designers Dorothée Billard and Roger Conscience in intense workshop sessions. We exhibited these maps at the Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism / Architecture in the autumn of 2015. These maps and the related analyses of patterns and pathways are published in this book; most of them for the first time.

On the other hand, we developed a series of articles that conceptualised six individual urbanisation processes. Five of these have been published in academic journals, while one text has been newly written for this book. The collective elaboration and writing of these articles demanded not only further efforts of theorisation, but also additional comparative work via a critical evaluation of existing conceptualisations in order to sharpen and consolidate our newly elaborated concepts.

This book is divided into four parts. Part I offers a general understanding of urbanisation processes. It explains the comparative strategy and methodology and the way we collaboratively conceptualised urbanisation processes. It also contains an overview of all the new concepts of urbanisation processes that we elaborated over the course of our collective study. A shorter version of the four chapters of Part I has been published in the article 'Towards a new vocabulary of urbanisation processes: a comparative approach' (Schmid et al. 2018). In Part II we trace the social production of urban territories in each case study. The maps at the beginning of each chapter convey a novel analysis of the patterns of these huge territories. The texts explain the respective patterns and pathways that urbanisation has taken and reveal the specificity of each urban territory. Most of these texts are condensed versions of the much broader analyses developed during our research. Part III presents our enriched vocabulary of urbanisation processes. We reprint the articles, slightly revised and adapted to the context and style of this book and expanded with maps and illustrations. For certain processes, particularly bypass urbanism and multilayered patchwork urbanisation, the maps published in these chapters helped considerably to detect the process as such. The chapter on the incorporation of urban differences was complemented with an additional case study on Istanbul, and the chapter on multilayered patchwork urbanisation is published here for the first time. In the concluding Part IV, Christian Schmid and Monika Streule present a synthesis of the entire comparative analysis. Thinking the patterns and pathways of urbanisation together allowed us to develop a comparison of the different paradigms of urbanisation.

The empirical results and theoretical considerations assembled in this book convey a kaleidoscope of urban territories and processes across the planet. They are open to various ways of reading, as the different components can be linked in new ways, and thus new aspects and connections among them can be identified. We offer this book for critical examination and discussion, and as inspiration for inspiration to further comparative endeavours. It is meant as an invitation to develop a renewed vocabulary of urbanisation, and to advance new theoretical frameworks to grasp the contemporary urbanisation of the planet.

Naomi Hanakata, Ozan Karaman, Anne Kockelkorn, Lindsay Sawyer, Christian Schmid, Monika Streule and Kit Ping Wong

1 ETH Studio Basel was an offshoot of the Department of Architecture at ETH Zürich located in Basel, led by architects Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, Marcel Meili and Roger Diener, and geographer and sociologist Christian Schmid. In this framework, researchers and students were conducting experimental urban research together.

2 The research project Globalization of Urbanity brought together the chairs of Josep Acebillo (Accademia di architettura, USI Mendrisio), Jacques Lévy (ENAC EPF Lausanne) and Christian Schmid (Department of Architecture, ETH Zürich) in the framework of the Swiss Cooperation Program in Architecture (Acebillo et al. 2012).

3 The Future Cities Laboratory (FCL) is the first and largest programme of the Singapore–ETH Centre. It was launched in 2010 as an interdisciplinary research hub that addresses the future of urbanisation. It brings together researchers from many parts of the world and a wide range of disciplines.

# PART I

# DECENTRING URBAN RESEARCH: THEORY, PROCEDURE, METHODOLOGY

# URBANISATION PROCESSES

# AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL REORIENTATION

Christian Schmid

The urban world has fundamentally changed in the last few decades. A wide range of urbanisation processes is generating a great variety of complex and often surprising territories, which are disturbing conventional understandings of the urban. The challenge to scholars is thus to analyse not only the multitude of urban territories, but also the various urbanisation processes that are transforming those territories. This also means that what constitutes the spatial units of analysis has to be fundamentally reconsidered. Urbanisation processes are unsettling and churning up urban territories, and are constantly generating new urban configurations. The essential task, therefore, is to investigate the historically and geographically specific patterns and pathways of urbanisation and the dynamics of urbanisation processes. A new vocabulary of urbanisation is required to help us decipher these rapidly mutating urban territories and to facilitate discussions and common understandings of urbanisation.

This chapter introduces the essential theoretical concepts for reframing a dynamic analysis of urbanisation processes. Together, they constitute a novel territorial approach, based on a decentring perspective on urbanisation. This perspective was first brought forward by postcolonial approaches that marked an important change in urban theory and research by going beyond western models of urbanisation to address a variety of urban situations and constellations developing across the planet.

In an ambition to develop global urban studies, they also proposed to bridge the various divides that criss-cross our planet.

This postcolonial perspective has been complemented by the invention of the concept of planetary urbanisation that has exploded city-centric understandings of urbanisation. The term planetary urbanisation captures the phenomenon that contemporary urbanisation processes are taking place throughout the world, and thus can be grasped only by using a planetary perspective. To analyse planetary urbanisation, we must abandon the concept of bounded settlement areas, and analyse urbanisation processes instead of urban forms. This approach not only focuses on urban developments 'beyond the city', but also fundamentally reorients the analysis of densely settled urban areas.

# CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FOR URBAN RESEARCH

This decentring move in urban studies demands an epistemological reorientation of urban analysis. To better understand patterns and pathways of urbanisation in time and space requires new concepts and theoretical framings that are suited to a dynamic, process-oriented analysis. This motivated the development of a *territorial approach* to urbanisation, which has been elaborated over more than two decades in the context of several research projects. Starting from Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, the territorial approach has continued to be developed in the interaction between practice and empirical research. It gives a new answer to the old question: how to understand urbanisation?

First of all, urbanisation has to be reconceptualised as a multidimensional process. A deeper analysis reveals that the various constitutive elements of urbanisation processes are continuously producing new urban forms, and thus the patterns and pathways of urbanisation of a territory are always specific. This needs a reorientation of urban theory to conceptualise the dialectic between the general and the specific. The concept of urbanisation processes is at the centre of this reorientation, so we now address the question: how can we identify and conceptualise urbanisation processes? One possibility is to do this by contextualising specific situations in the overall field and employing inspiration gained in other situations. This always includes a comparative moment: we have to diversify the sources of inspiration and enrich our language with a wide palette of terms representing the manifold emerging urban situations.

## DECENTRING URBAN RESEARCH

To understand urbanisation in time and space demands a fundamental epistemological reorientation: the analysis of the diverse patterns and pathways of urbanisation developing across the planet needs a decentring of the analytical perspective on the urban. This decentring perspective follows, and is in fact inspired by the postcolonial turn in urban studies that challenged the deeply inscribed geographies of theory production, particularly the Anglo-American hegemony in international urban studies. More than two decades ago, Jennifer Robinson (2002) called for a diversification of the sources and inspirations in urban theory, a suggestion that has been repeated many times since then (see e.g. Roy 2009; Sheppard et al. 2013, Parnell and Oldfield 2014). One important analytical

and methodological starting point to address this challenge is to treat every urban area as an 'ordinary city' (Robinson 2006) and thus as an equally relevant place for learning about contemporary urbanisation as well as a relevant and valuable starting point for theory generation and conceptual innovation. Our own project is strongly influenced by this invitation, and seeks to address the analytical and methodological consequences that it implies.

Another consequence of this decentring move in urban theory and research is that it encourages us to go beyond conceptions of separate area typologies. The emerging patchwork of spatial unevenness can no longer be captured adequately through a typological differentiation between centre/periphery, rural/urban, metropolis/colony, North/South, or East/West. Indeed, the 'southern turn' of urban studies (see e.g. Rao 2006), so strongly fostered by postcolonial approaches, has paved the way towards a more comprehensive and differentiating view of the urban world, questioning the compartmentalisation that inherited concepts inscribe and prescribe and that implicitly and explicitly structure theories as well as research and practice (see also Simone 2010, Robinson 2014). In order to implement this decentring perspective, however, we have to go one step further and question the still dominant city-centric conceptions in urban studies that limit and impoverish our understanding of contemporary urban processes. The second important starting point for this project was therefore the concept of *planetary urbanisation*, which addresses a wide range of urban transformations that have given rise to questions about many of the fundamental assumptions and certainties of urban research (Brenner and Schmid 2014, 2015; Merrifield 2014). This includes various processes that extend the territorial reach of the urban into a seemingly non-urban realm, and the development of heterogeneous and polymorphous extended urban landscapes that are characterised by the superimposition and entanglement of cores and peripheries. These processes are continually producing new patterns and pathways of uneven urban development, while urban territories are becoming much more differentiated, polymorphic and multi-scalar.

At the same time, the concept of planetary urbanisation requires an epistemological reorientation of the focus of urban research: no longer to look at bounded settlements, but to examine urbanisation processes stretching out over the territory. We use the perspective of planetary urbanisation to question not only conventional analyses of areas located outside a putatively urban realm, but also to challenge inherited understandings of urban core areas. This conceptualisation has important consequences for long-entrenched understandings of urbanisation: it examines the debilitating effects of city-centrist approaches and related methodological cityism (Cairns 2019; Angelo and Wachsmuth 2015) that focus exclusively on agglomerations and urban regions, which are defined by catchment areas, commuter zones or labour markets. All these approaches are based on the agglomeration paradigm; the assumption that cities can be defined as concentrations of labour power and the means of production (Brenner and Schmid 2014; Schmid 2023). Contemporary agglomerations stretch out to form multipolar, polycentric urban configurations, leading to overlapping catchment areas, and thus seriously challenging any attempt to place boundaries for identifying the putative basic units of both urban analysis and everyday life. To put the postcolonial turn discussed above into a planetary perspective means to assert that every point on the planet might be affected by urbanisation processes in one way or another, and thus could provide important insights into the urban process. Robinson's recent call to make 'space for insights starting from anywhere' (2016: 5) invites us to look for inspiration and for new concepts to emerge from any place on this planet.

## FROM URBAN FORM TO URBAN PROCESS

The perspective of planetary urbanisation has fundamentally changed inherited views on the urban. First of all, it proposes a much more dynamic procedure of analysing urban territories, focusing on the urbanisation processes that are shaping and reshaping these territories instead of urban forms. This process-oriented perspective is expressed by the introduction of the related terms 'concentrated', 'extended' and 'differential' urbanisation, which indicate three basic modalities of the urban process (Brenner and Schmid 2015). Firstly, any form of urbanisation generates not only the concentration of people, production units, infrastructure and information that leads to *concentrated urbanisation*, but also inevitably and simultaneously causes a proliferation and expansion of the urban fabric, thus resulting in various forms of *extended urbanisation*, stretching out beyond dense settlement spaces into agricultural and sparsely populated areas. Food, water, energy and raw materials must be brought to urban centres, requiring an entire logistical system that ranges from transport to information networks. Conversely, areas that are dominated by extended urbanisation might also evolve into new centralities and urban concentrations. Thus, concentrated and extended forms of urbanisation exist in a dialectical relationship with each other and can, at times, merge seamlessly. Very large urban territories may therefore be marked by both concentrated and extended modalities of urbanisation. Secondly, both modalities of urbanisation must deal with processes of *differential urbanisation*, which are unevenly

churning settlement spaces, leading to various processes of commodification and incorporation, but also to the creation and generation of new centralities and new differences. This requires a dynamic and relational understanding of urbanisation, taking into consideration both the extended and the uneven character of urban territories, in which new centralities can emerge in various places, in the urban peripheries, but also outside densely settled areas, creating complex interdependencies and multi-scalar urban realities (see Diener et al. 2015). Thus, the concept of planetary urbanisation does not postulate that urban areas are becoming more homogenous or that one overarching process of urbanisation is shaping the world, as many critics of the concept imply. Instead the opposite is true: planetary urbanisation reinforces and intensifies uneven development and leads to much more complex and contradictory urban territories. It is therefore essential to consider the specificity of these territories and hence to analyse concrete processes and manifestations of the urban on the ground (Diener et al. 2015, Schmid 2015, Schmid and Topalović 2023).

These considerations have far-reaching consequences for the analysis of urbanisation, not only for territories of extended urbanisation, but also for densely settled metropolitan territories. Urbanisation has to be understood as an unbounded process that transgresses borders and extends over vast areas. This implies a fundamental shift from a centric perspective that starts from the real or virtual centre of a 'city' and then stretches out in order to define its boundaries to identify the 'relevant' perimeter of analysis; instead, a decentred perspective is needed to understand the wider urban territory. Shifting the analytical perspective away from the centre enables a view on the production of urban territories from a different, ex-centric angle, avoiding the traps of methodological cityism and the illusory dualism of city and countryside. We thus have to keep open the unit of urban analysis and avoid analysing cities, urban regions or similar bounded units, focusing instead on *urbanising territories*.

In order to understand the rapidly changing universe of our urbanising planet, we thus have to rethink the current conditions of urbanisation. Urban forms are constantly changing in the course of urban development; they can perhaps best be understood as temporary moments in a wider urban process. The challenge is thus not only to analyse the multitude of urban territories and forms, but also to focus on the various urbanisation processes that transform those territories and generate those forms. This means that the spatial units of analysis —conventionally based on demographic, morphological or administrative criteria—also have to be reconsidered. Urbanisation processes do not simply unfold within fixed or stable urban 'containers', but actively produce, unsettle and rework urban territories, and thus constantly engender new urban configurations. The essential task, therefore, is less to distinguish 'new' urban forms, but rather to investigate the historically and geographically specific dynamics of urbanisation processes.

The call to analyse urban processes is not novel and has been expressed by urban scholars many times (see e.g. Lefebvre 2003 [1970]; Harvey 1985; Massey 2005). However, to realise this call in concrete urban research in a thorough and consistent way has many consequences and faces various obstacles and difficulties. Many new terms and concepts intended to designate various putatively new urban phenomena have been introduced into urban studies in the last two or three decades. However, most of this energy has been spent in identifying and labelling different types of cities or urban regions based on emergent urban functions, forms and configurations such as global cities, megacities or edge cities (see e.g. Taylor and Lang 2004; Soja 2000; Murray 2017). Many of these once novel terms and concepts have already lost much of their explanatory force, as the new urban forms that they were intended to grasp have changed profoundly in the meantime. However, much less has been achieved in developing new concepts to understand, analyse and define the various ways in which urban areas are being transformed. As a result, the field of urban studies is not well equipped with analytical tools to analyse urbanisation processes.

We have then to question in a more general way the concept of urbanisation itself, which is often understood and interpreted as a one-dimensional, all-encompassing, linear and universal process. For a long time the dominant conception of urbanisation was based on a demographic definition of the population growth of cities (for a detailed discussion see Brenner and Schmid 2014). This purely statistical definition has countless implications which are rarely discussed, and it reduces the urban to a black box in which all sorts of contradictory developments are homogenised and turned into one universal movement. Everything that happens outside this black box is treated as 'non-urban' and consequently not even taken into consideration. The one-dimensional and trans-historical economic postulate that the agglomeration process follows a universal law of spatial concentration that can be applied to all cities from ancient times to contemporary global city-regions, irrespective of any concrete historical and geographical context, has a similar effect. Thus, in a widely debated text on the 'nature of cities', Allen Scott and Michael Storper (2015: 4) postulate: 'All cities consist of dense agglomerations of people and economic activities'. Such narrow views that only take into consideration one single criterion and focus exclusively on urban centres and agglomerations reinforce a simplistic and dichotomous view of the world—in which only cities and non-cities or

urban and rural areas exist. However, as urban research constantly reveals, the urban phenomenon is much more complex and polymorphic than in this characterisation (see Schmid 2023).

Accordingly, there is an urgent need for more differentiated conceptions of urbanisation which, instead of being based on statistical definitions, the morphology of settlements or transhistorical urban features such as size or density, analyse the urban as a multidimensional process—a process that includes the economic, social and cultural aspects of daily life. Thus, David Harvey regards urbanisation, from the perspective of political economy, as a process of the production of the built environment; that is to say, the construction of houses, production plants and infrastructure, with all their attendant social implications. However, as urbanisation unfolds, it is not only the space economy that changes, but also the understanding of the world and the social meaning of the urban. Consequently, Harvey (1985) also analysed the urbanisation of consciousness and the emergence of an urban experience. Such a multidimensional understanding is developed in much more detail in Lefebvre's theory of the production of space, which I will elaborate upon in the next section.

# A THREE-DIMENSIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF URBANISATION

Urbanisation processes include many aspects of urban transformation that crystallise across the world at various spatial scales, with wide-ranging, often unpredictable consequences for inherited socio-spatial arrangements. We thus have to understand urbanisation as a multifaceted *emergent phenomenon,* formed by an ensemble of several interrelated dimensions that shape and transform urban territories. They are linked to abstract processes of capitalist accumulation, industrialisation and commodification, state strategies and broader social relations at various spatial scales; but at the same time they are always anchored in everyday life and realised through concrete constellations, struggles and tactics on the ground.

In his theory, Henri Lefebvre offers us an elaborated three-dimensional understanding based on his double triad of the production of (urban) space: perceived, conceived and lived space, and spatial practice, representation of space and spaces of representation (see Lefebvre 1991 [1975]; Schmid 2008, 2022). Firstly, we have to analyse how *spatial practices* produce a material space that can be perceived by the five senses, and thus constitute a *perceived space*. Secondly, we need to understand that we cannot see a space without having conceived of it beforehand. To be able to orient ourselves and act in a space, we need a concept, or a representation of space, which is directly related to the production of knowledge. Thirdly, we must consider the question of lived space, and thus how space is experienced in everyday life, which involves the process of meaning production. This depends on the social forces that create an urban space by initiating interaction, and hence relationships, among people and places. In this process, specific patterns of social, economic and cultural differentiation evolve and can be seen as main elements of the specificity of an urban territory. This triad can be used to differentiate urbanisation processes. While we did not apply this triad in a formal manner, these interrelated moments of the production of space guided our field research and the criteria by which we defined urban processes, constituting a helpful framework for thinking across diverse urban contexts.

Firstly, we can analyse how a spatial practice produces a material space that can be perceived by the five senses. Spatial practices encompass all sorts of movements of people criss-crossing the urban territory and they are associated with concrete interactions. They create connections and points of orientation, and thus lead to the production of a system of networks of interaction connecting people, goods and information as well as to the

formation of centres and peripheries related to each other in various constellations. All these movements and actions in urban space are facilitated, enabled and supported by short-term and long-term investments into the built environment, starting from the building of provisional shacks and incremental improvements to building houses, and proceeding upwards to the construction of large housing compounds, office blocks, neighbourhoods and all sorts of infrastructure. Together, they form an urban fabric that defines the material framework of daily activities and routines, the constraints and options people have in their daily life and the access to all sorts of material and social resources. This results in the production of an urban fabric covering increasing parts of the territory and enabling as well as hindering social actions. In concrete places, very different configurations of centralities and patterns of the urban fabric might develop, and thus the material form of an urban territory is always specific.

Secondly, we can explore how urbanisation is conceived, planned, controlled and regulated. Urban processes unfold under specific regimes of territorial regulation that include various forms of representation, models of urban governance (understood in a broad sense) and market or state-led urban strategies on all possible scales (see Schmid 2014). Territorial regulation comprises the rules that guide the production of the built environment and the use of the land, and therefore also determines what will be located in which part of a territory. This includes all aspects and modes of ruling including formal and informal, explicit and implicit, tacit and expressed, but also the different degree and form of access to power and decision-making processes for different social groups. However, as we clearly learned during the course of our research, these territorial regulations are not only very complex but also highly specific and therefore often extremely difficult to understand. Territorial regulation involves complex relationships between various groups, including tenants and landlords, land and property owners, financial organisations and also state actors. It thus leads to complex constellations of regulatory dynamics such as market mechanisms, state regulations, long-entrenched traditional and customary rules and various cooperative forms of negotiation. These rules are always specific, and they lead to very different processes of urbanisation. The most fundamental question here is the material and legal relationship to the land. Who has access to which land? How do various landownership systems intersect? How can people achieve tenure security? What are the power relations between various state agents, institutions and social networks in terms of rules and regulations? What conceptions and representations of space and what kinds of urban strategies dominate the debates, and how does the practical implementation of planning proceed?

Finally, urban processes always entail the disruption, dislocation and reorientation of the inhabitants' experiences. This third dimension of the urbanisation process is anchored in everyday practices and driven by various experiences of collective action and struggle, lived solidarity, feelings of success, disappointment and failure, desires and all the dramas and pleasure of everyday life. Important aspects of the urban experience include symbols, meanings and collective memories, which sometimes condense into taken-for-granted certainties. Questions of social composition and class relations, the social and legal status of migrants, family life, gender relations and sexual life, among others, are key to this experience. For our analysis, this third dimension played an important role and, as we show later, has been decisive in defining urbanisation processes.

Considering the characteristics and interrelationships of these three moments of the production of space, it is possible to condense them analytically and to proceed with an identification of concrete urbanisation processes. The production of an urban fabric on the basis of everyday actions and interactions, the processes of territorial regulation through which power structures are inscribed into a territory and the patterns and dynamics of lived differences that emerge, consolidate or get incorporated—all these contribute to the specific character of urbanisation processes and urban territories. The differentiation of these three dimensions of the general process of urbanisation allows us to define urbanisation processes more precisely and to go beyond the familiar set of processes offered by urban studies today.

# ABSTRACT AND CONCRETE: THE QUESTION OF SPECIFICITY

How can we conceptualise urbanisation processes? How can we relate the process of general urbanisation to concrete processes on the ground? The relationship between the general and the specific, or in philosophical terms the universal and the singular, is a recurrent question in urban studies. It has been treated in detail in a research project of ETH Studio Basel that analyses a range of case studies across the world (Diener et al. 2015). The strategic thesis (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]) of this project postulates that each urban territory is distinguished by certain characteristics that underpin the production and reproduction of its own specificity. This means that we have to investigate how specificity is constituted and at the same time to explore how we can bring specific processes into a more general conceptualisation.

Recently, the question of specificity has been revived in the context of debates on planetary urbanisation (Schmid 2018, Goonewardena 2018). This debate has foregrounded a range of epistemological questions concerning some basic understandings, orientations and procedures in critical urban studies: How can we analyse urban developments in a planetary context without neglecting the specific determinations of concrete places and experiences in everyday life? How can we make a comprehensive analysis of urbanisation that brings together a multitude of experiences in different contexts? How should we approach and conceptualise the relationship between specific places and general processes?

These questions address a range of theoretical challenges: the role of totality, the relationship between urbanisation as a general process and specific urban constellations, between the abstract and the concrete, between universals and singular cases. There are many ways to conceive such fundamental concepts and their respective relationships. Thus, to give only one example, the alleged dichotomy between the singular and the universal could also be conceptualised in a dialectical manner. Hegel understood these as moments of a 'concrete universal' that he conceptualised with his famous triad—the universal, the particular and the singular—as an instrument to grasp the relationships between different theoretical categories. In his philosophical system, the universal moment represents a general principle of development, whereas the particular moment stands for the differentiation of the universal. Finally, the singular moment arrives as the concrete realisation of the universal moment (see e.g. Stanek 2014: 64–65).

The idea of a concrete universal as a dialectical unity of singularities and particularities deeply influenced not only Marx but also Lefebvre. It can be recognised in core concepts like 'labour' or 'capital', but also in Lefebvre's understanding of the 'urban', of 'everyday life', and of 'space' (see Schmid 2022). However, starting from a clearly materialist position, unlike Hegel, both Marx and Lefebvre located concepts not only in thought, but also in practice, and therefore understood abstraction not only as a mental procedure but also as a material social process in and through which certain abstract principles, such as exchange value, become a concrete social reality: a 'concrete abstraction'. Related to this understanding is Lefebvre's definition of urbanisation as a comprehensive transformation of society that he analysed as a total phenomenon. He defined urbanisation as the totality of changes that a society undergoes as it evolves from its agrarian beginnings to its urban present (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]). Lefebvre links capitalist urbanisation directly to the process of industrialisation that he understands in its most general sense as referring not only to the construction of machines, factories and infrastructure, but also to the related industrial organisation of society. This includes the ensuing financial, technical and logistics systems; the generation, processing and distribution of energy, food, raw materials and information; and also the rules and agreements regulating global markets; the various economic, social and cultural networks that permeate and span urban space; and the modernisation, standardisation and commodification of everyday life that comes with industrialisation. Lefebvre famously concluded that this process tends toward the complete urbanisation of society and hence the urbanisation of the entire planet, a position he reconfirmed again in his very last published text analysing how the city dissolves in a planetary metamorphosis (2014 [1987]).

Urbanisation can therefore also be understood as a social process of abstraction—whereby a given natural space is transformed into an urban space and hence also into a technologically determined, abstract space dominated by industrialisation—a 'second nature'. At the same time, however, this urban space is a concrete physical reality; it has its own specific characteristics. Urbanisation is thus a process during which general social developments are territorialised, which involves the materialisation of social relations in a specific place and at a specific period of time. This materialisation is always confronted with concrete conditions—the land with its characteristics, specific political, social and economic constellations and rules and regulations—which they reshape and transform. Thus, the materialisation of general tendencies in concrete contexts leads to specific urban situations and configurations. The crucial point therefore is to understand how general tendencies and abstract processes materialise, how they become

a social reality, consolidating and inscribing themselves onto a territory. Thus, we can examine a territory as the specific material form of urbanisation and trace the transformation of nature to a second nature: an urban space, produced by society.

From a general point of view, urbanisation can therefore be conceptualised as an encompassing but uneven transformation of the territory that unfolds in time and space. From a temporal perspective, each successive round of urbanisation encounters the results of earlier phases of urbanisation and transforms them anew. However, this is not to say that the traces of earlier phases completely disappear. Urbanisation is thus not—like a footprint in the sand—the direct expression of a general social development. The land, the territory, are never 'empty' or 'primal': they are always occupied by people and various social practices, they bear the marks of earlier social processes and they are embedded in wider contexts and social networks. Urbanisation is crucially dependent on specific local conditions and therefore does not proceed evenly across the board but leads to differentiation and uneven urban development.

However, this dialectic of general processes or universals (such as urbanisation) on the one hand and the specific urban territories or the individual on the other leaves us with a dilemma: We don't understand how a concrete situation is produced and how general processes materialise in concrete places. This is the moment in which a third term moves to the foreground: the particular. Following Hegel's triad, urbanisation could thus be understood as a universal category that contains many particularities or constituting instances; among these are many different urbanisation processes. Urbanisation is a general process with manifold particularities that finally materialises in singularities, each of which forms a concrete totality: a specific urban territory with its own features and specific patterns and pathways of urbanisation.

This gives rise to the question of how the theoretical and the empirical are related. As we have explained elsewhere (Brenner and Schmid 2015, Schmid 2022), urbanisation (as well as the urban, the city and so on) are not empirical, but theoretical categories; they are theoretical abstractions constructed on the basis of general considerations. However, what we encounter on the ground are always concrete phenomena. In empirical research, we start from certain observations in specific locations and bring them into conceptualisation, which means that we construct a representation or a concept. The point is to identify and analyse particular urbanisation processes as particular moments or as constituting instances of a universal—the general process of urbanisation.

We thus conceptualise urbanisation processes as particulars or as differentiations of a general process of urbanisation and analyse how a specific territory is transformed by these particular (socio-spatial) urbanisation processes. In doing so we therefore understand the particular as a mediation between the universal and the individual: Particular urbanisation processes constitute general traits of socio-spatial development on the ground and thus on a specific terrain. As a consequence, we can analyse an urban territory as the result or outcome of the interaction and entanglement of a specific combination of different urbanisation processes.

# DEFINING URBANISATION PROCESSES

How can we conceptualise multidimensional urbanisation processes that allow us to decipher the production of specific urban territories? Looking at contemporary approaches, we realise that they offer only a very rudimentary and limited set of urbanisation processes, such as urban regeneration, gentrification, suburbanisation, peri-urbanisation, or informal urban development. These concepts do not suffice to grasp and understand the differentiated and dynamic patterns and pathways of urbanisation emerging across the planet (see Chapter 4). A revitalised vocabulary of urbanisation is therefore required to decipher—both analytically and cartographically—the transformation of urban territories. In our project we were looking for concepts that address the multidimensionality of urbanisation and not just highlighting one isolated aspect. As we will argue in more detail in Chapter 4, these concepts should not be derived from only one specific paradigmatic case, but have empirical starting points in different urban territories. Therefore, a comparative procedure is necessary for the development and conceptualisation of urbanisation processes.

Lefebvre did not define urbanisation processes more specifically. He gave us a series of important concepts, such as the production of the urban fabric, the hypothesis of the complete urbanisation of society and the important consideration that urbanisation affects both urban and non-urban areas. But, beyond these general reflections and conceptions, we have to be inventive and identify different processes of urbanisation. To make Lefebvre's concept fruitful for concrete analyses we need to go beyond his general theoretical considerations using a transductive research procedure (see Chapter 2).

## A COMPARATIVE PROCEDURE

The guiding theoretical question of our project was how to conceptualise urbanisation processes. This implies a moment of generalisation: to detect a bundle of characteristics, common underlying mechanisms, logics, regularities and common traits in the way urbanisation unfolds and proceeds, thus producing similar outcomes. Using an appropriate comparative procedure, it is possible to identify a common problematic across different cases or singularities and the various divides that separate them.

These specific urban outcomes can be grouped in order to make systematic distinctions between different situations that share a common problematic. Thus, if we look at existent concepts, we see that they define in a more or less precise way a core problematic, such as the forced relocation of inhabitants (gentrification), geographical peripherality (suburbanisation) or precarious settlements (urban informality). We can understand these concepts as expressing and defining particular moments of the general process of urbanisation. In other words: urbanisation as a general and generic concept has to be specified by more narrowly defined concepts of urbanisation processes.

In a separate step, we subsequently have to identify concrete urbanisation processes and bring them into conceptualisation: the main aspect here is to find appropriate definitions of these processes. This includes a theoretical moment, to examine extant concepts and terms and possibly also develop and define new concepts. This always includes a comparative moment: We compare a specific urban configuration with extant concepts and assign it to one of them. Or we come to the conclusion that this configuration does not fit the extant definitions and start to develop a new concept with a different definition. In the following step, these concepts have to be specified, tested using different examples and finally stabilised in order to propose using them for further discussions and various applications.

## TOWARDS NEW VOCABULARIES OF URBANISATION

Our territorial approach allows us to analyse the surface of the earth and to discern certain consistencies emerging in the ongoing current of urbanisation and in the continuous mesh of the urban fabric. This analysis detects the interplay and entanglement of urbanisation processes that give a territory its distinctive features and characteristics. It identifies territories within which the same rules apply, the same regulations are in operation; in which certain overarching connections and modes of interaction dominate and may give rise to a more or less coherent understanding of the urban. However, it does not follow that we should consider only the specificities of urban territories and fall into the trap of singularity. Rather, urbanisation can be seen as a general but differentiated process with several dimensions. It is composed of a wide range of particular urbanisation processes unfolding in the confrontation of general processes and specific territorial conditions that can be identified through comparative analysis.

From a more general perspective, our project highlights and confirms the necessity of developing a differentiated view of urbanisation. The reduction of the concept of urbanisation to certain universal principles or mechanisms cannot suffice to address productively the diversity and richness of the contemporary urban universe. By identifying different processes of urbanisation

as constitutive elements of an urbanising planet, this project offers an analysis that goes beyond the apparent contradiction between universalising and particularising research strategies.

The results of this project and the analysis presented here provide a dynamic understanding of urbanisation processes across the divides that characterise our contemporary world. Urban territories are open to a vast range of urban developments and hence also to realising the possibilities that are intrinsic to urbanisation. Throughout the considerations addressed in this chapter, the overall ambition of this project has become evident: to contribute to the development of an extended and more diversified vocabulary of urbanisation and at the same time to offer a much more differentiated framework for analysis and practice.

New concepts and terms are urgently required in order to help us to decipher the varied and restlessly mutating landscapes of urbanisation that are currently being produced across the planet. It is necessary to diversify the empirical references and theoretical sources in urban theory, and to enrich our language with a wider palette of terms that represent the manifold emerging urban situations and urban processes. The goal is not to develop a unifying language, but to propose an enriched vocabulary that leads to a differentiated view of the world and helps us to better understand the dynamics of urbanisation as well as to facilitate the exchange of ideas and debates in urban studies that is increasingly multilingual and multinational in character.

# THEORY BUILDING

# THROUGH COMPARATIVE STRATEGIES

Christian Schmid

The contemporary world is being transformed by a great variety of urbanisation processes. To understand and grasp the multiplicity of urban realities and experiences we have to expand the vocabulary of urbanisation and develop new concepts. This poses a range of questions: How can we grasp the multitude of urbanisation processes emerging all over the planet? How can we analyse urban developments in a planetary context without neglecting the specific determinations of concrete places and experiences in everyday life? How may we conceptualise urbanisation processes that bring together a multitude of experiences in different contexts?

One of the most prominent and promising strategies developed in recent years has been the mobilisation of a renewed epistemology of comparative urban research. Comparing urbanisation processes in different places offers different starting points for generating concepts which reflect a fuller range of urban experiences and thus more adequately address the development of diverse patterns and pathways of urbanisation across different contexts. Doing so makes it possible to go beyond specificity and identify underlying commonalities and logics. As a consequence, comparative urbanism has become a widely applied procedure in urban studies in recent years. But there are many different comparative strategies that could be used to attain this goal. This chapter

presents a short overview over some of them and outlines the specific comparative approach we developed and applied in our own project.

The goal of our project was to identify and conceptualise urbanisation processes in a new way, directly relating theory-building to empirical research. We therefore applied a *transductive* comparative research strategy that is able to go beyond specificity and conduct a dynamic analysis of urbanisation. We started right from the outset with a theoretical base and followed a methodological and analytical procedure driven by Lefebvre's three-dimensional dialectics of the production of space and by the decentring and process-oriented perspective offered by the epistemology of planetary urbanisation. As a consequence, we did not compare individual urban territories, but urbanisation processes that we identified in the different territories and then brought into conceptualisation.

To achieve this goal, we proceeded with the combination of a horizontal and a vertical analysis of the territory. On the one hand, we identified specific urban configurations in order to approach the specific patterns of urbanisation, and on the other we proceeded with a periodisation following a regressive–progressive procedure. This allowed us to identify specific paradigms of urbanisation in time and space.

# COMPARATIVE URBAN RESEARCH

For a long time, comparative urban research followed relatively predefined routes and procedures—either by applying established theoretical frameworks or by looking for variations in the outcomes of similar underlying processes (Tilly 1984). Consequently, most of these studies focused on reasonably similar cases within certain geographical boundaries—mostly within and across Europe and North America, thus excluding places that were considered too different to compare (Robinson 2011a) or were understood as exceptional cases (Roy 2016). This spatial imagery corresponded to a temporal imagery as well, as it excluded places that were not deemed to inhabit the same time in relation to the supposedly universal time of powerful, influential cities of the West (Sheppard et al 2013).

The postcolonial turn in urban studies revived comparative analysis, and the restrictive and exclusionary formal methodologies of traditional approaches came under thorough criticism. Robinson (2004, 2011: 19) demanded a renewal of global urban studies and argued for 'a revitalised and experimental global comparativism that will enable urban studies to stretch its resources for theory-building across the world of cities'. In a similar vein, Nijman (2007) and McFarlane (2010) pleaded for a renaissance of comparative urbanism. In the following years, what might be called 'new comparative urbanism' (Lees 2012) has turned into an important significant resource for conceptual experimentation by encouraging open-ended comparisons crossing entrenched divisions in urban theory. This new strategy stands in contrast to earlier comparative endeavours in advocating a more experimental approach, in which urban territories with diverse histories and across established borders of specialized area studies were brought into conversation in an effort to enable new conceptual and theoretical framings. The full reach and extent of the new approaches and methodologies developed in the two last decades is analysed in detail in *Comparative Urbanism* by Jennifer Robinson (2022).

## COMPARATIVE URBANISMS

Despite the convincing arguments in favour of a resurgent comparative urbanism, empirical studies using this methodology have been slow to take off. As Peck (2015: 170) observes: 'Most corners of the urban studies field remain dominated by "lone scholar" models of enquiry and generally small-scale collaborations, which is sufficient for single-site studies or unidimensional comparisons across a few sites, but rarely much more.' Despite this caveat, a number of important studies have been published

in recent years. Including only analyses of urbanisation, a whole range of important works could be cited: AbdouMaliq Simone (2004a, 2010) for example, is applying his ethnographic comparative theorisation of how urban dwellers are advancing urban development across Africa and Asia in a masterly and illuminating way. Ola Söderström (2014) compares the trajectories of urban development in Hanoi and Ouagadougou, Theresa Caldeira (2017) presents a comparative analysis of peripheral urbanisation across the global South, Gavin Shatkin (2017) investigates the drivers of urban real estate megaprojects in Asia, and Miguel Kanai and Seth Schindler (2019) investigate the development of large-scale peri-urban projects near Manaus and Dar es Salaam.

In contrast, larger comparisons are logistically, financially and also methodologically demanding projects and they confront researchers with the difficult choice of forming either a small team that can travel through a limited number of cases so as to elaborate a coherent account, or of engaging a larger but also more heterogeneous team of researchers, which can handle a larger number of cases, but then face difficulties of ensuring coherence and coordination. Whereas limited comparisons that present a collection of individual case studies summarised in the introduction and linked together by a conclusion are common, more sophisticated comparative contributions that generate or compose new concepts are still rare. To go beyond such limitations required that researchers involved in a comparative project must adopt a shared methodological and theoretical perspective to probe and test new concepts and grasp the contours of a collaboratively defined problematic.

Addressing the difficulties of comparative urbanism discussed above, our own project tried to put in place a kind of middle way by bringing a limited number of cases in conversation with each other that were nevertheless sufficient to represent enough difference in our sample. The selection of our case studies was thus not the result of a systematic analysis of specific criteria, such as economic structure, demographics, regional characteristics, historical pathways and a concomitant search to place cities in categories like 'global cities', 'metropolitan regions', 'capital regions', or 'megacities'. Instead, we selected the eight case study areas according to two commonalities: their size and urban dynamics. We chose these criteria because we sought to avoid the influence of the effects of scale and of the opposing dynamics of growth and shrinking. Thus, all case studies are very large urban territories, all of which have experienced long periods of strong urban growth, leading to processes of both urban extension and urban intensification. The smallest territory, Paris, counts about 12 million inhabitants; the largest, the Pearl River Delta, more than 60 million (because of this large size, we analysed only the eastern part of the entire conurbation; namely, Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan). Our sample represents about a quarter of all the urban regions worldwide that have more than ten million inhabitants. A further criterion was to choose urban territories across the various divides that are shaping our planet, such as 'North' and 'South', or rich and poor, including very different economic, social and political situations, territorial regulations and forms of everyday life. For our final selection of concrete case studies we needed researchers who were already familiar with these places at the beginning of the research project (see Chapter 3).

Consistent with our dynamic understanding of urbanisation, our goal was not to compare territories, settlements, cities or regions, but processes. The basic unit of comparative analysis, the comparable, was therefore 'urbanisation processes'. While there are many studies that compare large urban regions and mega cities, most famously *The Endless City* (Burdett and Sudjic 2006), the book that introduced the term 'the urban age' into the debate (for a critique of this concept see Brenner and Schmid 2014), there are far fewer studies that compare different urbanisation processes; and if they do exist, they mostly focus on already established processes, such as gentrification, suburbanisation or urban regeneration (see Chapter 4). Our own project, however, compared large, openly defined urban territories and aimed to conceptualise urbanisation processes. This required us to proceed with a double comparison: firstly, to identify different urbanisation processes in one territory and then to compare them across different territories. In this way, our project was both novel and experimental in a strict sense.

## COMPARATIVE STRATEGIES

As Robinson (2022) shows in her detailed overview of comparative urbanism, a wide range of comparative approaches exist and new concepts of urbanisation can be developed in many ways. Existing individual case studies involve to some degree an implicit or explicit comparison with similar or related cases. The most common procedure is thus generalising insights from individual case studies and transferring their results to other cases. However, it is difficult and problematic to derive new concepts just from one specific case or singularity, as it always bears the risk of oversimplification and of bringing an implicit bias generated by the specificity of the context into the conceptualisation process. Names themselves can carry certain connotations that might impose assumptions on similar processes in other contexts. Prominent examples of these transpositions are the concepts of gentrification and suburbanisation (see Chapter 4).

A second, widely applied approach is a renewed variant of variation finding. This approach presupposes that a definition of a specific phenomenon or process already exists, and tries to further develop the concept or to identify its limits and differences. Such projects usually start with already established theoretical frameworks and do not seek to detect and identify new conceptualisations, such as comparisons of government strategies and governance regimes. Other projects explore the contours of a phenomenon or a process in order to examine its reach and scope, such as *Spaces of Neoliberalism* edited by Neil Brenner and Nick Theodore (2002), which is an important transatlantic comparison of urban restructuring that inspired an entire generation of critical urban researchers. Similarly, *Whose Urban Renaissance?* edited by Libby Porter and Kate Shaw (2009) assembled a large team of scholars and activists to explore disinvestment and reinvestment in the context of urban regeneration projects across very different contexts in order to explore alternative strategies. The project 'Planetary Gentrifications' applied the concept of gentrification to all possible situations and processes across the world (Lees et al. 2016), and the large-scale project 'Global Suburbanisms' led by Roger Keil explored the huge diversity of forms and processes in urban peripheries across the world (see e.g. Keil and Wu 2022). However, as these two examples show, such comparisons often do not generate new conceptualisations, but rather stretch the reach of extant concepts as they find more and more new cases that they try to integrate into the existing definitional field, thus widening and loosening the concept itself (see Chapter 4).

To detect and develop new concepts, different tactics and strategies are needed. Robinson introduced the distinction between genetic and generative comparative strategies (Robinson 2016, 2022: 126). While genetic comparisons trace how specific (urban) outcomes emerge, and through this engagement with their production or genesis draw them into conceptualisation, generative comparative strategies bring different singularities or cases into conversation with each other by building analytical connections. In this way almost every question or problematic can be productively handled and concepts can in principle stay open and revisable. Examples of such efforts are the work of Roy and Ong (2012) on 'worlding cities' that foreground the disparate urban forms in Asian cities which cannot be conceptually reduced to universal logics, but are the outcomes of very different worlding practices. Pieterse and Simone (2013) explore 'rogue urbanism' in Africa, intending to produce new and relevant theoretical work within the border zone between inherited theoretical resources, emerging postcolonial readings and artistic representations of everyday practices. The large project on 'subaltern urbanisation' explores and defines new urbanisation processes beyond urban agglomerations in India (Denis and Zérah 2017; see also Mukhopadhyay et al. 2020). All these are exemplary experimental studies using ethnographical methods, grounded theory and creative reflections. While they focus on 'southern' urbanisms, comparisons across the alleged North–South divide are still relatively rare. An early example is the work of Marcuse and van Kempen (2000) on 'globalizing cities', comparing the different modalities in which globalisation processes unfold in cities across the globe. Marie Huchzermeyer (2011b) makes an experimental comparison across space and time of tenement housing in 21st century Nairobi and 19th century Berlin. *Global Prayers* (Becker et al. 2013), a fascinating collaboration of researchers and artists from a wide range of fields and disciplines, explores relations between urbanity and religion by critically engaging with religious communities across the world. A paradigmatic example of a larger comparison across global divides is the detailed analysis of trans-scalar territorialisation processes induced by urban mega-projects in Shanghai, Johannesburg and London, conducted by a team of experienced researchers from these three urban territories (Robinson et al. 2022, 2021).

Our own comparative project combined both genetic and generative strategies, as it aimed to develop and define new concepts through the identification and comparison of urbanisation processes and at the same time to elucidate their genesis and outcomes. The goal of our comparative project was to detect and develop new concepts by comparing urbanisation processes, allowing a nuanced and detailed analysis of urban territories. In this way, our comparative project became part of theory production as the urbanisation processes themselves had to be detected, identified and conceptualised. Consequently, the research was guided by theory. While strongly informed and inspired by postcolonial approaches and the new comparative urbanism, it was anchored in Lefebvre's theory of the production of space and operated with the territorial approach developed in several related research projects (see Chapter 1). At the same time, this project had to keep the theorisation process open in order to accommodate new experiences detected during the empirical research.

# A TRANSDUCTIVE COMPARATIVE RESEARCH STRATEGY

What can concrete case studies tell us? The starting points of our comparative endeavour were concrete and specific urban territories. The challenge was thus to develop a comparative procedure capable of apprehending the general tendencies of urbanisation and at the same time of addressing the specificities developing in each urban territory. This implies the use of a strategy of comparison that starts neither with concrete individual case studies nor with generalised concepts, but applies a transductive strategy by maintaining a dialectical relationship between theory and empirical research. In Lefebvre's understanding, transduction 'is an intellectual operation which can be methodically carried out and which differs from classical induction, deduction and the construction of "models", simulations as well as the simple statement of hypothesis. Transduction elaborates and constructs a theoretical object, a *possible* object from information related to reality and a problematic posed by this reality. Transduction assumes an incessant feedback between the conceptual framework used and empirical observations. Its theory (methodology) gives shape to certain spontaneous operations of the planner, the architect, the sociologist, the politician and the philosopher. It introduces rigour in invention and knowledge in utopia' (Lefebvre 1996 [1968]: 151).

Lefebvre understands transduction as a dialectical movement. The first moment consists in empirically analysing a specific, concrete social practice, while also getting rid of the allegories, metaphors, pseudo-concepts and representations that try to define and dominate this practice. The second moment focuses on analytically approaching the fullness of the lived experience without destroying it. Finally, in the third moment, the concept is developed in such a way that it can be used to analyse the contemporary society, to articulate a critique of the present and to illuminate the horizon of future development. To engage in this dialectical procedure is to think along with this movement (Lefebvre 1980: 37, 1996 [1968|: 165–166).

In our comparative project, then, we started from a well-defined theoretical base but applied an empirically grounded procedure. The point was not only to find new phenomena or to trace possible connections, but also to use comparison to detect and reconstruct new concepts of urbanisation that might be related to each other in various ways. Thus, these concepts needed to be flexible and we kept their definitions as open as possible. As a methodological principle, the urban processes to be compared and the criteria of comparison were thus not pre-given and we sought to avoid reliance on any kind of predefined concepts. The new concepts of urbanisation had to emerge during the research process itself, discerned by the use of specific methodological tools, some of which were developed and applied in grounded theory. These issues are analysed in detail by Monika Streule in Chapter 3.

The analysis in Chapter 1 has shown how important the interplay of the three dimensions of the production of space is in the generation and analysis of urbanisation processes. The production of an urban fabric and thus of second nature on the basis of everyday actions and interactions, the processes of territorial regulation through which power structures are inscribed into a territory and the patterns and dynamics of lived differences that emerge, consolidate or get incorporated—all contribute to the specific character of urbanisation processes. By differentiating these three dimensions we were able to define urbanisation processes more precisely. By using the appropriate comparative procedure, it was possible to identify a common problematic across different cases or singularities and the various divides that separate them.

The main challenge of our own project was thus to develop a comparative research strategy to apprehend the general tendencies of urbanisation and at the same time to address the specificities developing in each urban territory. The definition of urbanisation processes implies a moment of generalisation emerging from observations in specific urban territories; to detect a bundle of characteristics, certain common underlying mechanisms, logics and regularities in the way urbanisation unfolds and proceeds, thus producing similar urban outcomes in very different territories. These urban outcomes can be grouped and analysed comparatively so as to distinguish systematically between different processes that share a common problematic.

However, this process of discovery and conceptualisation needs to start by addressing the problem of being influenced by all sorts of preconceptions. This is particularly pertinent when analysing spaces, because we cannot see a space without having conceived of it before. What we perceive and 'see' is therefore necessarily influenced by existing representations. Such representations of space structure our 'view of the world' and guide and determine our research to a certain point. This engenders a tendency of selective perception: we see what seems to be obvious. Therefore, many aspects are either concealed by existing conceptualisations or remain under the radar of our attention. It is important to make explicit such representations of space, because often researchers already have certain concepts in mind, or compare their own findings with concepts that are easily available and have already been elaborated. This may lead them to overlook differences and dismiss important factors. Therefore, in our comparative analysis, we

wanted to systematically exclude existing representations, concepts or models of spaces in a first phase, and took them into consideration only in a second round through a critical assessment.

## HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ANALYSIS

The fact that cities no longer constitute units that can be delimited in a clear way, as they are highly dynamic, multifaceted and complex, poses a significant methodological challenge for any urban comparative project. To address this problem we applied two theoretical principles: firstly we understood an urban territory as a force field in which various urbanisation processes unfold, collide and interweave, thereby generating specific patterns of urbanisation; and secondly we analysed the historical and path-dependent process by which this territory was produced, and thus reconstructed the pathway of urbanisation.

In an article written in the 1950s on rural sociology that would later become famous, Lefebvre presented a novel procedure to analyse agricultural territories (2003 [1953]). In his own research he had observed that very different social formations and levels of technology may coexist side by side. modern large-scale mechanised farming, and also certain residues such as tools, cultivation methods and community forms that were survivors of a distant past. He concluded that agricultural territories presented a twofold complexity: a horizontal complexity, created by the presence of social formations and structures of the same historical time that generate differences that can go as far as being antagonistic. On the other hand, he observed a vertical complexity through the simultaneous presence and coexistence of social formations originating from different times. These two kinds of complexity intertwine, intersect and interact, creating a confusing ensemble of facts 'that only a sound *methodology* can disentangle' (Lefebvre 2003 [1953]: 113; emphasis in the original).

Transposing these considerations to contemporary urbanising territories, our research adopted a twofold approach. We proceeded with a horizontal or synchronic analysis of the patterns of urbanisation to grasp the present situation of a concrete urban territory. The synchronic analysis aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of the expansion and interweaving of urbanisation processes and identify the resulting pattern of urban configurations. This intellectual operation freezes the urban process conceptually so as to discern its manifold constituents and thus examines the pattern of an urban territory as it appears at a given moment. This requires a specific method of mapping that is presented by Monika Streule in Chapter 3. In a second step, we applied a vertical or diachronic analysis to understand the historical production process of the current urban situation. Thus, we had to reconstruct the urban development by following the pathways of urbanisation, which requires a specific methodology of periodisation that I elaborate below.

It is only through the combination of horizontal and vertical analysis that we can grasp and analyse an urban territory in its specificity (see also Schmid 2014). As a next step, therefore, it is necessary to combine the two analyses in order to identify the different urbanisation processes that are constantly transforming the territory and crystallising in various urban configurations. From such a dynamic perspective, any given urban territory can be understood as the materialisation of an ensemble of specific urbanisation processes that are articulated with each other. Using this approach, we do not try to define the 'limits' of an urban space, but to analyse the succession and overlap of various urbanisation processes. Therefore, in this analysis urban areas do not come to an end—it is just the analysis that stops. The outer boundary thus marks the end of the analysis, not the end of the urban territory as such. This diachronic and synchronic analysis was done for each urban territory independently by individual researchers. At the same time, we brought the various urbanisation processes emerging through this analysis into conversation with each other through our collective comparative procedure. What we compared in our research therefore was not cities or territorial units but urbanisation processes.

In the following, I first treat the construction of urban configurations and of a periodisation separately and then show how they can be analysed in space and time. In doing so, I explain how we define urbanisation processes and urbanisation paradigms. In the first case we highlight one individual process (say popular urbanisation) and in the second we analyse the simultaneous interaction and entanglement of several processes in a territory.

## IDENTIFYING URBAN CONFIGURATIONS

The horizontal analysis examines the patterns of urbanisation in a given territory. While increasingly exact data and sophisticated quantitative methods are available for mapping and analysing spatial distributions, they can only create an illusion of exactness. Urbanisation is a dynamic process that is constantly changing, and no representation of space can provide more than just a snapshot of it at a given moment. Furthermore, urban realities comprise very diverse multi-scalar attributes that are superimposed on each other in layers—an urban territory is always a more or less thick palimpsest comprising traces and remnants of different times and social formations (Corboz: 1983). Accordingly, many different lines of demarcation may be

drawn, depending on the observer's perspective and heuristic interest. This necessitates a specific method of mapping.

In Lefebvrean terms, we need to understand a map as a representation of space. As Nietzsche stated, we cannot see something without giving it a name. Accordingly, we are not able to act within a space without having developed an idea of what it looks like. In order to communicate this idea, we require terms, concepts, images and maps that delimit and denote this space. Thus, representations of space are defined in a twofold manner—as (conceived) ideas and as (communicated) concepts. Lefebvre refers here to the German terms 'Vorstellung' and 'Darstellung' (Lefebvre 1980: 26). Representations of space signify something and they also prescribe something; they guide our actions and give them a direction. As Lefebvre warns us, such representations are never innocent: they are always associated with power.

What effects do these representations of space have? They privilege certain aspects and suppress others. This raises the question of what is present and what is absent, what is illuminated and what is hidden—what is not shown often being more important than what is shown (Lefebvre 1980). Representations of space have an operational quality: their purpose is to denote something, to illuminate something, to change something. Thus, proposing a different representation of space constitutes an intervention in a debate. The point is not to find the 'real' or 'true' situation but to construct a representation of space (and time) that is useful for understanding the process and capable of revealing the problematics and potentials underlying it. Lefebvre's theory is self-reflexive at this point and shows how researchers themselves become actors in the process of the production of space. This directly poses the question of the responsibility of the researcher. As Lefebvre notes, the author has to take personal responsibility in such operations and incurs risks, including the risk of error (Lefebvre 2000 [1968]: 28).

In our project we proceeded with the horizontal analysis by distinguishing different urban configurations in a given urban territory. The analysis of an urban territory starts with the choice of the perimeter of analysis. We did not look for bounded units but chose larger territories that allowed us to identify different urban configurations. These configurations are areas that have a certain apparent coherence and are produced by similar processes. This means that we could differentiate an urban territory according to concrete phenomena we analysed on the ground. The identification of an urban configuration was thus the result of a detailed research process: finding the characteristics that distinguish different territories—(the list was open—any kind of characteristics could be used to differentiate a specific area). This already includes a comparative procedure; namely, differentiating areas and assigning them to different configurations.

This approach was developed in an analysis of the urban development of Havana in a collective project. Its goal was to distinguish different areas and identify their respective problematics, problems and potentials to inform urban planning. In the case of Havana, the identification and analysis of urban configurations revealed an urban structure that was completely different from the hitherto dominant representation of this urban space, which was basically defined in strictly geographical terms. The prevailing planning concept, which had been applied for many years, subdivided the entire urban area of Havana into three zones—a central, a peripheral, and an intermediary zone. In contrast to this representation, two large urban configurations emerged from our analysis that we called 'Blue Strip' and 'Deep Havana'.

The Blue Strip was our term for a heterogeneous zone of varying width along the coast in which most of Havana's important institutions, facilities, restaurants and hotels are concentrated. It is the area that continues to determine the image of Havana today—from which the famous iconography of the city as a tropical, urban Eldorado, which has been reproduced for decades in cinema, literature and advertisements, stems. Accordingly, the Blue Strip is also the part of Havana that draws the greatest international attention, as well as the crowds of tourists and visitors and the influx of investments. By contrast, Deep Havana is a large area that is also quite heterogeneous and comprises very diverse neighbourhoods. While it is located right in the geographical centre of Havana, in many respects it forms a remote, forgotten, neglected and disregarded part of the Caribbean metropolis, overshadowed by the famous neighbourhoods along the coast and far away from the flows of visitors and capital. The elaboration of this other representation of space was the key to addressing the socio-spatial inequalities that have developed in Havana over the decades. We identified a series of five more urban configurations. Although the full analysis has yet to be published, this analysis has already entered the local debate on planning and urban development (Peña Díaz and Schmid 2007).

The heuristic concept of urban configurations offers us an open and flexible way of analysing an urban territory. It allows us to distinguish between different patterns of urbanisation and to develop a typology of them. An urban configuration brings the movement of urbanisation to a standstill; it is a picture of a certain moment in time or a snapshot in the continuous process of urbanisation. A specific configuration might change its territorial extent or footprint as well as its characteristics over time. It is in constant transformation through renovations, demolitions and new constructions, and also in the

changing context of the wider territory—what once had been peripheral might become central in the course of the development. Therefore, urban configurations are always tentative and provisional, meant to analytically structure the territory in order to be able to better comprehend it. We could say that an urban configuration is emergent: it emerges as process and as concept. Our method of identifying urban configurations is explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

In the case of the Havana project, the goal of the project was to identify and analyse urban configurations as a basis for the development of appropriate planning strategies. Urban configurations can also be used as starting points for further analysis and theoretical examination. This implies finding out how a specific configuration was produced and what its potentials are. That means setting the urban form into movement by inserting it into the process of the production of space. In a project oriented towards a more thorough study, we might proceed with a comparison of seemingly similar configurations. This is what we did in this book.

## REGRESSIVE–PROGRESSIVE ANALYSIS

After having identified different urban configurations and thus analysed the pattern of urbanisation in a given territory, in the second step we proceeded with a vertical analysis to understand the pathway of urbanisation. The aim was to reveal the path dependency of the territory as well as the decisive interruptions and changes in the urban process. This analysis does not simply aim to reconstruct the history of an urban configuration; instead it is intended to detect the ways in which history remains present in the contemporary situation and influences the future trajectory of this process. This analysis follows the *regressive–progressive* procedure developed by Lefebvre (Frehse 2014; Schmid 2015). This analysis first descends into the past to identify the defining moments that have inscribed themselves into the territory as well as into the collective memory. Subsequently, it ascends to the present in order to reconstruct the main lines of development of the urban territory.

These two movements generate two different kinds of analysis. The descending movement engenders a genealogical analysis, while the ascending movement provides a genetic analysis. The descending, genealogical analysis emphasises the discontinuity and the contradictions of urban development, the shifting balance of power and political interventions; it searches for the origin of a historical process and insists on the site, the contexts and the connections. The genetic approach, in contrast, reconstructs the genesis of the urban process. It captures its recognisable trajectory, emphasises the continuity and the inner cohesion of the historical movement and searches for the fundamental dynamics that shape the present moment (Schmidt 1990:183).

## CONCEPTUALISING URBANISATION PROCESSES

The combination of the horizontal and vertical analysis, and thus the reconstruction of patterns and pathways of urbanisation, allows urbanisation processes to be conceptualised. We distinguish here between urban configurations and urbanisation processes. While urban configurations constitute a specific moment in time (in our research project around the year 2015), urbanisation processes are always situated in space and time. This means that there is a beginning and thus an origin of the process. It could be rooted in a certain problematic or in a specific constellation of the political forces that initiated the process. The process then evolves, unfolds, comes to fruition and reaches a moment of full development, and may subsequently go through several stages of transformation or may also come to an end, either by slowly fading out because of changed socioeconomic or political conditions or by being abruptly erased and replaced by another urbanisation process. In our comparisons, this happened with several urbanisation processes; for instance in Istanbul, where popular urbanisation was gradually transformed into plotting urbanism, or in Shenzhen, where the process of plotting urbanism was abruptly replaced by urban renewal.

We must be clear that certain urban configurations may not be dominated by one singular urbanisation process, but may be determined by a combination of processes, either at the same time or in a succession of processes that inscribe their traces in the terrain. These traces are then integrated into the urban pattern and thus survive, or leave their mark, such as in the process of multilayered patchwork urbanisation. Other urbanisation processes may be difficult to map because they are relatively general, like the incorporation of urban differences, or because they have a more scattered urban extent, such as mass housing urbanisation.

This is now the moment for theorisation and comparison: to evaluate specific urbanisation processes and analyse and compare their various trajectories and possible pathways. We give them names and develop consistent definitions to make them suitable for further applications. The precise procedure is presented by Monika Streule in Chapter 3.

# PARADIGMS OF URBANISATION

On a different scale, this historical regressive-progressive analysis can also be used to establish the periodisation of the urbanisation of the entire urban territory and thus to identify and reconstruct specific paradigms of urbanisation. The concept of the paradigm of urbanisation was introduced in an analysis of the historical development of Zurich to distinguish several historical periods of urban development (Schmid 2006). These paradigms were then contrasted with a parallel analysis of Geneva in a comparative study (Marco et al. 1997). Despite the fact that both urban territories were centres of industrial production that developed into global finance places in in the 1970s and were obviously determined by the same national institutional frameworks, they displayed quite different patterns and pathways of urbanisation. The regressive-progressive analysis revealed that these differences could be explained, at least partly, by the divergent political constitution of the two places as either an extended territory (Zurich) or a city-state (Geneva) in medieval times, and by the process of early industrialisation that was limited to the city territory in Geneva but covered a large area around Zurich, which soon became the centre of the industrial heartland of Switzerland. It thus became visible that certain characteristics may strongly determine the long-term urban development of a territory, a result that was then further explored in the analysis of the specificity of urban territories (Diener et al. 2015). Such periodisation can also contribute to a different and innovative reading of urban history.

There have not been many systematic attempts at this kind of comparative analysis. The closest is that of Abu-Lughod's (1999) ambitious comparison of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles in the longue durée from the foundational acts up to the present. While there are many parallels between this and our own method of analysis, the big difference from our project is that her periodisation followed the (pre-given) accumulation regimes of the USA. In our approach, however, we elaborate a specific periodisation for each urban territory, which sometimes leads to periodisations that diverge quite markedly from each other. For a more detailed discussion of Abu-Lughod's approach, see Brenner (2001).

In general, we understand a paradigm of urbanisation as the ensemble of urbanisation processes that determine a given territory at a specific time. Following Lefebvre's triadic conception of the production of space, a paradigm of urbanisation can be analysed on the basis of three dialectically related dimensions: the development of new forms of territorial regulation, the production and transformation of material socio-spatial structures and the production of meaning and symbolisms in everyday life.

Just as the identification of configurations helps to analytically structure the patterns of urbanisation, a periodisation helps to structure the pathways of urbanisation. This analysis thus attempts to identify periods that show a certain regularity and stability in time, which are dominated by specific material characteristics, power and class constellations and ways of life. These periods might be disrupted and changed at certain historical moments by revolutions, regime changes, shifting constellations of forces and parallelograms of power, economic crises and periods of growth or decline; but also by long-term changes in the production process and the global division of labour, and also by changing settlement patterns and urban transformations, constellations of particular territorial relations and regimes of territorial regulations. Also forces of nature, such as a massive earthquake, may play a key role. But our analysis shows that even such devastating events can have different effects on the patterns and pathways of urbanisation—in the case of Mexico City, it provoked a change in the paradigm of urbanisation, while in the case of Tokyo the urban structure was almost seamlessly restored.

However, we have to be clear that the paradigms of urbanisation distinguish different phases in the production of space and not different periods of general social development. While the production of space is linked to wider social processes, it nevertheless follows a logic of its own and accordingly displays a different kind of dynamic. This was a lesson that Henri Lefebvre had to learn in his encompassing history of the production of space of the West (see Schmid 2022, Chapter 6).

We therefore need to take into account the spatial division of labour and the related unequal development of urbanisation across the globe. Despite the fact that today, trans-scalar processes prevail as a result of globalisation and widespread processes of neoliberalisation, there may nevertheless be regional differences and specificities that go beyond variegations of Fordist or neoliberal accumulation regimes (Brenner et al. 2010). We therefore should not take it for granted that there is any kind of universal periodisation that follows a kind of world history. We always need to construct an independent, immanent periodisation for each urban territory, based on the specificity of this particular territory in time and space. It is obvious that such a periodisation may differ from that of the dominant regimes of accumulation.

Paradigms of urbanisation are always specific to space and time. This means that the territories under consideration may change along the pathway of urbanisation. This became very clear in the analysis of the Pearl River Delta, as manifested in the related but nevertheless distinct paradigms of urbanisation experienced by Shenzhen, Dongguan and Hong Kong before

1980. But with the new economic policy put forward by Deng Xiaoping, a new multipolar urbanisation process started that finally led to the integrated development of the entire Pearl River Delta (see Chapter 6).

The paradigms of urbanisation of our case studies are analysed in some detail in Part II of this book. Further results of the comparison of urbanisation paradigms are presented in the final Chapter 'Paradigms of Urbanisation: A Comparative Outlook'.

# CREATING COMPARATIVE MOMENTS

# AN EXPERIMENTAL METHODOLOGY

Monika Streule

Advancing research methods to engage with today's diverse and complex urban worlds is the key to comparative inquiry. Working across different case studies confronts us with particular challenges that invite us to revisit and rethink conventional methods and procedures of research (see e.g. Robinson 2011a; Ren and Luger 2015; Lancione and McFarlane 2016). Moreover, theoretical interventions such as planetary urbanisation (Brenner and Schmid 2011, 2015; Schmid 2018) and the critique of methodological cityism (Angelo and Wachsmuth 2015; Angelo 2017) as well as post-colonial propositions (Robinson 2006, 2011b) call for methodological innovations for analysing urbanisation, as is explained in detail in Chapter 2. This emphasises that appropriate methods are needed not only to inform a theoretical understanding of urbanisation processes but also to include perspectives that are different from those already established within academia. As many critics have noted, these are still dominated by Euro-American approaches and understandings (e.g. Kenway and Fahey 2009; Myers 2014; Leitner and Sheppard 2016).

As a result we had to adapt and also develop a whole range of new methods that would allow us to adopt a decentred, process oriented, open-ended comparison of urbanisation processes. This chapter explains the comparative methodology of our project, drawing on a complementary set of

ethnographic, cartographic and historiographic methods suited to an experimental, transdisciplinary and collaborative study of urbanisation.

A whole range of different comparative tactics have emerged in recent years that increasingly draw on experimental approaches. Only a few studies, however, offer discussions on the methodological design and operationalisation of comparative research (e.g. Gough 2012; Becker et al. 2013; Simon et al. 2020; Wood 2020; Brill 2022). Even more urgently needed is a broad discussion on the theoretical implications of different methodologies. This chapter seeks to contribute to these recent debates on experimental approaches in the field of urban studies by presenting the specific methodology that we developed over the course of this research project. It addresses in particular the way of analysing the spatialities of urbanising territories and urbanisation processes. In our project, we analyse urbanisation empirically as a dynamic, ever-changing process, and we understand an urban territory as socially produced. Methodological approaches do not simply emerge automatically from theoretical assumptions; rather, methods and methodology have to be adapted and reinvented to address these theoretical assumptions. If urban theory is to be revised, it is imperative, as Jennifer Robinson (2006, 2016, 2022b) puts it, to develop experimental and creative methodologies and rationales for comparative analysis. Therefore, we had to develop an approach in which both methodology and theory address these intertwined issues. As discussed in Chapter 2, we applied a transductive procedure in which methodology and theory are dialectically related, and thereby mutually influence and alter each other (see Streule 2018, 2020). If, as we conceive it to be, urban theory is dynamic and decentred, it is imperative to develop experimental and creative methodologies (see Robinson 2006, 2016, 2022). This also applies to the nitty-gritty of doing comparative research and the methods employed in such research processes. It is thus necessary to reflect on the development of new and inventive methods that enable us to draw different urban contexts into analytical conversation with each other and to problematise dominant assumptions and parochial imaginaries on urbanisation, in order to simultaneously revise and rebuild urban theory.

In the following pages I go through our research process step by step, discuss our complementary set of ethnographic, cartographic and historiographic methods, and explain three consecutive comparative moments that are crucial not only for the analysis of each case study but for the generation of new concepts of urbanisation. The final section reflects on how crafting new methods of both data collection and analysis shapes the generation of concepts and vice versa, and discusses possible implications of this for urban studies. It concludes with an invitation to a broad methodological discussion and its theoretical consequences by emphasising the interconnectedness between developing new methods and the generation of comparative concepts in urban studies.

# A COMPARATIVE METHODOLOGY

Our approach is based on a collective, transdisciplinary and transductive research process by applying an experimental methodology that combines a wide variety of sources and procedures. It emanates from collaborative work, where the members of our team brought their disciplinary backgrounds and empirical research experiences from geography, sociology, anthropology and architecture into a shared methodological framework. At the same time, this approach had to allow the comparisons to inform their own research. This transductive approach demands an inversion of the conventional procedure: the comparison does not start once the field research is completed, it starts right at the beginning of the research. This demands a systematic and iterative comparative process to be employed during the entire research.

With this comparative project, then, we started from a well-defined theoretical base understanding urbanisation as a multidimensional process (see Chapter 1) and combined this with an empirically grounded procedure using an inventive qualitative methodology. This implied both that we engage empirically with concrete places and solicit the everyday knowledge of people who are mostly under-represented in dominant urban theories, and that we engage theoretically with often neglected bodies of work proposing concepts of urbanisation that differ from that offered in the anglophone canon. The aim of this project was less to find new phenomena or trace possible connections between different places, but to use the tool of comparison to detect and conceptualise new concepts of urbanisation that might relate in various ways with each other. This conceptualisation required a great deal of flexibility, and therefore we kept our definitions of the urbanisation processes as open as possible. This open approach also deeply influenced the methodology and the methods we applied. As a methodological principle, the urban processes to be compared and the criteria of comparison were not pre-given, and we sought to avoid relying on any kind of predefined concepts. The new concepts of urbanisation had to emerge during the iterative research process itself, in tandem with the progress of our conceptual development during each step of data collection and analysis. This methodology is very similar to iterative strategies of grounded theory (Charmaz 2014)—yet, unlike in grounded theory, we did not follow an inductive approach that rejects a priori theoretical assumptions. Rather, in our procedure we developed and applied a transductive research procedure, simultaneously collecting and analysing data and invoking iterative strategies of going back and forth between empirical research and conceptual work. The emerging concepts were the result of long and intense debates during team workshops, which included the entire research team and occasionally also external colleagues.

These workshops constituted the very core of our methodological procedure and were indispensable for developing our comparative concepts. We organised a total of 12 workshops of one to two weeks each, involving the entire research team. We shared and intensively discussed fieldwork data and established the common ground of our project based on our specific multidimensional understanding of urbanisation that guided our research. The workshops, taking place either in Singapore or Zurich, were crucial for bringing the results of each study into a comparative perspective with the other cases. This truly collective process of building concepts and urban theory, based on discussion and feedback sessions between individual research and team workshops, is one of the unique strengths of this project.

The first step of our comparative empirical research was to define the perimeters of our case studies. Our processual understanding of urbanisation required a definition of the units of analysis that differed from extant approaches. In our research, the geographical frame of analysis of each case study had to be left open to include the large region extending into the interface of concentrated and extended urbanisation. This geographical framing was not taken as an indicator of the limits of the urban region, however, but rather as the practical extent of the area under analysis.

After this first approximation, the concrete boundaries of the research units were defined during the multi-sited research process itself, based on the results of the qualitative interviews at each site and through newly developed mapping procedures. I expand on these methods below. For now, it is important to emphasise that the units of analysis are always constructed. The perimeter drawn in studying urbanisation is not a neutral tool and not a given space, but a theoretically and empirically relational urban territory, drawing on everyday experience as a site of knowing and knowledge production (Streule 2020: 427–428; see also Chapter 2). With this conceptualisation, the unit of analysis itself was transformed into a research object; eschewing the areas delineated by administrative boundaries, and defining them through local, regional and global processes. At the same time, our multi-sited, dynamic and relational understanding of the research units also opened up possibilities for comparative urban research across the different case studies.

# HOW TO RESEARCH THE SPATIALITIES OF URBANISING TERRITORIES?

As our project aimed to be a qualitative study of contemporary urbanisation processes and spatial transformations on a metropolitan scale, we were confronted with the challenge of how to actually do this. As we did not find adequate tools among the conventional social sciences methods, we developed a novel methodology that allowed for a dynamic analysis of patterns and pathways of urbanisation, as situated in concrete contexts. Our set of methods is composed of iterative rounds of field research comprising various forms of field trips and interviews with inhabitants, exploratory mapping sessions with local experts for the outlining of the patterns of urbanisation, a regressive-progressive method for the historical analysis of the pathways of urbanisation and a comprehensive consideration of a broad local scholarship.

## FIELD RESEARCH

In a series of field trips that included long-term ethnographic studies as well as short field visits on various occasions, each researcher moved through the urban territory on foot, by public transport or private vehicle, documenting qualitative data by taking pictures and jotting down notes in a research diary. Moreover, walking had to be adjusted to the specific ways of moving on the streets in each case study, where questions of who can move where, how and when are key (for a fuller discussion drawing on the example of walking in Mexico City, see Streule 2017). These exploratory walks of participative observations were continuously complemented by tours guided by experts through specific urban areas and different techniques of qualitative interviews (with users and producers of space and with inhabitants, activists, artists, policy-makers, project developers and so on). Furthermore, a review of local literature, as well as archival research and consultations of local media, were used to help contextualise the findings.

The variation in field research methods described here is partly due to the interdisciplinary background of the team, but also mirrors the individual positionality of each researcher and their different levels of experience and knowledge of the field. The research design of the project did not seek uniformity or even a preset methodological frame for qualitative research and it did not try to impose a specific approach to all the case studies. Rather, the methods we applied followed systematic yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data during field research.

This inventive approach to methods was particularly useful in studying a great variety of ever-changing urbanisation processes taking place on a large scale and in different contexts. Our methodological employment of multi-sited research strategies was particularly useful here. As George E Marcus (1995) suggests, multi-sitedness is a necessary tool for working ethnographically, but beyond that, it is also required to define new, complex and surprising fields of research. This is particularly true of multi-scalar and multi-sited research used to analyse large and heterogeneous urban territories. To render mobile ethnography operational as a research tool, we drew on a range of transdisciplinary techniques that are part of the well-established ethnographic toolbox. However, it became evident that conventional and more orthodox applied ethnographic methods entail serious limitations and shortcomings (Streule 2020: 428, 2023). One example of the limitations of traditional approaches is their exclusive focus on single administrative units such as neighbourhoods. It was thus necessary to adapt conventional ethnographic methods to suit the research question.

While the concrete field work varied, as explained above, all researchers in this project interviewed a wide spectrum of people based on a theoretical sample of very different inhabitants and experts on everyday life focusing on many different spatial practices, perceptions, interpretations and evaluations of the urban. From this dynamic perspective, analysing, understanding and describing the specifics of the social field is necessary only insofar as it contributes to an adequate comprehension of the production of territory (see also Nadai and Maeder 2009: 246). This includes identifying the main actors that produce a specific urban configuration as well as the lines of conflicts and alliances that emerge in this process, along with identifying power relations between and among different groups of interest (see also Schwarz and Streule 2016, 2022).

By employing an unusual perspective on a metropolitan scale, the multi-sited approach to mobile ethnography that I describe here offered a way to define and map urban configurations based on grounded qualitative empirical data. Notably, neither the metropolitan scale of analysis nor the local scale of the field site was a fixed entity predefined by local administrative boundaries, such as municipalities or neighbourhood units. Instead, scales and field sites were key concerns of our studies and were defined eventually through the ethnographic research itself. This iterative research process constantly produced (spatial) knowledge through a mobile ethnography, which then needed to be analysed in light of the dialectical production of territory by both the researcher and the researched themselves (Streule 2020: 427). The focus of this mobile ethnography was thus

not the description of a specific place or city, but the question of how and why certain urbanisation processes are dominant in specific urban configurations, how they can be explained and how they shape urban territories (see also Welz 1998: 183). The sampling method of these studies aimed at theory construction (well-known as theoretical sampling as used in grounded theory), not representativeness.

## EXPLORATORY MAPPING SESSIONS WITH LOCAL EXPERTS

Mapping is a widely used tool of transdisciplinary and critical urban research, and is of interest not only in geography or architecture but also in the framework of artistic and activist research projects (see e.g. Wildner and Tamayo 2004). Numerous publications on the possibilities and limits of mapping show that the process of map-making is not neutral (e.g. Wood 1992; Crampton 2010). This is true for established georeferenced cartography as well as for qualitative mapping (see Sletto 2009). Maps are powerful instruments: they direct our gaze to certain questions and bring selected phenomena to light, while others remain hidden. Maps always contain a selection and hierarchisation of certain data sets and narratives. However, reflecting on these inherent properties of maps also opens up the possibility of contributing to alternative representations of the urban, as numerous counter-mapping projects vividly demonstrate (e.g. kollektiv orantotango+ 2018). In our project we designed and developed a specific method of exploratory qualitative mapping to identify different urban configurations in a situation of scarcity of data. Originally developed in a research project on the urban development of Havana, the method is based on several exploratory mapping sessions with focus groups of architects and urban planners (Peña Díaz and Schmid 2007; Schmid 2014). We employed this method in our comparative project by using the maps resulting from these sessions as guidelines to conduct further interviews, to share emerging analyses and interpretations with other experts and to request their feedback. The experts included geographers, anthropologists, urban planners, architects and urban activists who were knowledgeable about the particular case study area.

In the first step, the exploratory mapping sessions served to discuss and visually represent various areas of the urban territory in terms of their specific socioeconomic and morphological characteristics and functions, ongoing transformations and the lived experiences of their residents. Thus, the map on the table around which those discussions took place was both a concrete support for the discussions but also an instrument that enabled us to synthesise complex relationships. The group sat around a basic map of the urban territory (preferably a topographic map for the sake of legibility, but also an aerial view), with tracing paper, coloured pens and a sound recorder. The mapping session, also possible with a small round of several people, usually started with questions that were intentionally open to interpretation and further discussion. A second step of this method of qualitative mapping was added to cope with the difficult question of representation within the colonial tradition of cartography. The researchers once more invited local scholars to discuss the preliminary results of the previous mapping sessions and to comment on the emerging maps. Through these constant feedback loops we established a sort of dialogical re-reading of the multilayered map to refine the cartographic representation of urbanisation stage by stage (see also Streule and Wildner 2022).

The collaborative drafting of these emerging maps together with local experts was a necessary step in knowledge production and can be understood as a process for the gradual analysis of the urban territories, which became more and more precise over the course of the research, and also to find blind spots in the qualitative data in the process. This two-step mapping procedure not only helped to identify key characteristics of the urban territory framed as patterns of urbanisation, but also to reflect critically on knowledge production. Additionally, the maps were complemented by using mixed data from a variety of sources including field research findings, original archival sources and census data, if available. These multiple layers of information were integrated through triangulation to produce a map that showed areas where certain urbanisation processes were dominant. Triangulation here means using several methods, mixed data and multiple researchers in different case studies to extend data and interpretations. This is not to simply confirm other results or to use other methods to study the same phenomenon, as Uwe Flick (2019: 121) points out, but to make research and results more credible and fruitful. The result of this step was what we called a thesis map. It shows different urban configurations for each case study, as I explain in more detail below.

## REGRESSIVE-PROGRESSIVE METHOD FOR A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

After this first phase of empirical research, we employed a historical perspective. At this point, the temporal dimension became the organising principle of the analysis, with the aim of understanding important turning points in the pathway of urbanisation and their aggregate impacts on the urban configurations identified. How can such a complex process as the social production of space be studied both empirically and via a historical perspective? The built environment, or surface, is one possible starting point for reconstructing a spatialised

historical narrative (see also Abu-Lughod, 1999). Following the regressive-progressive method introduced by Henri Lefebvre (2003 [1953]), the analysis descended into the past to identify defining moments of a specific urbanisation process and ascended again by reconstructing the decisive lines of historical development and elaborating on a periodisation which illuminates the respective constellations of dominant power and fields of conflict. Using this regressive-progressive method, we could grasp the urban as a dynamic multi-temporal process.

This historical procedure presumed the researcher had an initial understanding of the context. The development of a spatialised historical narrative was thus based on the thesis map already established. As a synthesis of the preceding empirical research, it functioned as a starting point for the regressive-progressive analysis. The urban configurations thus became the points of reference for the historical reconstruction. The potential of this regressive-progressive procedure lies, as Fraya Frehse (2001: 172) points out, in the resulting systematisation of an extremely heterogeneous historical corpus of sources. For this focused data collection and analysis, we used secondary literature and original archival sources such as historical maps and photographs to identify key moments in the reconstruction of the material production of space, territorial regulation and people's everyday lived experiences. A critical methodological reflection of this approach involves an active understanding of history that enables us to situate the ideas, experiences and practices of spatiality and historicity in their material, political and social contexts. This analysis provided important insights into how urbanisation processes inscribe themselves into the terrain. The periodisation of the production of space showed that different, at times relatively stable, political, economic and social arrangements dominate urbanisation in each case study.

Based on the assumption that different urbanisation processes shape an urban territory simultaneously, each researcher conceptualised and discussed the main urbanisation paradigms that are fundamental for understanding urban transformation processes in their respective case studies. Their historical analysis clarified the temporality of spatial processes and contributed to the differentiation of current transformation processes. Delineating the findings of the historical analyses and reading them through the lens of the thesis maps provided the basis for the identification of urbanisation processes. They also enabled detailed and wide-ranging accounts of each urban territory. The analyses of the urbanisation paradigms and the urban configurations thus constitute important results of our research project in their own rights. They are presented in detail in Part II of this book.

# THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF URBANISATION PROCESSES

The main steps of our comparative procedure can be analytically structured by three consecutive comparative moments: firstly, identifying different urban configurations for each case study, secondly defining urbanisation processes across cases in comparative team workshops and thirdly, generating concepts through collective writing. This comparative procedure included a constant collaborative engagement with all the case studies, whereby each researcher contributed their expertise and growing knowledge of one specific case. In this procedure, we did not use the other cases simply to contrast it with our own research. Instead, we learned from each other to read our own cases through the other case studies. The regularly organised team workshops bringing together the team members were crucial for this exchange and for mutual learning. Furthermore, these workshops became the key for creating comparative moments, where first contours of new concepts emerged. To consolidate and define these concepts, the final phase of the project was dedicated to a collective writing process that was vital for generating and defining our concepts. Finalising these papers with up to eight co-authors was probably one of the most difficult tasks of the project, as the following brief reflection also shows.

## FIRST COMPARATIVE MOMENT: IDENTIFYING DIFFERENT URBAN CONFIGURATIONS IN EACH CASE STUDY

A first step of our comparative procedure was to produce a thesis map for each case study. This map synthesises the qualitative data and the narrative elements drawn from observational fieldwork, the exploratory mapping sessions and the historical regressive-progressive analysis. Mapping allows for a highly interrelated and simultaneous analysis of this mixed data. Each researcher—in interaction with the entire research team—produced a thesis map for one of the eight case studies. The map displays different urban configurations, simply marked with different colours for each case study. In this first phase of comparison we used colours, not names, to indicate the different urban configurations because the naming process itself constitutes an analytical step.

The elaboration of the thesis map corresponds to the first comparative moment of the project—that is, to identify and describe urbanisation processes for each case study. To achieve this goal, different

parts within the same urban territory have to be related and compared with each other and mapped as distinct urban configurations. In this process, the researcher specifies the resulting urban configurations, identifies their characteristics and prepares short descriptions of each of them. In this way, the different urban configurations are geographically and historically situated and, finally, named: they ideally bear names in the local language as they are empirically grounded. It is important to note that different languages were uses in both data collection and analysis including Turkish, Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Mexican Spanish, English and the various Indigenous languages spoken in the case-study areas.

In this way, the thesis maps were deployed as heuristic tools and integral parts of the research process. Despite its clear benefits, this type of visualisation had obvious limits. The presence of boundaries—no matter how gradual they are—gave the impression of abrupt transitions and homogenous territories, whereas the regions under study are often highly heterogeneous and bear the legacy of multiple layers of urbanisation processes. To address these shortcomings, written texts to accompany the maps were important. Whereas the maps represent patterns of urbanisation, we used text to represent the pathways of urbanisation. We could thus indicate emergent urbanisation processes and, at the same time, potential concepts. For the readability of the maps, we also worked together with a team of cartographers and graphic designers who helped us to draw these thesis maps.

## SECOND COMPARATIVE MOMENT: IDENTIFYING URBANISATION PROCESSES ACROSS CASE STUDIES

Having identified the urban configurations in each of our case studies, the most challenging and rewarding step of the research began, in which the collective dimension of the research and the transductive approach again became crucial for generating specific emerging concepts of urbanisation processes from the different urban configurations that we put in conversation with each other. This analytical step corresponds to the second comparative moment of the research—that is, to identify urbanisation processes across the case studies. This second comparative moment enabled us to conceptualise new urbanisation processes, and thus theorisation drawing on our previously developed analysis and description of the urban configurations of each case study. The goal of this second step was to construct concepts which struck a delicate balance between generality and specificity so as to enable meaningful comparisons between singularities.

For this purpose, we grouped urban configurations across the different cases that displayed commonalities in their patterns and pathways, their multidimensional characteristics and dynamics and that especially shared a common problematic. In intense discussions during our team workshops, we considered the various urban situations we had encountered during our field research. The conceptualisation of popular urbanisation serves as a good example of our comparative procedure (see also Chapter 12). Based on observational field research, we noticed that we were describing very similar dynamics in certain areas of Mexico City, Lagos, Istanbul and Kolkata. We had realised early on in the comparative team workshops that these dynamics took place, at least initially, in low-income neighbourhoods, and were characterised by the people who produce urban space, strong political organisation and incremental processes of construction, which in some cases led to a consolidation of the neighbourhoods. In the workshops we outlined the concept and developed the contours of this specific urbanisation process. We note that this collective process of presenting initial empirical data, learning from other case studies and finally considering the relevance of existing and established terms like 'slum', 'auto-construction' or 'urban informality' shaped both our conceptualisation of popular urbanisation and the analysis of each case study.

Just as in this example, other concepts were developed in several rounds of discussion across the different case studies. Thus, multiple iterations were necessary to test the adequacy of the concepts, to readjust their conceptual borders and to find coherent definitions that delineate the process. Through this transductive procedure of collective conceptual experimentation and validation in the field, we were able to finalise some of the concepts while keeping on hold or discarding others. We finally identified and conceptualised a total of 10 new comparative urbanisation processes.

## THIRD COMPARATIVE MOMENT: COLLECTIVE WRITING AND GENERATING CONCEPTS

This collective and comparative procedure resulted in a range of proposals for new concepts. The co-authored papers are examples of the collaborative way in which we worked during this project. After engaging in an intense writing process, we published several articles introducing five of these concepts: popular urbanisation (Streule et al. 2020), plotting urbanism (Karaman et al. 2020), mass housing urbanisation (Kockelkorn et al. 2022), the incorporation of urban differences (Hanakata et al. 2022) and bypass urbanism (Sawyer et al. 2021). These texts are all reprinted in Part III of this volume. One additional process, multilayered patchwork urbanisation, is also presented here, while two processes are briefly discussed in Chapter 4: laminar urbanisation and post-proletarian urbanisation.

A necessary step in the definition of these urbanisation processes—and what could be framed as a third comparative moment—is to put them in the context of current scholarly debates, discussing and differentiating them in relation to extant concepts. By rigorously following this path in the final phase of the conceptualisation, we ensured that our methodology was consistent with our open approach and also with the suggestion by grounded theorists that a literature review should be conducted after developing an independent analysis (Charmaz 2014). We thus took part in the collective writing process with the goal of relating the emerging concepts to extant concepts, and of defining our concepts more precisely and offering them for further examination. The organisation and writing process of each paper—exceeding by far the project duration's end, including more than four researchers located in different parts of the world who were at the time working on various new projects—was, not surprisingly, very challenging. After numerous delays, many missed deadlines and an unusually lengthy review processes it is to the credit of each and every team member and their patience, commitment and perseverance, that all these papers have been published, contributing to a decentred vocabulary of urbanisation.

# GENERATING CONCEPTS OF THE URBAN FROM SPECIFICITY

This chapter has demonstrated the usefulness of an experimental comparative methodology that may be mobilised not only for exploring variations on already defined concepts, but also to generate new concepts of urbanisation. It shows one possible way of theorising new concepts arising from the confrontation of different urban experiences and informed by various urban territories across the globe. Furthermore, our research experiences have shown that engaging in this kind of comparative experimental methodology requires the invention of a series of new tools, especially specific versions of field research, exploratory mapping and comparative team workshops. My focus on the comparative procedure clarifies the way that we adopted and adapted these existent methods to fit the situation of each case study and draw on empirical data to develop new concepts and analyse processes rather than urban forms. Moreover, in our aim to analyse those processes on a metropolitan scale from a comparative perspective, we based this experimental set of methods on a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data, combining multi-sited ethnographic field research with a historical analysis and cartographic synthesis, thereby moving beyond the usual pre-given set of data. The chapter further introduced the transductive approach as a fundamental way of conducting data collection and analysis simultaneously in an iterative research process. In this way, our methodology emphasises theory construction rather than the description or application of extant concepts. Put differently, using this comparative procedure—systematised in three comparative moments as discussed above—involved making comparisons during each stage of the analysis to advance theory development. Mapping was a key tool of this procedure, as it allowed us to move analytically and imaginatively within and across different contexts and thus helped us to develop new concepts: first by describing urban configurations, then by defining urban processes. In this way, we used these maps as heuristic devices in a comparative procedure that challenges the arbitrary division between theory and research.

While the experimental methodology and inventive methods described in this chapter enabled us to identify and determine the patterns and pathways of urbanisation for large urban territories and the development of new comparative concepts, we now turn to the question: what contribution can this qualitative, transdisciplinary and collaborative methodological approach make to urban studies more broadly? A main concern of current

debates is of issues of generalisation and abstraction, as well as critical stances towards universalism in theory construction (e.g. Jazeel 2019; Asher 2019; see also Derickson 2015; Goonewardena 2018; Ruddick et al. 2018; Wilson and Jonas 2018; Angelo and Goh 2021). Moving far beyond the traditional methods of comparing phenomena in terms of their similarity or difference, or by contrasting and reading one case against another, the methodology presented here illustrates a way of actually thinking through elsewhere (Robinson 2016) and maintaining a balance between abstract theorising and concrete research. Obviously, generating new concepts with a wide reach involves a moment of generalisation, of moving beyond singularities. However, our goal was not to universalise concepts but to detect the bundling of characteristics, common underlying mechanisms, logics, regularities and common traits in the way urbanisation unfolds and proceeds, and thus produces similar outcomes. Conceptualising urbanisation processes through the experimental methodology presented here, we were able to identify a common problematic across different times and places and the various divides that separate them. The challenge was to develop a methodology that apprehends the general tendencies of urbanisation and at the same time addresses the specificities as they develop in each urban territory (Schmid 2015). Concepts that help to grasp the complexity of urbanisation processes need to both generalise among diverse processes and differentiate among them. We therefore did not search for overall similarities across different kinds of settlements, but used qualitative methods to identify specific urbanisation processes and to reveal their distinct logics. Instead of widening, we therefore narrowed down the scope of our concepts to identify systematic differences among various urbanisation processes. This implies a methodology that neither started with concrete individual case studies nor with generalised concepts, but applied a transductive strategy to maintain a dialectical relationship between theory and empirical research. This comparison and the concepts resulting from it are necessarily incomplete and partial, and form only one of many other possible starting points for the development of an enriched, enhanced and revisable urban vocabulary.

# NEW CONCEPTS OF URBANISATION PROCESSES

# AN OVERVIEW

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This chapter explores the potential of a comparative approach in theory building and the conceptualisation of urbanisation processes. It shows one possible way in which new concepts can be generated by bringing together different experiences from various urban territories across the globe. As argued in Chapter 1, a new vocabulary is required to decipher the rapidly mutating urban landscapes and to identify the multitude of urbanisation processes that are shaping the planet to facilitate discussion and common understanding. Chapters 2 and 3 present our transductive comparative research approach. This is a qualitative and collaborative approach that led us to invent a series of methodological tools, especially specific versions of qualitative mapping, multi-sited ethnography and common comparative workshops. We could show that this methodological design enables us to identify the patterns and pathways of urbanisation, even for very large urban territories. This collective approach has resulted in the elaboration of a range of new concepts.

In this chapter we first analyse the shortcomings of the most widely used concepts of urbanisation processes, namely suburbanisation, gentrification and urban informality. This includes a discussion on the problematic of conceptualising urbanisation processes. We then introduce six of the concepts we developed in our comparative project: popular urbanisation, plotting urbanism,

mass housing urbanisation, multilayered patchwork urbanisation, bypass urbanisation and the incorporation of urban differences. We briefly introduce two additional processes during this discussion: laminar urbanisation and post-proletarian urbanisation. This selection represents the major set of urbanisation processes we have conceptualised so far. To give readers the possibility to get an all-encompassing overview on our findings, we present here a detailed summary of each concept that focuses on the relationship between the different processes. The full presentation of the individual urbanisation processes is provided in Part III of this book.

# CONCEPTS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF URBANISATION

Many of the existing concepts for the analysis of urbanisation processes have serious shortcomings. Generic terms such as 'urban restructuring' or 'urban transformation' indicate that some sort of urbanisation process is going on, but they do not distinguish between different qualities and rhythms of urbanisation. An evaluation of more specific concepts reveals some additional difficulties. Firstly, there is only a very small number of well-established and clearly defined process-based concepts available for the analysis of urbanisation. By far the most widely applied and debated concepts in English-speaking urban studies are 'suburbanisation', 'gentrification' and 'informal urbanisation'. These three concepts constitute a very restricted and limited toolset for analysing and deciphering the wide variety of urbanisation processes and the heterogeneity of urban situations developing all over the planet.

Postcolonial critiques (see e.g. Roy 2005; Tang 2014; Wu 2020) point to a second problem posed by the origin of these terms: their Anglo-American bias. It is important to reflect on the conditions under which these concepts were developed, then applied to other cases, gaining widespread acceptance and finally entering into the canon of the scientific industry. Even though many of these concepts have been used worldwide in recent years, they are nevertheless rooted in Western debates, experiences, inspirations and imaginations. Thus, gentrification was originally a very specific concept that was derived from the term 'gentry' that only existed in Britain and India, though with different connotations. And while various forms of peripheral urbanisation had started to occur in the 19th century and have emerged all over the planet today, the most widely applied term in anglophone texts is 'suburb', which is still tainted by North American debates from the 1960s. These terms designate a specific location, socioeconomic situation and urban experience, mainly connected with middle-class families living in detached houses on the outskirts of agglomerations (see e.g. Gans 1967 and Soja 2010). These origins are still effective as mostly subliminal and unconscious connotations, widely disseminated through Hollywood's cinema and TV series. However, a wide range of other terms designate urban development outside dense central urban areas, such as *banlieue* (French) or *barrio* (Spanish), *bairro* (Portuguese), campung (Indonesian) and many more (see e.g. Topalov 2017). Such terms might evoke very different—in certain respects even opposite—socio-spatial contexts and experiences (such as peripheral working-class neighbourhoods or the rural–urban interface), which,

in the dominant English-language academic literature, have either been treated as simple translations or relegated to being 'unimportant particularities'. A very informative overview on the different terms and their meanings can be found in *What's in a Name?* edited by Harris and Vorms (2017). Ren (2017) explains at the example of Beijing that there is a whole series of Chinese terms to designate urban peripheries in everyday language and academic scholarship; some of them general, others local. However, they are all routinely translated as suburbs or suburbanisation in English. A debate on peripheral urbanisation that has been recently emerging in the Latin American context offers a much more nuanced picture of urbanisation processes beyond urban centres (see Caldeira 2017; Lukas and Reis 2022). All these efforts testify to the great variety and complexity of the urban periphery and reaffirm the need for a diversified and enriched vocabulary of urbanisation.

The term 'informality' also has specific connotations. Its origins lie in the designation of an informal labour market for poor immigrant workers in southern cities as opposed to the normalised, protected, 'modern' and Western way of formalised wage relations, put forward in the early 1970s especially by the International Labour Organisation (Souza and Tokman 1976; AlSayyad 2004). This concept was subsequently extended to embrace an entire way of life and applied to neighbourhoods that were constructed outside of the regularised and formalised procedures of housing construction and urban planning. The term 'informal' is thus imbued from the outset with negative connotations, designating a kind of exception or deviation from the 'modern' model of urbanisation (Varley 2013). Even if the concept changed its meaning over the course of various redefinitions, first in Latin America and later worldwide, and was finally turned into a positive term emphasising the transformative capacity of the urban poor evoking alternative pathways of urban development by subaltern and postcolonial studies (Roy and AlSayyad 2004; Roy 2005; Hernández et al. 2010), it still bears discernible pejorative traces from its origins.

A third shortcoming of these concepts is their one-dimensional character, which privileges only one aspect or factor as central to their definition. Again, the example of informal urbanisation illustrates this point: the distinction between the formal and the informal tends to dominate the debate, and the resulting concept is inadequate in accounting for the spatialities and lived dimensions that encompass many different modes of producing urban spaces. Furthermore, examples of urban areas displaying certain aspects of informality abound and include very different urban configurations. We might indeed ask whether the shacks along the rail tracks in Kolkata, the relatively well-organised, self-constructed neighbourhoods in Mexico City, the consolidated and normalised post-gecekondu areas in Istanbul (Esen 2011), the wealthy residential areas in Belgrade constructed during the transition period between the socialist and the neoliberal regime (Diener et al. 2012) or even China's urbanised villages should all be called informal settlements, only because they match certain aspects of informality in their production process. While the conceptual axis formality–informality still has great value for understanding urbanisation in general, e.g. as a 'mode of governing' (Roy 2005), and can be useful in the analysis and definition of territorial regulation (see Chapter 1), to use it as a characteristic and defining element of an urbanisation process is indeed questionable. As Mbembe and Nuttall (2008: 8–9) note in respect of African urbanisms: '[R]ather than opposing the 'formal' with the 'informal' or the 'visible' with the 'invisible', we need a more complex anthropology of things, forms, and signs in order to account for the life of the city in Africa. Analytically as well as in people's daily experience, simplistic oppositions between the formal and the informal are unhelpful.'

A fourth issue is the loss of precision and relevance through generalisation. A concept may originate in a specific experience linked to one place and then be applied to more and more apparently similar examples in other places. Through this tactic of conceptual stretching, the original definition is relaxed to encompass more and more cases, until it becomes an almost generic term. The most prominent example of this is the term gentrification, which was originally coined to describe specific experiences in London in the 1960s by highlighting the displacement of poor residents from central locations and their replacement by more affluent social groups, accompanied by the physical upgrading of neighbourhoods and the increase in ground rents (Glass 1964). In a further important conceptual reformulation, gentrification was linked to the realisation of the rent gap as a key defining element (Smith 1996; for an overview see Bernt 2022). This concept was first applied fruitfully in Britain and North America and soon also used in some European contexts. Later it was reinterpreted as a global strategy (Smith 2002). Recently, even the term 'planetary gentrification' has been introduced to discuss a wide variety of examples of gentrification—understood in a very broad sense—across the world (Lees et al. 2016; see also Slater 2017). Through this process of conceptual stretching, the term gentrification has reached a high level of generality and has become almost a blanket term for any kind of urban upgrading and restructuring accompanied by some form of displacement of people and businesses. Processes such as neighbourhood upgrading in London or Berlin now fall under the same rubric as the piecemeal process of urban densification in Lagos, large-scale state-led urban renewal projects in Shanghai or Istanbul, condo developments in Jakarta or slum clearance strategies in Mumbai. Even if we acknowledge that

the term gentrification can be applied in very productive ways to many situations and has also become an important concept underpinning many political struggles, we can nevertheless imagine that a much more nuanced and richer vocabulary could be developed to designate the various emerging kinds of urban upgrading and restructuring, also reflecting varying local experiences (see e.g. Préteceille 2007; Wu 2016; Hanakata 2017). As Ghertner (2015) observes, the most violent forms of displacement take place in situations in which public, common and customary land uses are being targeted by planetary trends of land privatisation, property formalisation and tenure regularisation. These situations, Ghertner argues, are not just variations of gentrification but constitute an altogether different process. Analysing condo developments in Jakarta's former Kampung areas, which could also be subsumed under the wide concept of gentrification, Leitner and Sheppard (2017) propose instead the term 'contested accumulation through displacement', thus provincialising Harvey's (2003) concept of accumulation by dispossession. Analysing the real estate megaproject developments in Asia that lead to the conflict-ridden and sometimes violent displacements of residents and businesses, Shatkin develops a revised concept of the rent gap, noting that the specifics of current analyses of gentrification in the USA and Europe are of 'limited relevance in much of urban Asia' (Shatkin 2017: 27). These shortcomings do not mean, however, that the concept of gentrification should be restricted to places in the West or even be abandoned altogether—it still plays a crucial role in many urban territories. But it needs to be defined in a more precise way (see Bernt 2022), and it should not be used to prevent the development of other concepts, as we argue in more detail in Chapter 17.

The effects of homogenising strategies become especially clear in the concept of 'suburbanisation', which has become a generic term that can be applied to all kinds of urbanisation processes unfolding beyond the confines of relatively dense urban core areas (which then by default are defined as 'urban'). While it is illuminating to learn that today the vast majority of urban populations live outside central urban areas, it is another question whether it is useful to assemble a wide array of very different urban experiences under the conceptual umbrella of 'global suburbanisms' (Keil 2013). The vague definition of suburban as a combination of a non-central population, economic growth, urban spatial expansion and 'suburban ways of life' (Keil 2013: 11) embraces all sorts of urban territories, whether their residents have a high or low income, whether they are of high or low density, already well established or recently built, dominated by private developments, self-constructed settlements or mass housing urbanisation. Directly related to these problematic aspects of the concept of suburbanisation is the dualism between 'city' and 'suburb' that it entails (see also Schmid 2023). As the large comparative project Global Suburbanism recently demonstrated (Keil and Wu 2022), urban territories lying beyond the urban core may display very different forms and dynamics, and even in the same territory very different urban configurations may emerge that do not fit at all into such a binary construction.

Moreover, processes that could be defined as gentrification affect many suburban areas today. Lees et al. (2016: 211) recognise that suburbanisation and gentrification processes are becoming increasingly blurred. If we take these observations seriously, we can conclude that almost the entire contemporary urban world is becoming suburban, while at the same time it is also becoming gentrified. We arrive here at a paradox. As these terms are stretched to encompass more and more cases or singularities, they become at the same time fuzzy and lose much of their explanatory capacity. As Robinson (2016: 19) aptly puts it: much difference risks remaining unconceptualised, leaving us with concepts without difference and difference without conceptualisation.

As a result of these standardising tactics all sorts of urban constellations are straitjacketed into a few generally accepted concepts, leading to the reduction of conceptual complexity, the simplification of explanations and misleading interpretations of urban realities. Furthermore, these tactics restrict the imagination and reduce scholars' inventiveness in producing new concepts. In contrast, a range of conceptual experimentations and proposals, particularly derived from southern experiences, go in a different direction and enrich the urban vocabulary, such as 'tenement urbanism' (Huchzermeyer 2011b), 'occupancy urbanism' (Benjamin 2008), 'subaltern urbanisation' (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2020) and 'recombinant urbanisation' (Balakrishnan 2019). A certain number of concepts also address urbanisation processes occurring beyond the suburbs, such as 'desakota', 'periurbanisation' or 'exurbanisation', mainly inspired by the development of various rural–urban constellations (see e.g. McGee 1991; Andersson et al. 2009; Schmid 2023). All these contributions have inspired our own study and could form the basis of a broad agenda of conceptual differentiation.

Conversely, several research projects followed or were inspired by our own comparative endeavour. Lindsay Howe (2022) developed an entire range of specific terms to distinguish the variety of urbanisation processes for townships in the extended urban region of Johannesburg, and Meth et al. (2020) conceptualised a series of urbanisation processes in a comparative study of urban peripheries in Johannesburg, eThekwini and Addis Ababa, that they call 'speculative', 'vanguard', 'auto-constructed', 'transitioning', and 'inherited' peripheries.

# URBANISATION PROCESSES

In this section we present a short version of each urbanisation process we have developed in our project. At the end of this chapter we add a list that summarises the full set of concepts. More detailed discussions of these concepts can be found in Part III of this book.

Our definitions of urbanisation processes are organised according to the three-dimensional conception of urbanisation elaborated in Chapter 1. The first dimension captures the material production of urban space based on the construction of settlements, production sites and infrastructure, everyday actions and interactions. The second captures the production of conceptions of urban space, including processes of territorial regulation through which power structures are inscribed into a territory. The third captures the production of lived space and thus the patterns and dynamics of differences that emerge, consolidate or become incorporated during urbanisation.

## POPULAR URBANISATION

Popular urbanisation was the first concept we identified in our project, and it serves here as an example of our comparative procedure. It became clear at the very beginning of our comparative discussions that neighbourhoods in Mexico City, Lagos, Istanbul and Kolkata were shaped by very similar dynamics. They were all located at peripheral areas and at least initially inhabited by low-income people. The houses were at least partly self-produced by their residents and were thus marked by incremental processes of construction, and in some cases developed a great capacity for adaptation to the needs of their inhabitants.

To name this urbanisation process, we borrowed the term *urbanización popular*, which is frequently used in the Latin American literature (Navarro and Moctezuma 1989; Azuela 1993; Duhau and Giglia 2008). However, its original use and definition is very close to that of informal urbanisation, and our own definition is quite different. In order to indicate this distance, we used the English translation 'popular urbanisation'. In our definition, we conceived of popular urbanisation as a process that points to the ways in which people establish themselves in the urban environment through collective processes of appropriating and producing space (Streule and Schmid 2014). The key to the definition of this urbanisation process is its multidimensionality, and this can be summarised by three main aspects: firstly, the material transformation of the urban territory with strong participation by the inhabitants; secondly, residents' capacity to fight and negotiate successfully for access to the land and (relatively) favourable territorial regulations, which requires good political organisation; and thirdly, the collective experiences of the inhabitants during their everyday life and popular struggles for recognition.

In all four cases the massive immigration of people and the blatant lack of affordable housing have been key drivers of the process. In the absence of proactive interventions by governments to provide affordable housing, communities started to produce what seemed to be spontaneous and makeshift settlements. In historical terms, we can understand popular urbanisation as an alternative to the process of mass housing urbanisation that started in Hong Kong and Paris about at the same time as popular urbanisation first emerged in Mexico City and Istanbul.

In all these cases, gaining access to the land involves various forms of collective mobilisation and struggle and usually concerns either collective land, state-owned land, state-protected land (such as wetlands or nature reserves) or marginal land that is not already used (such as marshy or land along the shore of a sea or lake). We can thus understand popular urbanisation as a specific urban strategy in which individuals and groups engage in intricate webs of negotiation with state actors to secure incremental gains in tenure security, infrastructure and amenities.

The extent to which these settlements are able to take hold and consolidate into less precarious neighbourhoods that sometimes even develop considerable urban qualities and can be adapted to the needs of their inhabitants depends on the collective mobilisation of the residents and their capacity to negotiate successfully with various state actors. In Istanbul and Mexico City, relatively rapid processes of consolidation could be established, and popular settlements acquired a certain stability and suitable infrastructure and sanitation. The image of the shack so often evoked in both popular and scientific accounts and representations referred in fact only to brief episodes in both cases. On the other hand, in Kolkata and Lagos popular urbanisation has played a very limited role, mainly because most of the land was either in private hands or embedded in complex structures of ownership, and it was not possible to develop enough pressure through political mobilisation for popular urbanisation to take place.

In Istanbul, the first stages of popular urbanisation emerged in the second half of the 1940s. These settlements, called gecekondu, were largely constructed on state-owned land in close proximity to factories. They were initially treated as a 'social disaster' (Şenyapılı 1998: 308) and the only viable option seemed to be to demolish them immediately. Their rapidly increasing number, the need to house cheap labour power for the growing industries and the inability of the state to meet these needs, forced subsequent administrations to follow a policy of tolerance and regulation. Consequently, Gecekondu

residents organised themselves, sometimes under the influence of socialist and revolutionary groups (Aslan 2004) and also through clientele arrangements, and leveraged their voting power to obtain tenure security. In many areas, mafia-like groups, as well as communitarian networks organised the parcelisation and trade of land. Following new tenure laws in the 1980s, many former gecekondu areas rapidly transformed into dense urban neighbourhoods. Increasing tenure security went hand in hand with the commodification of informal land markets (Öncü 1988). Thus, in the case of Istanbul the process of popular urbanisation turned into a different process, which we call plotting urbanism.

A similar situation developed in Mexico City, where the state tolerated popular urbanisation while seeking to control and regulate the process. When in 1954 the Federal District (Distrito Federal, the federal state that governs the central area of Mexico City, recently renamed Ciudad de México) implemented restrictions on illegal subdivisions and trade of *ejido* lands (a form of communal agricultural land), this propelled popular urbanisation in neighbouring federal states. In the following decades, the process generated housing for millions of residents in once remote places that today have become fairly central as a result of the massive expansion of the urban region. The regularisation of these neighbourhoods was closely linked to social and political struggles. Mexico City, like many other Latin American cities, has a long history of grassroots organisation. Neighbourhood associations led by charismatic leaders have been a crucial aspect of popular urbanisation, as they have organised the struggle for the provision of basic infrastructure and services. Today, in the face of continuing illegal subdivisions and land occupations, local governments follow a selective policy of regularisation and eviction, especially to prevent encroachments on nature reserves.

In contrast to both Istanbul and Mexico City, the process of popular urbanisation in Lagos and Kolkata was always seriously hampered by very low tenure security. In contrast to its common representation as a stereotypical 'city of slums', popular urbanisation in Lagos is the exception rather than the rule. Lagos's popular settlements, such as parts of Ajegunle or Makoko (the iconic settlement at a prominent spot built on stilts in the waters of the Laguna, often pictured in the media), account for only a very small portion of the urbanised territory. Our analysis has found that popular urbanisation has not been able to take hold in Lagos due to the absence of accountability on the part of state actors as they undertake demolitions and forced evictions, together with the collusion of customary landowners and the lack of powerful grassroots organisations promoting shared living space; as well as the highly individualistic strategies of survival and claim-making. Thus, the process of plotting urbanism dominates most of Lagos.

Similarly, the process of popular urbanisation plays only a minor role in Kolkata. Large parts of the areas officially designated as slums are in fact *bustees* (see e.g. Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority 2005). The Urdu term *bustee* (or *basti*) does mean slum, but in most cases areas designated as bustees are a specific form of tenement settlement, which are legal urban entities based on a three-tiered tenancy system: firstly, the landowner; secondly the hut owner (the *thika* tenant who has a lease from the landowner) and, thirdly, the bustee dweller to whom the hut has been let (Sengupta 2010). Thus, areas of popular urbanisation, according to our definition, occurred in only a limited number of areas in Kolkata, such as in the south, settled mainly by Hindu refugees from East Bengal after the partition of India in 1947 or in certain peripheral areas in the eastern fringe, close to or even inside the wetlands (see e.g. Roy 2004). Additionally, toehold settlements have been constructed by very poor people on state land, e.g. along roads, railway lines and channels.

These four examples of popular urbanisation demonstrate the necessary conditions for this process to emerge and flourish. A key condition is the availability of cheap land (e.g. public or collectively owned land) that allows the construction of the first illegal settlements. Another important condition is a state strategy of tolerating and even negotiating the construction and consolidation of these settlements. The presence of collective networks, a certain degree of political organisation and specific collective traditions are also necessary for the success of popular urbanisation. What, then, are the advantages of popular urbanisation? While it is born out of specific and often precarious conditions, it can advance utopian moments of collectivity, engagement and mutual self-help. It offers residents some very practical advantages, such as a high degree of flexibility and adaptability of the houses, the incremental evolution of the settlement in response to their needs and requirements, the adaptation of the built structure to changing socioeconomic situations, and opportunities for social inclusion.

## PLOTTING URBANISM

In the course of our research we identified another urbanisation process, which at first sight appeared to be very similar to popular urbanisation and, like the latter, is often subsumed under categories such as informality, incremental urban development or slum. However, on closer examination we saw that it possesses fundamentally different dynamics and internal contradictions. This process was apparent in a surprising combination of cases, namely Istanbul, Kolkata, Lagos and Shenzhen. In fact, we needed quite some time before we came to accept it as a common process and then to elaborate a more precise and convincing definition that we could apply productively to all four cases.

Unlike popular urbanisation, in which collective action, political organisation and self-help play decisive roles, this process is mainly defined by three other characteristics: firstly, the relationship to the land is based on a territorial compromise that allows for the existence of multiple conflicting systems of landownership and land regimes. Secondly, market mechanisms and commodification play an important role, which also creates specific social relationships between landlords or rentiers, who often still live in the area, and their tenants. Finally, the process proceeds in a piecemeal and incremental way, plot by plot, without overarching planning, which creates a variety of local situations. We therefore called this process 'plotting urbanism' in order to stress the fundamental role of the plot, but also allowing some allusions to the strategic and dubious meanings of plotting in the sense of scheming for individual gain.

Plotting urbanism refers firstly to piecemeal and speculative land development or the densification of existing settlement areas. In the case of Istanbul, it is often the result of the consolidation, intensification and increasing commodification of 'post-gecekondu' areas (Esen 2011). In Kolkata, it designates old bustee areas that have been undergoing dramatic redevelopment and verticalisation. In Shenzhen, it comprises the emergence of 'urbanised villages' in the context of state-driven urban development. In Lagos, plotting is so dominant that it must be seen as just the ordinary way of urban development in its ever-expanding and densifying urban peripheries.

Plotting urbanism occurs often in the presence of conflicting multiple claims to land, which are a source of contradictions that are circumvented and exploited by landlords and various authorities, largely in the pursuit of individual gain. In most cases it can be understood as a kind of a territorial compromise that articulates entrenched, customary, collective or just illegal rules and regulations with formal or state land regimes. Thus, individual landowners, land mafias, religious communities, village communities and big landowning families have considerable power in negotiating access to land. Plotting allows a rapid increase in population, and usually results in extremely dense spaces with poor urbanistic qualities. Because of its piecemeal and uncoordinated character and the prioritisation of individual gain over public good, the resulting living environment is often deficient in common facilities and public spaces, even if there might be a vibrant public life.

Its main contrast with popular urbanisation is the key role played by the production of housing for rent. In fact, plotting often realises the potential rent gap in the area. Here modifying Neil Smith's (1996) original concept, we define the rent gap as the difference between the actual rent obtained in an area, and the potential rent that could be captured through intensification and marketisation (see also Özdemir 1999). The rent gap itself is produced and realised by the stabilisation of a land regime, which potentially turns dwelling units with very low realised exchange value into assets that can be developed for the market. As a consequence, the landlord-tenant relationship shapes the social relations in significant ways.

Signs of commercialisation were already present in the very beginning of popular urbanisation in Istanbul. Settlers often had to pay fees to dubious gatekeepers and owners, and individual houses could be sold in the informal market as well. With increasing tenure security, the tendency towards commercialisation intensified in the late 1970s. With a series of amnesties in the 1980s which not only regularised land tenure but also encouraged densification (Ekinci 1998), old gecekondu neighbourhoods underwent a dramatic transformation. This marked the shift from popular urbanisation to plotting urbanism. Plotting happened in different ways, in the form of the replacement of existing gecekondu structures with multistorey apartment buildings, and in some peripheral areas, agricultural land was illegally subdivided by its owners and sold for apartment construction without the required permits (Yonder 1987). In both cases the resulting built environment was very dense and of inferior quality, due to substandard construction techniques and materials, and inefficient land use allocation. While it allowed many residents to achieve upward mobility through rent accumulation (Boratav 1994: 28; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001), a major downside of the process has been the entrenchment of exploitative relations within informal land markets and the emergence of rentier ethics amongst the urban poor (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001). Transformation of gecekondu areas through plotting almost disappeared in the 2000s with the introduction of an urban renewal agenda. In the last few years however, plotting has re-emerged in some late-generation gecekondu areas.

In Lagos, plotting could be seen as the long-entrenched common process of urbanisation. Successive colonial and national governments have had little effect in regulating Lagos's land market. Even the Land Use Act of 1978, which was intended to place all land in Lagos under the control of the governor, has contributed to rather than resolved land disputes. Due to the complicated and costly procedures involved in securing formal land titles, and a lack of enforcement on the part of the governments, most plot-owners have not sought formalisation. This lack of formal tenure security did not, however, prevent the growth of a highly dynamic and expanding land market overseen by indigenous landowning families that act as surveyors and regulators. This results in an ambiguous status quo, in which the state tolerates the customary authority over land, and plot owners and tenants try to negotiate individual arrangements. While many established migrants are able to afford plots, new migrants join the system as tenants. Previously

peripheral but now highly central areas have developed into dense residential areas through plotting. Some plot owners in central areas are selling their now valuable plots to embark on a second round of plotting in rapidly developing areas in more peripheral places, where they can afford more land. Similarly, the tenants—who constitute the majority of the residents in plotted areas—save up their money in the hope of becoming plot owners themselves. After buying the land from the indigenous owners, the plot owners build incrementally as money becomes available, and rent out units to finance the rest of the construction.

The formation of urbanised villages (*chengzhongcun*, literally 'village in the city') in Shenzhen was marked by conflicting interests between the city government, which followed the order of the national government to integrate the dual rural-urban land system originating in the Maoist area to propel rapid urban development, and the village collectives, whose farmlands had been expropriated by the city government for urban expansion. With the new territorial regime established in Shenzhen following China's economic and territorial reform in the 1980s, collective landownership ('rural land') changed to state ownership ('urban land'). Thus, landownership of the village collectives was systematically converted into a kind of leasehold in which only the right to use the land remained intact. The superimposition of a city territorial regime on the former village collective system gave rise to villagers' battles to defend their land, and created interstices in which a unique form of territorial regulation evolved. In the course of successive rounds of large-scale acquisition of farmland by the city government, the village collectives fought for a land exchange policy that granted them land on which to build houses and factories. In this process, village households found an alternative source of income by riding the wave of urbanisation on their own terms; namely, by building higher and denser (Bach 2010; Hsing 2012). The city government attempted to incorporate these spaces into the city administrative system and turn village collectives into shareholding companies; however, this process of incorporation strengthened the bargaining power of the villagers (Song and Zenou 2012), as they were allowed to construct new buildings, and thus effectively to conduct their own businesses renting property. From this contradiction the process of plotting urbanism emerged, leading to the typology of urbanised villages, which attracted migrant labourers searching for cheap housing (Wu et al. 2013). Due to the lack of effective measures against illegal construction, the urban spaces produced by plotting are generally marked by varied, dense and often unhygienic living conditions. However, the generic ground floor layout of these multistorey houses offers ample possibilities for installing shops, small businesses, workshops and markets and hence street life in these urbanised villages is often lively. Additionally, a range of public facilities was established by both the villagers' shareholding companies and the city government. The most recent phase of plotting urbanism in Shenzhen has been dominated by a policy of urban renewal, in which most of the existing urban fabric has been demolished and replaced by condominiums and office towers, which marks the transition towards yet another urbanisation process in Shenzhen.

The process of plotting urbanism in Kolkata is an extraordinary development that first emerged in Howrah, a neglected and overlooked territory with about three million inhabitants located on the west bank of the Hooghly river, on the 'other side' of the city of Kolkata. Howrah bridge connects the central bazaar area of Kolkata to Howrah and Howrah station, one of the two major railway stations of the region, which in turn links Kolkata to the western part of India. Since the mid-2000s concrete structures of up to six floors with limited sanitation have popped up in the midst of the traditional bustee areas characterised by one-storey buildings with small courtyards and narrow alleys between the houses. These new buildings are not only precarious but also partly illegal; they are tolerated by a weak local state in a situation of extreme housing scarcity. Our detailed analysis shows that the specific constellation of the three-tier bustee system has allowed landowners to undertake this massive intensification. Once the original tenants were relocated by landlords to the upper (illegal) floors of the new houses, the ground floors were used to store goods for the nearby bazaars, and new homes mostly for lower middle-class residents were created on the second and third floors. This form of densification and verticalisation soon became widespread, and today large parts of the central areas of Howrah, as well as parts of the bustees in the harbour area, have been transformed into this unusual urban typology that only aggravates the precarious conditions in areas officially designated as slums (Kallenberger 2018).

As has been illustrated with these four examples, plotting urbanism can have very different starting points and show a great variety of possible pathways. In Lagos plotting has been the dominant urban process for decades, but has been little discussed in the academic, planning and policy literature and thus has not yet been understood as a specific process. In Shenzhen plotting urbanism represents a historical phase of the urban development that was an indispensable element of the extremely rapid construction of this new metropolis completely from scratch, but was then normalised and is disappearing in a process in which the plotted settlements themselves are being removed. Similarly, in Istanbul areas that developed through plotting are now under pressure to undergo further rounds of redevelopment or large-scale urban renewal. Their trajectories point towards further

incorporation of these spaces into the larger urban context and the blurring of boundaries between plotted areas and formally developed areas. Kolkata presents yet another case, as plotting arrives almost spontaneously in tenement areas. Thus, plotting can take very different shapes and trajectories, but what keeps all these examples together is the combination of piecemeal urban development, a specific constellation of overlapping and contradictory land regimes and the commodification of housing. These general criteria may be met in quite a wide range of territories. Examples are the campungs in Djakarta (see e.g. Simone 2014), the processes of 'wild urbanisation' in Belgrade (Diener et al. 2012), and certain forms of subaltern urbanisation in India (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2020; Bathla 2023), where 'plotting' is even a commonly used colloquial term.

## MASS HOUSING URBANISATION AND POST-PROLETARIAN URBANISATION

A very different option for addressing large-scale housing shortage is the process of mass housing urbanisation. This term does not refer to the state-driven process of housing production for low-income groups in general. We use it to designate the large-scale production of rental or private housing initiated either directly by the state or through various forms of public–private cooperation. A key aspect of this process is the direct intervention of state actors in the urbanisation process, leading to the strategic reorganisation of urban territories. Mass housing urbanisation is thus clearly different from other large-scale urbanisation processes such as the privately organised and market-oriented production of single-family homes and condominiums, or the various forms of self-construction as well as popular urbanisation discussed above.

In Hong Kong and Paris this process unfolded during the post-war economic boom. In both territories it was provoked by a severe and politically threatening housing crisis, which made economic, technical, and organisational efforts for rapid housing construction politically necessary and economically desirable. A different version of mass housing urbanisation evolved around the turn of the century in Mexico City and Istanbul under conditions of financialised housing markets, where it served —among other things— to relocate lower-income groups from urban regeneration and renewal sites in central areas.

We define mass housing urbanisation as a process of urbanisation with three main characteristics. The first is the large-scale construction of housing units based on standardised industrial production for lower-income groups (working and middle classes). This process receives financial support from public authorities, including direct and indirect subsidies such as regulative interventions into the housing market, the provision of social advantages for tenants and mortgage benefits. These subsidies may be granted to social rental housing and for home ownership. In both cases the state influences and structures social reproduction. Its second characteristic is the powerful intervention of state actors into the urbanisation process. Only state actors have the legal power and the organisational capacity to control the large-scale production of housing. Most important, in these cases the state holds the power of disposing of public land, as well as expropriation rights and other tools of planning and finance. Because of its organisational complexity, this process is often implemented at the scale of the nation-state. Its third defining characteristic is the strategic reorganisation of entire urban territories through the relocation of people. This often also includes resettling mostly lower-income groups from central locations to urban peripheries, thus rearranging the social composition of urban areas and transforming both the periphery and the urban centre. The standardisation of the production process, the urban design, the housing typologies and floor plans contribute to imposing normative lifestyles and consumption patterns.

In Hong Kong, mass housing urbanisation was initiated as a response to the massive immigration of refugees from China and a series of interrelated crises during the Chinese civil war and the rise of the Communist Party to power after the Second World War. It soon evolved into a governmental strategy to contain and control the immigrant population. In the mid-1950s the government started to develop entire industrial towns. In this way, an industrial working class was created, assuring the growth of labour-intense export-oriented manufacturing that became soon competitive on the world market. Like Hong Kong, the Paris Region faced an economic boom and unprecedented urban growth during the post-war period. In combination with comparatively low construction activity and the dilapidation of the existing housing stock, the region faced a severe housing crisis that posed a threat to governmental stability. In the early 1950s growing public awareness and protests provoked a shift from providing housing at the level of local government towards the strategic intervention of the nation-state into the urbanisation process. In 1958, the government created 'priority areas for urbanisation', an administrative tool that promoted the construction of large estates colloquially called grands ensembles. These were prefabricated housing complexes composed of high-rise towers and slabs (tours et bars), structured by open spaces and equipped with urban amenities. They were scattered across the entire banlieue of Paris, particularly in areas where land prices were low, and thus were often to be found in peripheral areas poorly connected with local centralities and public transport. The grands ensembles catapulted

the life routines of the upper working and lower middle classes from the 19th into the 20th century and provided the grounds for the formation of a consumer and leisure society.

In the 1970s, mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong began to fulfil an additional function: it became a tool for creating civic pride and identity as a response to the social unrest that challenged the legitimacy of the colony. The government started a new town programme, aiming to build complete cities with their own centralities, as well as access to local employment, decent public housing and an improved urban environment providing leisure and public facilities. This programme became an instrument to solve the contradictions of colonialism through the production of space: instead of giving people democratic rights, it offered them a sense of belonging. In contrast, the grands ensembles in Paris experienced gradual decline. By the mid-1980s they had turned into zones of precarity, deprivation and stigmatisation. This was a result of the occurrence of several factors. The national neo-liberal reform programme from 1977 introduced a new governmental rationality initiating the shift from a right to housing to the duty to participate in the housing market (Kockelkorn 2020). This fundamentally altered the social composition of the social housing sector: while higher income groups left the social housing sector, low-income French citizens and immigrant populations gradually gained access to regular social rental housing. At the same time, the dramatic economic crisis of the mid-1970s, accompanied by deindustrialisation and a massive rise in unemployment, led to the gradual decline of the industrial working class. As a result, the grands ensembles started to enter a period of socioeconomic peripheralisation and were tied to the imaginary of racialised precarity and violence. Starting in 1990, urban uprisings erupted in the Parisian banlieue almost every year, culminating in riots in the autumn of 2005 that erupted in the post-proletarian north-eastern banlieue of Paris and soon spread across France.

A similar process of socioeconomic peripheralisation began in Hong Kong during its development into a global city and the unprecedented industrialisation of the Pearl River Delta which led to the fundamental economic and territorial restructuring of the entire region. Large parts of Hong Kong's manufacturing industry moved across the Chinese border and its urban development was marked by deindustrialisation and the growth of the financial, real estate and service sectors. The colonial government changed its territorial strategy towards metropolisation, shifted its attention from public rental housing to the subsidised sale of housing and introduced new incentives to boost home ownership. In this process, mass housing urbanisation was coupled with the expansion and financialisation of the private housing sector. These developments generated a parallel process of socioeconomic peripheralisation: the dramatic loss of industrial jobs forced working class people into the low-end service sector, while the real estate boom led to a massive surge in property prices and rents. Many low-income families from the metropolitan centre had to relocate to the fast-growing new housing estates in the new towns that became territorial traps: they lacked local job opportunities, everyday life became precarious and social reproduction arduous.

In Mexico City and Istanbul mass housing urbanisation was launched under very different circumstances. Just as in Hong Kong and Paris, the post-war period was marked by strong economic growth (through import substitution industrialisation) and the related immigration resulted in a housing crisis. In contrast to Paris and Hong Kong however, they did not have the resources to launch fully fledged mass housing programmes. Thus, in both cities, popular urbanisation became a widely practiced strategy to accommodate the massive wave of rural-urban immigration. Only in the 2000s did new approaches to mass housing urbanisation gain traction. However, they were motivated by very different rationales; namely, the financialisation and commodification of the housing sector.

In Mexico City, peripheral municipalities approved more than 400 mega conjuntos habitacionales between 1999 and 2015. These were part of a national programme based on several reforms introduced by the Mexican government in the 1990s, including land reform, the reform of the financial market and the reform of pension laws (Álvarez 1999). In contrast to the grands ensembles of France and the new towns of Hong Kong, these mega conjuntos consist of mass-produced small single-family homes forming vast carpets of housing (Salinas 2016). Yet as in Paris and Hong Kong these settlements were mainly built in remote areas where land was available and cheap. Furthermore, they were detached from the existing urban fabric and often were lacking in even basic urban infrastructure and access to public transport. Newcomers were usually dislocated from the social networks they had established in other parts of Mexico City. The lack of social cohesion has resulted in great insecurity in the mega conjuntos, which became notorious for gender-based violence and vandalism. The poor material quality and rigid structure of these houses further diminished their desirability. In recent years there has been a falling demand for new houses in the mega conjuntos and an exodus of residents, generating abandonment and vacancies in many settlements (Valenzuela and Tsenkova 2019). This motivated a shift in Mexico's housing policy towards more integrated urban development. For most low-income families in Mexico City, however, the long-standing and well-established process of popular urbanisation still offers the most realistic way of getting affordable housing.

In Istanbul, mass housing urbanisation was more complex than in Mexico City. State-administered mass housing schemes that genuinely addressed the needs of low-income groups became prominent only in the 2000s. In 1984 a Mass Housing Law was passed, prescribing the establishment of a state-administered mass housing fund together with an organisation to oversee it, which is known today as the Housing Development Administration (TOKI). Initially it was limited to giving credit to housing associations (Altınok 2012), and most of these benefited middle-class families with regular incomes. Subsequently, the administration expanded TOKI's sphere of activities and authority allowing to undertake for-profit projects, to found or own shares in private companies, and to even implement urban renewal projects (labelled 'gece-kondu transformation'). For those who are able to participate—through a mixture of coercion and consent—TOKI's urban renewal schemes function as a disciplinary tool, both in terms of the need for adjusting to a rigid payment scheme, and to its dense repetitive living environment: pre-dominantly towers in an open landscape with a lack of well-defined streets and open spaces. Besides the difficulties in meeting their monthly payment schedules, the downsides mentioned by relocated ex-gecekondu residents include the low quality of construction, dense living conditions, restrictions on use of common areas and open spaces, diminished contact with neighbours, increasing anonymity and a lack of perceived security (Bartu-Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008; Baysal 2010).

The pathways of mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong, Paris, Mexico City and Istanbul show a great variability of forms, typologies and regulatory regimes. Particularly important, however, are the varying rationales for launching such strategies, which can be divided into two broad categories: first, the idea that mass housing urbanisation can serve as an instrument to control, contain and reproduce the industrial working class, and, as in Hong Kong, also to produce a sense of pride and identity. However, a remarkable change occurred between the late 1970s and the late 1990s—a change from the provision of housing to its commodification, and from a social welfare approach to financialisation and promoting home ownership that occurred in all four case studies. During this research we also found that in all four case studies there was significant evidence of processes of peripheralisation (see Chapter 16). These observations indicate that there are underlying traits inherent in this particular urbanisation process, which is strongly dominated and guided by the state. The forms of state control that are imposed are expressed in norms, rules and regulations that often incorporate discipline and domestication in everyday life. Furthermore, the use of standardised and rigid material structures limits the adaptability and flexibility of mass housing. This stands in contrast to popular urbanisation as well as to certain forms of plotting urbanism, which often result in settlements that have poor material and urban qualities but are much easier to adapt to changing individual and social needs. In this respect, the latter forms of settlement offer their residents the huge advantage of a certain degree of participation and co-determination in the production of urban space.

During our research on mass housing urbanisation, we also detected a related but different process that we call post-proletarian urbanisation. The mass housing areas in Hong Kong and Paris that are particularly affected by socioeconomic peripheralisation are former core working class areas. In Hong Kong, these are relatively central industrial areas that are currently being demolished and transformed by urban renewal projects. In Paris these areas are covering large parts of the northern and north-eastern banlieue, particularly in the Département Seine-Saint-Denis, which made up the core of the 'red belt' that was for decades governed by the French communist party. Since the late 1970s these areas have been facing rising unemployment, poverty and racialised peripheralisation. In recent years, large parts of the Plaine Saint-Denis, the huge industrial district in the middle of these post-proletarian areas, have been redeveloped for commercial and leisure use; the first large project was the Stade de France for the 1998 FIFA World Cup men's football championship. Here, we see strong parallels with the large area of South Central in Los Angeles, with a predominantly African American population that had formed an important part of Los Angeles's working class during the Fordist industrial boom. Similar to Seine-Saint-Denis in Paris, this area faced serious socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation with the crisis of Fordism and the related process of deindustrialisation. In 1992 the Rodney King riots erupted in this area, leaving it ruined and stigmatised for many years. Today people living in South Central face gentrification and displacement. In Mexico City, barrios bravos, the 'rough' working-class neighbourhoods originating in the 19th century, came under marked pressure with the deindustrialisation of central areas, and are currently undergoing urban upgrading and gentrification. In all four cases we see how working-class neighbourhoods in globalising cities faced deep problems over deindustrialisation; on the one hand through the dissolution of the industrial working class, and on the other through processes of urban renewal and gentrification.

## MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION AND LAMINAR URBANISATION

The discussion on suburbanisation at the beginning of this chapter has indicated the problematic of a generalisation of specific urban experiences. We have already seen that what might be called suburban areas are marked by very different urbanisation processes: popular urbanisation, plotting urbanism, and mass housing urbanisation all take place primarily in peripheral urban areas, and they affect mainly low-income groups. However, the middle classes are also settling in the urban peripheries. We even identified an urbanisation process that conforms to the classic North American concept of the suburb as a monofunctional mainstream middle-class neighbourhood with detached houses, usually lacking major centralities and public amenities. However, this process emerges only under specific socioeconomic, geographical and historical conditions, in which urban settlements expand almost unhampered into the surrounding hinterland, covering the territory like a carpet or laminated flooring. We therefore called this process laminar urbanisation.

However, the situations in urban peripheries are often far more complex. The starting point for the conceptualisation of another comparative concept was Paris, where large parts of the outer banlieue developed into a bewildering patchwork of all sorts of uses and functions in the last decades. This is the result of a succession of different patterns of urbanisation over time that were superimposed on each other, but not extinguished. Therefore, the agricultural period of the 18th century is still visible, with the inherited narrow street pattern in the former villages, the concentrically arranged allées, the huge feudal palaces and châteaux with their gardens that sometimes were transformed into public parks. The process of urban extension beyond the city of Paris in the late 19th century was mainly marked by the construction of pavillons, usually small, sometimes self-constructed working-class or lower middle-class single-family houses stretching out into the surrounding periurban areas mainly along train lines. During the period of French Fordism, the interstices of the urban fabric were filled in with grands ensembles, and also with shopping malls and all sorts of infrastructure. In the 1970s a new phase began with the construction of five villes nouvelles, state-planned new towns with their own urban centres, which were intended to restructure and redefine the huge urban periphery of Paris. Due to urban densification outside the perimeter of the villes nouvelles and the construction of various new urban functions and infrastructure a huge zone emerged, in which I argue parts of the villes nouvelles blended into their surroundings and became just one additional layer of the emerging overall urban patchwork. To characterise these areas, we introduced the term 'multilayered patchwork urbanisation'.

Starting from this observation, we found an astonishing similarity in Los Angeles, in the area of Orange County located in the south of the metropolis. Just as in Paris, dispersed centralities that structure and restructure the territory are a key factor for this process. Despite the fact that Los Angeles is often seen as the paradigmatic example of a polycentric metropolis, we realised that these centralities are distributed unevenly over the urban territory. They are in fact almost completely concentrated in two zones: one, which we called 'cosmopolitan urban' covers the central parts of Los Angeles, including Downtown LA, Hollywood, Pasadena and Santa Monica. The other zone with a high number of centralities is Orange County, the once widely discussed example of post-modern 'exopolis' (Soja 1992). In reconstructing this development, we recognised that the urban pattern is actually formed by several layers which are constituted by some entrenched urban centres, early urbanisations along suburban railway lines, industrial developments induced by the densely knit network of freeways, logistics hubs, an airport, and a wide range of cultural and consumer facilities including stadiums, amusement parks (such as Disneyland), a concert hall, a fashion centre, the largest shopping mall in the entire region and some attractive beach resorts. This contrasts with other areas in which almost no such centralities and facilities exist. It was thus possible to identify two distinct types of suburban areas in Los Angeles, namely multilayered patchwork urbanisation and laminar urbanisation.

A similar situation can be found in Tokyo, where we could also identify both processes, laminar and multilayered patchwork urbanisation. While, like in Los Angeles, large parts of the entire urban territory are dominated by laminar urbanisation (the two urban configurations of Tōkaidō and Yamanote urbanisation), a relatively heterogeneous urban configuration evolved that we call *pattchiwa-ku* urbanisation, shaped by the overlay of contrasting logics, rhythms and temporalities. The area comprises agricultural activities, residential areas, logistic hubs, large infrastructures, industrial plants and large military zones, resulting in a dispersed urban pattern marked by the simultaneity of different, largely independent urban dynamics.

In Hong Kong a comparable urban configuration emerged in the area of the New Territories which were for a long time clearly peripheral, located at the border between the colonial and the Chinese territorial regimes. Because the New Territories had been ceded by China to Hong Kong through a lease agreement, urbanisation took place according to colonial and customary laws (Tang 2014). In the post-war period this area was dominated by agricultural land, urbanising villages and mass housing estates, which were concentrated in the fast-growing new towns. Similar to the situation in Paris, the New Territories became the home of an industrial working class. This changed radically with the implementation of China's opening policy in the 1980s, which triggered the

rapid development of the main urban centralities of Shenzhen, located immediately beyond the border. Thus, the area of the New Territories that once formed the edge of Hong Kong was suddenly located in between the two main metropolitan centres of the eastern Pearl River Delta. The handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997 led to the implementation of cross-border strategies. Today, this zone is marked by a patchwork of wetlands, urbanised villages, regional market towns, large-scale mass-housing estates, condo towers, farmlands, truck parking and new cross-border infrastructures such as high-speed railways, highways and metro lines. At the same time, the large-scale development strategies aiming at regional integration in this zone is heavily contested by various forms of resistance to the demolition of non-indigenous villages and evictions.

What distinguishes multilayered patchwork urbanisation from other urbanisation processes is the simultaneous presence of multiple logics that together determine the urbanisation of the territory, so that no single logic becomes dominant. This results in a complex patchwork of more or less disjointed urban fragments. This situation is usually generated by a succession over time of different paradigms of urbanisation through which layer after layer of the urban fabric is produced and superimposed, without erasing earlier layers. This leads to the overlap of historical patterns of urbanisation and a multiplicity of spatial orientations and temporal rhythms.

These areas are often linked to various processes of industrialisation. The construction of massive transport infrastructure plays a key role in the development of these areas. The agricultural origins are often still visible as traces inscribed into the territory (farmhouses, village cores or streets laid out in wiggly patterns). This type of urban development is usually the result of central areas spilling into the urban periphery together with several rounds of urban transformation. In this process, the existing urban fragments are not demolished and replaced, but persist and are complemented by additional urban elements. As a result, the edges and the grids in the urban fabric (such as agricultural land, *terrains vagues* or industrial brownfield areas) are filled in and successively re-territorialised by new rounds of urban development.

Through massive urban expansion, these erstwhile peripheral areas are integrated into vast urban regions. They have been restructured in the last decades by the production of new urban cores and centralities, giving them a strong polycentric and even ex-centric orientation. These forms are either planned (such as the villes nouvelles in Paris) or emerge spontaneously, especially when they are close to infrastructural nodes (such as in Los Angeles). Such new centralities have been described as technoburbs (Fishman 1987) or edge cities (Garreau 1991); however, these terms do not capture the powerful dynamics of multilayered patchwork urbanisation, because these new urban forms are simply moments in the maelstrom of long-term urban restructuring and are therefore constantly changing in response to wider regional territorial dynamics. They should not be analysed in isolation but must be understood as elements of a more encompassing urbanisation process.

## BYPASS URBANISM

Another process that is dramatically reconfiguring urban peripheries is what we call bypass urbanism. We first encountered this process during our research in Kolkata, when we analysed Rajarhat New Town in its eastern outskirts and realised that this was not an isolated new town project, as it is usually depicted, but is embedded in a much broader process of urban development. In the east Kolkata wetlands, a roughly 30 km-long urban corridor has been developed from the International Airport in the north, passing the rapidly developing Rajarhat New Town and the modernist satellite town of Salt Lake, following the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass all the way to the south-eastern outskirts of Kolkata. Along this corridor, hundreds of condominium towers, office blocks and a wide range of private hospitals, shopping malls, luxury hotels, private high schools, universities and a science museum have been built. Many more such projects are under construction or planned. Seen from a comprehensive perspective, the Eastern Bypass is not just a motorway, but the spine of an urban corridor that literally bypasses the dense cosmopolitan core area of Kolkata. In our comparative sessions, we then realised that similar developments are occurring in Lagos and Mexico City. Mapping revealed the full extent of these developments because it allowed to see them in the wider context, and not just as individual projects. We named this process bypass urbanism.

We use the term bypass urbanism here to conceptualise an urbanisation process that goes beyond the reach of even the largest new town or urban megaproject, producing impacts on a regional scale and reorganising and reconfiguring entire urban regions. According to our three-dimensional understanding of urbanisation (see Chapter 1), we looked at bypass urbanism from three different but related angles. Bypass urbanism is a process that physically bypasses an existing urban area. It is constituted by several large real estate projects that are complemented by various infrastructure projects (such as toll highways or bridges), and attract business districts, exclusive residential areas, shopping malls, private schools and hospitals, which together have the potential to profoundly restructure the entire urban region.

Secondly, in order to be implemented, the production of these projects bypasses existing territorial regulations and planning procedures or takes advantage of certain flexibilities and legal

'grey spaces' in the regulatory system. These projects involve alliances of various private and state actors, such as private corporations and developers acting for profit, and state actors making use of private capital to achieve their own infrastructural and financial gain, additional prestige and political power. Thirdly, it bypasses everyday life in large parts of the urban region, reinforcing existing tendencies of uneven urban development, socioeconomic segregation and peripheralisation. It offers an alternative to the 'messiness' of the existing urban space by creating exclusive urban spaces that permit comfortable or prestigious lifestyles.

In Lagos, it is the marshy and sandy Lekki peninsula between Lagos Lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean that is currently being ploughed up by this rapid process of urbanisation. The central spine of this development is the Lekki–Epe Expressway, a toll road stretching 50 km east from the upmarket commercial centre of Lagos, Victoria Island, all the way to the mega-project of the Lekki Free Trade Zone at the eastern end of this corridor. This huge area is rapidly being filled with housing estates of all sizes and provenances, businesses, churches and mosques, markets and malls, private schools and university campuses, factories and large-scale industries. The western end of this zone is marked by Eko Atlantic, the elite new city quarter that is being built on reclaimed land next to Victoria Island.

In Mexico City, it is the newly built central business district of Santa Fe that initiated bypass urbanism. What used to be a dumpsite and landfill of former sand mines at the western periphery of Mexico City is today a global business centre with corporate headquarters, a private university and a huge shopping mall, surrounded by condo developments, gated communities and country clubs (see also Duhau and Giglia 2008). It extends to the residential and commercial area of Interlomas and includes well-known residential estates for the wealthy as well as residential areas located further north. It is further linked to the wealthy hills in the west of Mexico City by toll highways, and also to the nearby international airport of Toluca which offers a much faster alternative to the Mexico City international airport. This new urban configuration offers affluent people a range of amenities, private universities, malls and hospitals, and at the same time allows them to avoid the urban threats and nuisances they would encounter in the core urban areas, which are located in an earthquake zone and plagued by chronic traffic jams and air pollution.

The distinction between bypass urbanism and other forms of peripheral urban restructuring can be illustrated by our comparative research. Like multilayered patchwork urbanisation, this process transforms the urban periphery via the production of new centralities, but in this case it is accompanied by the relative decline of the existing urban fabric. In this respect, bypass urbanism represents the opposite of current trends in most large metropolitan territories, where central areas are upgraded through flagship projects, urban regeneration strategies and large-scale redevelopment efforts. With bypass urbanism, however, it is the geographical periphery that is made into a space where the privileged can avoid the messiness of existing urban situations, their complex urban structures, entangled land regulations and the endless processes of negotiating with various stakeholders. Thus, the former edge becomes the centre and assumes a reciprocal and privileged relationship with existing centralities. It almost seems that a 'new city' is coming into existence which bypasses the existing urban areas in terms of the material structure of the urban fabric, territorial regulations and the modalities of everyday life. With bypass urbanism a new kind of disparity appears that leads to the inversion of the centre-periphery relationship.

## INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

The processes discussed so far are located mainly in the urban periphery—even if this periphery has greatly changed in recent years. This raises questions about the development of seemingly classical urban areas whose intrinsic urban qualities are both strongly emphasised and valorised in many recent mainstream concepts, such as 'urban renaissance', 'creative city', or 'urban age'. These concepts indicate a fundamental change in the social, cultural and also economic relevance of the urban. Seen from a broader perspective, this process can be understood as the commodification of urban space. It encompasses not only the sale of parcels of land and the reservation of exclusive locations for certain privileged groups but, as Lefebvre notes, social space itself is turned into a commodity that can be bought and sold. As a consequence, urban space becomes the very general object of production, and hence of the formation of surplus value (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 154). In this process, urban life itself is tied into the commodification process. This means that the social qualities of urban space—difference, encounter, creativity—become part of the economic logic of systematic exploitation. The entire space becomes a commodity—including the people living in it, as well as the social resources and the economic effects produced by them (see Schmid 2012). As a result, most of these lively urban areas, full as they are of different people and activities, which are often but not always located in central areas, have changed tremendously in the last two decades.

A revealing example of this process is the dramatic long-term transformation of Shimokitazawa, a centrality located south-west of central Tokyo. The area started to develop with the expansion of the first commuter train lines in the 1920s. Like many other areas of Tokyo, Shimokitazawa quickly became a densely built district of single-family houses.

Located outside the main centralities whose development was strongly influenced by state strategies, it gradually developed into an alternative meeting place for young people with theatres, music venues, bars and shops in the postwar era. In the 1980s the popularity of this area grew rapidly, and magazines and TV shows promoted its unique atmosphere. From the early 2000s onwards local shop-owners and residents actively sought to benefit from this increased popularity and participated in the promotion of Shimokitazawa as an alternative entertainment centre for a leisure-seeking audience. Some homeowners even converted their living spaces into commercial zones. In addition to the small cafes (including Starbucks), and slow food restaurants, there was a great increase in the number of second-hand shops. Thus, Shimokitazawa finally turned into a space for the mainstream consumption of a 'different lifestyle' and was gradually leached of its place-specific qualities where encounters, exchange and innovation were once possible. However, the displacement of the original residents and socioeconomic transformations has been very limited, largely due to the fact that home ownership is so widespread (as in almost all parts of Tokyo), the plots are small in size, land is scarce, and there is a strong attachment to private property. In the classical sense, therefore, this urban transformation does not fit the definition of gentrification. Instead, it points towards a different process that we sought to grasp with the term 'incorporation of urban differences'.

This process refers to the production of differences as a key element of urbanisation, as discussed by Simmel and Lefebvre. The specific quality of urban space results from the simultaneous presence of people with different historical, ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds, and with different activities, functions and ideas, all of which meet in an urban space, interact and generate all sorts of social inventions. The urban thus turns into a productive force, continuously destabilising existing modes of coexistence and innovating new ones (Lefebvre 1991; Schmid 2012). This process, however, does not go without a contradictory dialectical movement: the commodification and incorporation of urban differences means that they become integrated into dominant market and state logics and are gradually homogenised, thereby fundamentally altering everyday life and urban experience in such areas.

The state often plays a key role in this process. In many cases it not only supports the process by using all sorts of policies and measures to upgrade, control and police these places, but even promotes and guides them in order to transform the entire urban area into a more mainstream place. With reference to Raymond Williams, we could call this process incorporation (Williams 1977; see in detail Shmuely 2008). The incorporation of urban differences thus designates the commodification and domestication of place-specific social, cultural, material and symbolic elements. Different actors involved in the production of space initiate this process and it is implemented through various combinations of market mechanisms and state interventions. It is a multidimensional process that includes more than the generation and appropriation of land rent, the material transformation of urban space and the 'upgrading' of neighbourhoods. The vital point here is that social space itself is commodified, and thus place-specific urban qualities themselves are brought under the umbrella of urbanisation-led accumulation. In our samples we could detect these processes in almost all territories, especially in Hong Kong, Los Angeles and Paris, but also in Lagos. However, we present here only two more cases, Mexico City and Istanbul.

The Centro Histórico of Mexico City was until recently a major commercial centre for popular classes of the entire urban region. Around one million visitors came every day to shop and exchange goods; thousands of street vendors sold a great variety of mainly low-price goods such as household items, clothing and electronics. Then a devastating earthquake affected large parts of the central areas of Mexico City in 1985. Many of the poorly maintained old colonial buildings were seriously damaged and a large number of residents, businesses and institutions left the Centro Histórico. However, many shops and venues for low-income people remained and residents organised social protests, successfully fought for their right to centrality and resisted relocation. Since the late 1990s, following the UNESCO declaration of certain sections of the Centro Histórico as world heritage sites, several mayors have implemented policies of urban regeneration (Delgadillo 2009). Using the classical arguments that they were rescuing the Centro Histórico from decay and conserving its colonial heritage, successive city governments—in partnership with private investors, most notably billionaire Carlos Slim—have implemented a multi-faceted program of revitalisation and beautification, combined with various security measures (Streule 2008). Street vending was banned in 2007, after several unsuccessful earlier attempts (Crossa 2009). Consequently, large parts of Centro Histórico have been fundamentally transformed by the conversion of warehouses into lofts, the opening of new cafés, bars and art galleries and the influx of young professionals, entrepreneurs and artists to live and work in the area. What used to be a dense, crowded, busy and popular urban space has been transformed into a commodified and heavily policed shopping, leisure and tourist zone closely monitored by hundreds of surveillance cameras.

As this example shows, the process of the incorporation of urban differences includes a highly political moment. It entails the incorporation of unique—and potentially subversive—elements into spaces of hegemonic power and thus also touches the very core of recent civil protests occurring in urban centres all over the globe. The June 2013 uprisings in Istanbul were sparked precisely by

a project to incorporate differences. The project —imposed personally by then prime minister Erdoğan—aimed at the conversion of Gezi Park, the most centrally located public park of Istanbul, into a commercial complex including shops, a museum and a hotel as part of a larger redevelopment scheme. This can clearly be understood as a political project to rid central Istanbul of activist groups and other 'undesirable elements' and to transform it into a 'safe' zone for tourist consumption (Erensü and Karaman 2017). In that way, the fight for Gezi Park was also a fight about who has access to the main centrality of this metropolis and pointed to the struggle for difference and for the urban as a political project.

As these examples show, incorporating differences is a general and encompassing process that often emerges in subtle ways and might remain for a long time under the radar of public awareness and debate. But sometimes it becomes evident, when tensions become so high that a single event can ignite a social explosion, as was the case in a long series of urban revolts across very different situations, or when massive interventions by state actors lead to public outcry and heated protests, as in the case of Istanbul. Often the incorporation of urban differences is linked to other urbanisation processes, such as urban renewal, urban redevelopment, condominium development or gentrification. While they usually also include aspects of incorporation, these processes are dominated by features such as the production of new office spaces, shopping facilities and luxury housing and the realisation of potential rent gaps. In contrast, the incorporation of differences goes far beyond gentrification. It is directly related to the production of urban value and the commodification of the urban, and affects access to centrality. It directly challenges the role of urban space as a place for exchange, interaction, meeting and encounter. Often, such spaces are not replaceable; they vanish, together with the social qualities they embody. Centrality is always ambivalent in this context. While on the one hand it creates the possibility for unexpected encounters, it is also susceptible to economic exploitation. It thus touches the very core of the urban. With the concept of the production and incorporation of differences, we direct attention to precisely those aspects that are so crucial for every urban territory.

# TOWARDS A NEW VOCABULARY OF URBANISATION

This chapter has argued for opening up the field of urban studies to conceptual experimentation in order to respond to various challenges posed by contemporary urbanisation. A revitalised vocabulary of urbanisation is urgently required to enable urban scholars to decipher—both analytically and cartographically—the differentiated and dynamic urban landscapes that are emerging across the planet. This calls for a shift from the long-standing emphasis on urban form to that of urban process, as well as an approach in which every urban context is regarded as theoretically generative and relevant.

What are the results of our comparative experiment? Through an examination of eight large metropolitan territories we were able to identify, develop and define a range of urbanisation processes that have not hitherto been conceptualised in this specific way. These new concepts are still in progress. More work is needed to stabilise their definitions, to expand their application and to see where, how and in what ways they may illuminate urbanisation processes in different places. We are well aware that the construction of new concepts has to go through a thorough phase of testing and evaluation, and some of the concepts discussed here may fade away during this process.

However, we see four significant advantages of these comparative concepts. First of all, they are multidimensional. They are not defined by one single criterion, but include the material production of the urban fabric, the territorial regulations, land regimes and power relations that guide urbanisation, and the transformation of rhythms and routines of everyday life implied in the urban process. This three-dimensional approach allows us to make clear distinctions about different urbanisation processes. The material production of an urban area always involves different modalities of construction, different actor constellations, ways of profit-making and processes of inclusion and exclusion. The question of territorial regulation includes different power relations, land regimes and regulatory systems that may include customary rights, and also modes of operation that range from institutionalised corruption to illegality and various forms of informality. The third dimension is related to lived space, which is usually not taken into consideration in the definition of urbanisation processes. But it may be a crucial aspect of urbanisation, because it is directly related to experiences in everyday life in which the deployment of collective versus individual strategies, experiences of solidarity or stigmatisation and the production of urban differences play a key role in the generation of urban value.

As has become evident, this multidimensional definition allowed us to discern differences among urban processes that would otherwise have passed unnoticed. Thus, we could define popular urbanisation and plotting urbanism as two distinct processes, despite the fact that both include some kind of informality. While popular urbanisation is marked by the collective production of urban space, plotting urbanism is determined by various forms of commodification and tenant-owner relationships. In contrast to popular urbanisation, and partly also to plotting urbanism, mass housing urbanisation includes the experience of state control that contradicts self-determination. Likewise, plotting urbanism shares some similarities with the process of incorporation of differences, such as some kind of intensification of the urban fabric and change in its socioeconomic composition; but the underlying logics of the two concepts are clearly different from each other. While plotting urbanism is mainly linked to regulatory ambiguities and compromises, the incorporation of differences emerges from the transformation and commodification of specific urban qualities closely tied and related to centralities. In contrast, bypass urbanism is mainly driven by the construction of new centralities in the urban periphery and thus exhibits clear parallels with multilayered patch-work urbanisation. However, it also implies the peripheralisation of existing parts of urban territories, which is not the case in the latter process.

Secondly, these concepts are multi-relational. The conceptual boundaries of each individual concept are drawn with reference to all the other concepts we developed at the same time. Thus, plotting urbanism may follow from popular urbanisation (as was the case in Istanbul), and may be replaced by a fully formal, commodified urbanisation process (as in the case of Shenzhen). These urbanisation processes can also be understood in a strategic sense as a set of options in a given moment. Thus, we may detect alternative strategies for urban development, such as in Mexico City, where popular urbanisation presents an alternative to state-led mass housing urbanisation. Therefore, it is also possible to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of the two processes. In a similar way, the processes of multilayered patchwork urbanisation and of laminar urbanisation may occur in the same urban region and thus reflect the intense differentiation that may develop in the urban periphery. The entire set of multi-relational concepts enables us to make general comparisons of urbanisation processes; it can also be used for a more thorough analysis of urban transformations within a single urban territory by regarding it as a specific combination of distinct urbanisation processes—as shown in Part II.

Thirdly, these concepts result from a comparative procedure and are therefore not derived from generalising single paradigmatic experiences, but from using several examples from very diverse urban contexts. They highlight differences and go beyond an idiosyncratic focus on individual cases or singularities. It is obvious that a comparative methodology also has limits: our analysis is based on a specific cross-section of large metropolitan territories and could detect only those processes that were present in the selected places at the time of observation. It will be useful to test whether these conceptual experimentations are relevant in a wider variety of urban contexts. Furthermore, we had to restrict our analysis to processes of concentrated urbanisation. It would be interesting to go further and analyse periurban areas or even more remote territories of extended urbanisation. Thus, other comparative endeavours are in progress and more may follow, not only across the divides of north and south or east and west, but also across the putative urban / non-urban divide (see Schmid and Topalović 2023).

Fourthly, this comparative project employs a transductive procedure and is thus directly linked to theory. The concrete empirical research is embedded in a theoretical framework derived from Lefebvre's open-ended theory of the production of space, oriented by the decentring perspective offered by the concept of planetary urbanisation and inspired by the imaginations and sensitivities of postcolonial approaches. As this project illustrates, these different perspectives are not mutually exclusive, but on the contrary may reinforce each other and stimulate a theoretically guided, and at the same time empirically grounded, research. While the resulting comparative concepts of urbanisation can be applied independently of the theoretical context of concept generation in this work, they are most productively combined with a dynamic perspective on urbanisation: to analyse an urban territory as an overlapping and intermingling of various urbanisation processes. Or, seen from the other side: to deconstruct an urban territory into several urban configurations and to reconstruct the urbanisation processes that produced them.

From a more general perspective, this project highlights and confirms the need to develop a differentiated view of urbanisation. The reduction of the concept of urbanisation to a limited set of universal principles or mechanisms cannot suffice to address productively the diversity and richness of the contemporary urban universe. By identifying processes of urbanisation as constitutive elements of an urbanising planet, this project offers an analysis that goes beyond the seeming contradiction between universalising and particularising research strategies.

To develop a more global and differentiated vocabulary of urbanisation is a collective project. It can be successful only if there is a common understanding of the need for and utility of such new concepts. Our project is therefore meant as a proposal and an invitation for further debate, reflection and conceptual experimentation.

# LIST OF URBANISATION PROCESSES

## POPULAR URBANISATION

(1) incremental material transformation of the urban territory, participation of the inhabitants, collective production of urban space.
(2) capacity to fight and negotiate successfully for tenure security and (relatively) favourable territorial regulations; forceful political organisation.
(3) collective experiences in everyday life, self-help, struggles for recognition.

Examples: Mexico City, Istanbul, Kolkata, Lagos
Origin: original process

Transformation into plotting urbanism, mass housing urbanisation, urban renewal

## PLOTTING URBANISM

(1) piecemeal process of urbanisation, plot-by-plot development without overarching planning creating a wide variety of local situations.
(2) conflict-ridden coexistence of multiple systems of landownership and land regimes; includes market mechanisms and commodification.
(3) specific social relationships between landlords and tenants; seeking for individual gain.

Examples: Lagos, Istanbul, Kolkata, Shenzhen
Origin: original process, popular urbanisation, tenement urbanisation (bustee)

Transformation into urban renewal, condominium development, formalisation

## MASS HOUSING URBANISATION

(1) large-scale process of standardised industrial housing production; financial support by public authorities for working and middle classes.
(2) strong intervention of state actors, strategic reorganisation of territories.
(3) rearrangement of social composition of urban areas; imposition of social norms, lifestyle and consumption patterns.

Examples: Hong Kong, Paris, Mexico City, Istanbul
Origin: original process, popular urbanisation

Transformation into urban redevelopment

## POST-PROLETARIAN URBANISATION

(1) precarisation of working-class areas through de-industrialisation, disinvestment and socioeconomic peripheralisation.
(2) stigmatisation and social exclusion, often accompanied by various upgrading and redevelopment strategies.
(3) social segregation, devaluation and degradation of urban qualities in everyday life.

Examples: Paris, Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Mexico City
Origin: old working class / popular / mixed neighbourhoods (19th / early 20th century), mass housing estates, laminar urbanisation

Transformation into urban renewal, urban regeneration, urban redevelopment

## BYPASS URBANISM

(1) combination of several large-scale infrastructure and urban megaprojects, physically bypassing the existing urban territory.
(2) bypassing existing territorial regulations and planning procedures through alliances between state actors and private investors.
(3) bypassing urban life in existing areas; creating exclusive zones with international lifestyle; reinforcing socioeconomic segregation and peripheralisation of existing urban areas.

Examples: Kolkata, Lagos, Mexico City
Origin: original process

Transformation into exclusive urban areas

## MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION

(1) superimposition of several urbanisation logics; multiplicity of spatial orientations and temporal rhythms; poly-centrality, generated by entrenched and newly produced centralities.
(2) inscription of different regimes of territorial regulation over a long period of time.
(3) co-presence of very different patches or enclaves without strong mutual relations; disorienting daily experience

Examples: Paris, Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Tokyo
Origin: diverse urbanisation processes

Transformation into urban intensity

## INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

(1) physical transformation of neighbourhoods; commodification of urban values.
(2) various upgrading and redevelopment strategies.
(3) homogenisation and domestication of lived experiences.

Examples: Tokyo, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Istanbul, Paris, Hong Kong, Lagos
Origin: relatively central areas with valuable urban qualities

Transformation into urban renewal, urban regeneration, condominium development

## LAMINAR URBANISATION

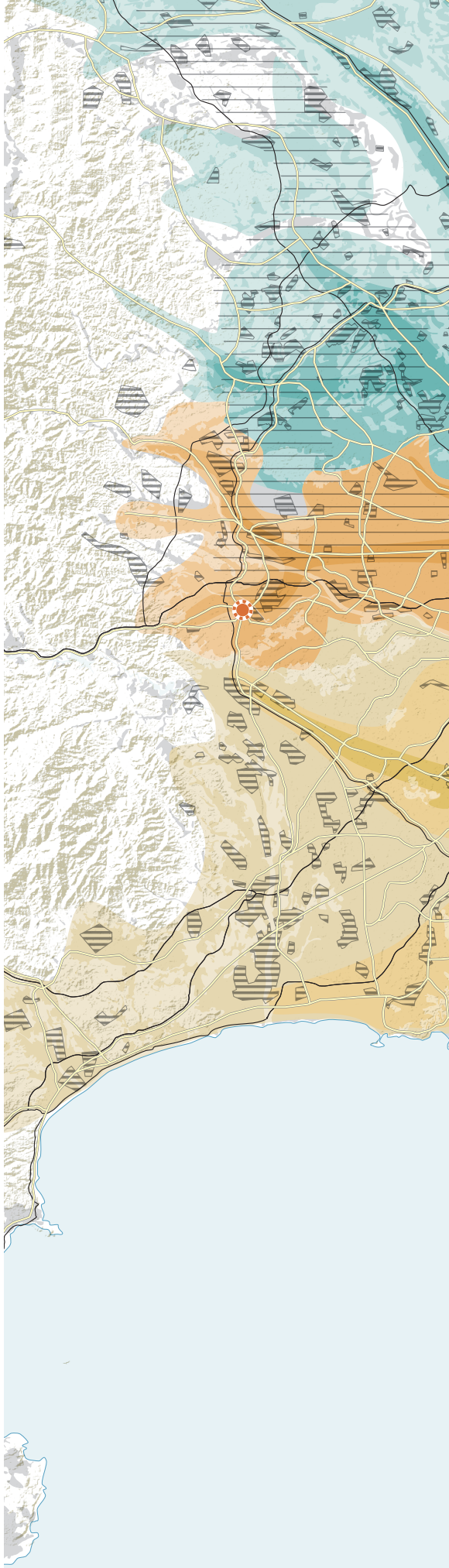
(1) single family homes; regular pattern of urbanisation, covering the territory like a carpet or laminated flooring; lack of centralities.
(2) private, market-oriented process guided by formal regulation; owner-occupied houses
(3) imposing a normative middle-class lifestyle.

Examples: Los Angeles, Tokyo
Origin: original process

Transformation into multilayered patchwork urbanisation, urban intensification, diversification

# PART II

# PATTERNS AND PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

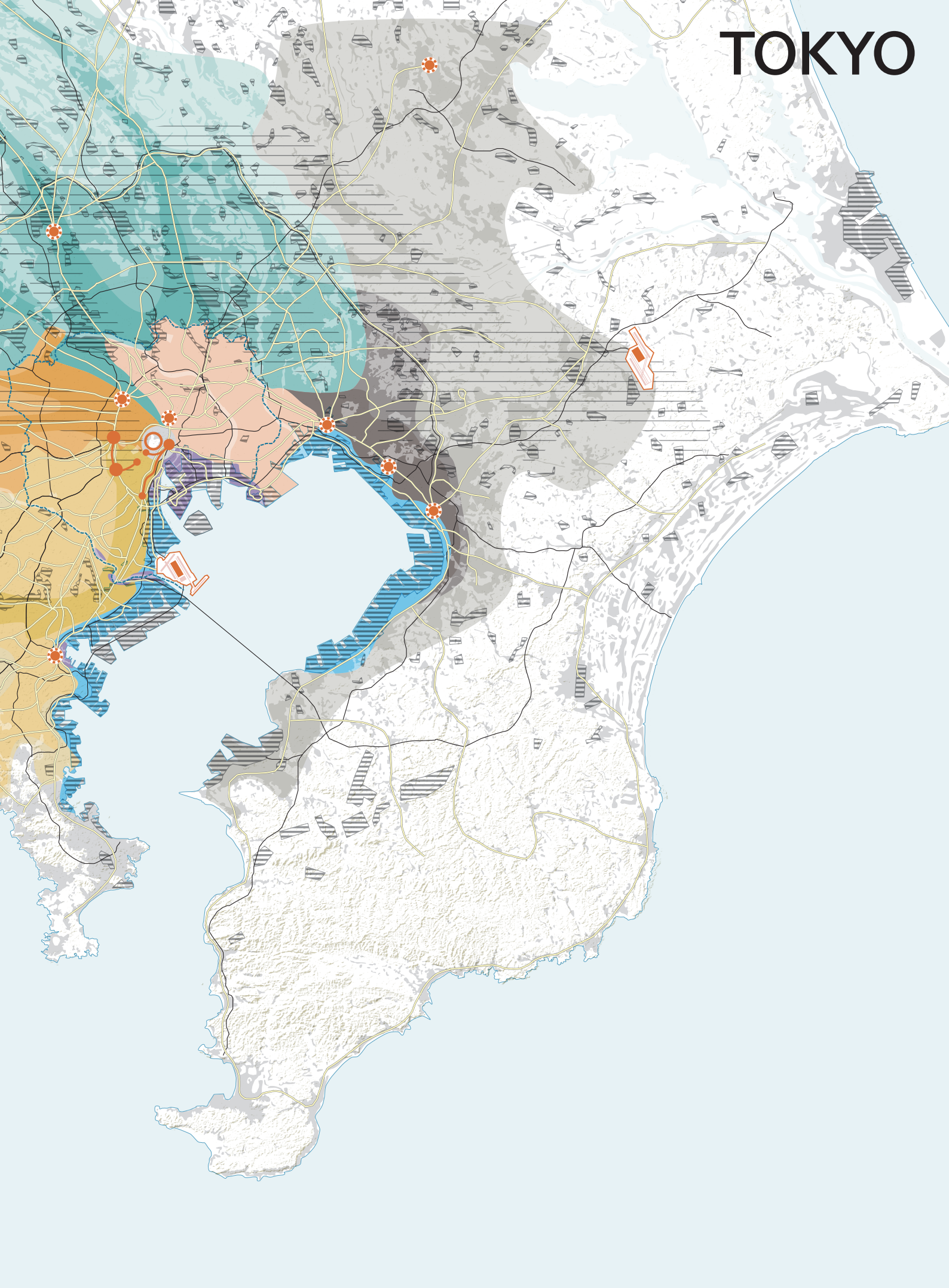


Archipelago of main regional centralities

Specialised regional centrality

| | |
|---|---|
| Tōkaidō: laminar urbanisation I | Long-established urban area with a socially and morphologically homogeneous structure; oriented towards the infrastructural corridor along the coastline |
| Yamanote: laminar urbanisation II | Continuous and tightly woven residential urban fabric stretching from the central archipelago to the west with no significant centralities |
| Shitamachi: urban legacy | Old traditional commercial and manufacturing area dominated by small-scale workshops |
| Pattchiwa-ku: multilayered patchwork urbanisation | Established and new residential areas, local centralities, large-scale infrastructure, dispersed industrial clusters, agricultural areas and forests form a landscape of diverse morphologies, rhythms and historical trajectories |
| Kōhaichi: peripheral urbanisation | Peripheral area including different morphological and functional clusters; largely characterised by agrarian production |
| Waterfront urbanisation | Old industrial belt stretching along Tokyo Bay, dominated by large-scale production sites; transformed by relocation of manufacturing industries and the introduction of the new housing type manshion |
| Manshion urbanisation | Residential areas on former industrial sites that are physically and socially disconnected from surrounding areas |
| New industrial urbanisation | Industrial clusters along transport infrastructure, including some of the manufacturing plants that were relocated from the bay area |
| Industrial areas | |
| Airport | Railroad |
| Urban footprint | Main road |

0 5 10 20 km


TOKYO

In Tokyo, I always have the feeling of being both inside and outside the city. What is the reason, why I can only express my feelings about this city in such a blurry and vague way?
Kengo Kuma, *Inside and Outside of Tokyo*; 2013

# FRAMING THE METROPOLITAN COMPLEX

Tokyo is one of the oldest and largest megacities, having reached one million inhabitants at the end of the 19th century and exceeded 10 million just after the Second World War. From this period of time to the present, urbanisation processes have been producing a territory of nuanced socio-spatial differentiation which this chapter sets out to capture. For this purpose, I examine the Tokyo metropolitan complex, which provides the empirical and conceptual framework for my analysis. This approach differs fundamentally from conventional studies, which usually focus on the core city of Tokyo and evoke imaginaries of a fractured city: a divided capital consisting of the hilly 'high city' of the Yamanote area in the west, and the marshy and earthquake prone 'low city' of Shitamachi and its environs

in the east, a city torn between the past and the present (Seidensticker 1984; Waley 1991; Jinnai 1995; Hohn 2009). Another common strand builds on a narrow and exclusive focus on a middle-class society that exhibits little economic, ethnic or cultural heterogeneity (Lützeler 2008; Chiavacci 2010; Fujitsuka 2011; Fujita and Hill 2012), or on the central 23 wards, allegedly representing Tokyo at large (Cybriwsky 1991; Machimura 1992; Sassen 2001; Sorensen 2003; Fujita and Hill 2008; Kikuchi and Sugai 2018). In contrast to these well-known stereotypes, this portrait of Tokyo explores a different way of understanding the city by taking into account both its finely grained urban complexity and its vast dimensions, which are among the main characteristics of the urban region today.

What architect Kengo Kuma refers to in his opening quote is the notion that Tokyo is a boundless megacity and at the same time a familiar neighbourhood: the centre of your daily life, where you live, where your train station is and where your neighbours and corner shops are. This chapter seeks to comprehend these shifting dynamics of the Tokyo urban region by exploring urbanisation processes on a large scale. In doing so, I acknowledge the intricate and interlinked nature of this urban region, which risks being ignored in a narration that focuses on a single process, a narrowly marked-out territory, or a certain phase in history. The various resulting urban configurations shown on the configuration map at the beginning of this chapter are intrinsically related to one another and embedded in the dynamics of regional and global processes. Furthermore, they all have undergone phases of expansion or contraction over time, and in many cases, they have altered their urban form along with the availability of new technological inventions or changing social norms. In urban configurations related to industrialisation, for example, the industrial sites in the centre are decreasing in size, a process which is directly linked to the new developments along the waterfront around Tokyo Bay, as well as the formation of new industrial clusters in other parts of the region. This portrait focuses on these interdependencies and the way that they manifest themselves in everyday life; it does not consist of a detailed narration of events or an exhaustive interpretation of quantitative data. My aim instead is to draw a holistic picture of the urban region of Tokyo from a new perspective; one that attempts to grasp the characteristics of the different urban areas through their relation to other areas, their histories as well as their present.

There are many ways to characterise Tokyo and, depending on the chosen definition, its area differs significantly in quantitative and qualitative terms. The most common definition includes the 23 inner wards (administrative units), here also referred to as the core area. These wards were established in 1943 and are located in the geographical centre of the urban region. Based on census data, in 2020 9,733,276 people lived in this area, which at 623 $km^2$ is slightly smaller than the island of Singapore. These 23 wards form the geographical focus of many studies on Tokyo that concentrate on the central area, the ‘high city’ and the ‘low city’ and the particular characteristics of the different neighbourhoods in this core (Seidensticker 1984; Ashihara et al. 1989; Waley 1992; Jinnai 1995).

The Tokyo Metropolitan Complex extending to the west. Shinjuku Ward, 2012
A dynamic urban centrality. Shibuya Ward, 2017

Another frame is *Tokyo-to*, the Tokyo metropolis, which is one of the 47 prefectures of Japan. The exceptional suffix *'to'* (English: capital) differentiates the capital from all other prefectures, which have the suffix *'ken'*, meaning 'prefecture' or 'province'. In 2020 the Tokyo metropolis numbered 14,047,594 inhabitants in an area of 2,188 km$^2$. This administrative district under the Tokyo metropolitan government includes the 23 central wards. Finally, the National Capital Region *Shutō-ken*, also known as the Greater Tokyo Area, includes the prefectures of Tokyo, Kanagawa, Saitama, Chiba, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma and Yamanashi. In 2020 it had a population of 36,500,291 on an area of 36,889,28 km$^2$, which is slightly smaller than Switzerland. As we can see, these three definitions of the entity 'Tokyo' show large variations in terms of area and population. Problems arise when these strongly varying entities are compared with other urban areas. For instance one definition of Tokyo is measured against another area, such as Mexico City, using a mere quantitative perspective. While the inaccuracy caused by the inexplicit or unacknowledged use of data applies to many cities, in the case of Tokyo these units vary greatly.

The intention of this portrait of Tokyo is to move away from such specific geographical and territorial entities and to focus instead on Tokyo as a space of conceptual exploration. To do this, I use the concept of the Tokyo metropolitan complex for my empirical study. This term originates from Japanese sociologist Takeo Yazaki (1972), who chose it for his study of the regional socioeconomic structure of the metropolitan complex in a circle of a 50 km radius around Tokyo Station. I employ Yazaki's basic idea to define a geographical space that is indifferent to any constructed or political boundaries. I go on to define my unit of analysis as an open area within which all observed urbanisation processes converge and become apparent. One of the key parameters I used to determine my area of investigation is the extent of the built-up area: while it fades out towards the north and north-west as it reaches the mountains, it continues along the coast to the north-east and south-west, creating a blurry edge that the configuration map displays as a crooked line.

Urban configurations in the Tokyo metropolitan complex show strong structural resilience and, at the same time, are continuously undergoing transformation. This leads to a manifestation of the urban that is ever-changing. One of the reasons for this specific mode of urbanisation is that the main infrastructural network was consolidated by the introduction of train lines around the turn of the 19$^{th}$ century, building on established routes to, from and within the city, thus visibly fixing the layout of Tokyo right up to the present. Even repeated moments of rupture, like the political transformation that ended the feudal system in 1868, the devastating earthquake in 1923 and the destructive air raids and fires at the end of the Second World War, did not alter this layout, but intensified and consolidated the strong attachment of the people to the land. Thus, rather than being attached to built artefacts, the inhabitants of Tokyo attach importance to reference points that carry meaning above and beyond the built environment, such as mountains, temples or sites of rituals. This very specific organising structure can also be described as their intimate relationship to nature and topography (Jinnai 1995: 18), or one that constitutes another layer of urban topology, whereby Nature and urban space are not conceived as opposing forces or antipodes, but as being intrinsically united through urban practices such as worship and the appreciation of Nature and its seasons in the routines of everyday life. As a result, Tokyo is not planned as an alternative to Nature; rather, urbanisation processes are influenced by this topology and follow historical and social relations that are deeply inscribed into the urban territory. Moreover, the key to understanding this mode of urbanisation is the prevailing socioeconomic homogeneity in Tokyo, which impedes the development of particular prominent or marginal urban configurations. Fuelled by a thriving, internationally competitive economy in the 1970s, Tokyo developed into a business centre, as well as one that embraced cultural and technological innovation. Notwithstanding the economic recession starting in the 1990s and the rupturing triple catastrophe of 2011—the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear disaster—, Tokyo has continued on its path of dynamic transformation and its production of urban qualities that are not necessarily visible at first glance, but only become evident in a close study of the urban space and the people's everyday lives.

# PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

The Tokyo metropolitan complex established and consolidated its dominant position within the urban system of Japan over several historical periods. This was not only the result of post-war urbanisation and the urban extension resulting from it, but it has been produced over the past four centuries, making Tokyo Japan's primary centre of economic and political control, capital accumulation and decision-making, as well as innovation. Today, the Tokyo metropolitan complex is by far the largest concentrated urban region of Japan, and home to one-third of its population. While devastating incidents and moments of almost total destruction have fractured Tokyo's history, this periodisation is not defined by major ruptures in the built environment, but rather by changes in society and regulatory systems. Here, I argue, continuous and gradual material transformation is the characteristic feature of Tokyo's urban condition.

## EDO AND THE FORMATION OF AN URBAN REGION

In the 15th century the city Edo (today's Tokyo) became the new national capital, replacing Kyoto, which had been the capital for more than 1000 years. In 1603 Tokugawa Ieyasu, shogun and military commander, emerged victorious from decades of national disputes and turned Edo into the new political centre, heralding a time during which there were few territorial disputes, yet great cultural development. Over the following decades the Empire of Japan restricted international contact or trade and instead focused on building an intricate and extensive regional bureaucracy, led by feudal lords and headed by the Shogun himself. In this way he established a single hegemonic power based on a general feudal system, the *bakuhan* (*baku* means 'fief'; *han* means 'system'). Due to expanding regional trade networks, customs and practices were spreading across the country, contributing to a sociocultural homogeneity. Against the background of regional extension, the Shogun decreed the edict of 'mandatory presence' (*Sankin kōtai*), requiring all feudal lords to spend alternating years in Edo and, when returning to their fiefdom in the hinterlands, to leave a large part of their households in the city. This law became the Shogun's main instrument of control and at the same time attached the urban elite to the city, as it ensured that they were continuously burdened by the cost of maintaining two residences and were similarly dissuaded from joining forces behind his back. This enforced seasonal travel, however, also contributed to an emerging and continuous exchange between the city of Edo and its peripheral regions.

Cat Street. Shibuya Ward, 2012

## ESTABLISHING A RESILIENT URBAN STRUCTURE IN TOKYO

A new period started when the Emperor regained power though a military coup in 1868. As the Emperor was eager to propel Japan into modernity, this moment constituted the end of the city Edo as a political entity governed by the military regime of the Shogun and marked the beginning of Tokyo as the centre of a new capitalist system based on the industrialisation of Japan. While foreign exchange of any kind had previously been restricted to a limited group of people and had been spatially confined to an artificial island next to Nagasaki south of Japan, Tokyo was now becoming the control centre of a country open to trade and eager to explore new territories outside the Japanese archipelago. Extended study missions to the West led by the political and intellectual elite of Japan brought new ideas back to Japan, including a new law inspired by the Napoleonic model, electrified tramways, and brick and concrete buildings. New products such as beer, oil paintings and Western uniforms arrived in the port of Yokohama and were carried by train to Shimbashi Station, which was only a stone's throw away from the Emperor's castle, the symbolic centre of the entire urban region.

Even if many had left the city due to the abolition of the mandatory presence decree and the uncertainty after the military coup, people returned when Tokyo offered new amenities and a growing, competitive market. By opening up to foreign ideas and goods, the city and subsequently the country started a process of modernisation. This term explicitly refers here to 'Westernisation,' or more specifically 'Americanisation,' as this process was expressed through the cultural perspective of Americanism (Hanakata 2020: 85). While British technologies were decisive for the development of the infrastructure and German thought has been influential in establishing a city planning system and a military force it was increasingly the American idea of 'modern living' that had the strongest impact in transforming the lived space of Tokyo. Despite this transformation, however, Tokyo's urban structure continued to consolidate the original blueprint of Edo. By the end of the 19th century, train lines were built along the main connecting routes within the city and a basic infrastructural network was established to meet the demands of Tokyo's extending urbanisation. The resulting urban pattern proved to be extremely resilient, as became obvious after a disastrous earthquake hit Tokyo in 1923. The damage caused by the earthquake and the ensuing fire required the near-complete reconstruction of almost the entire city. Despite this overwhelming destruction, however, urban development continued along existing patterns and the material space of the city was reproduced almost seamlessly. The use of urban space was partly intensified by large-scale housing developments in the second half of the

1920s and 1930s, but there was no fundamental change in the urbanisation pattern and the mode in which urban space was produced. While the earthquake brought about serious disruption in the central manufacturing district of Shitamachi (see section below entitled 'Shitamachi Urbanisation'), the peripheries of the Tokyo metropolitan complex continued to develop along the already established pathway of urbanisation. This seeming contradiction between structural persistence and the adaptive and dynamic capacity of urban space has been a key characteristic of the Tokyo metropolitan complex right up to the present.

## PRODUCTION OF TOKYO AS THE PREEMINENT CENTRE OF JAPAN

After the Second World War Tokyo was able to strengthen its primacy within the constellation of urban regions in Japan. This period started under the Allied occupation, which lasted until 1952 and was focused on recovery from the war. Growth-driven development soon restored the industry and economy of Japan, which became competitive on a global scale. With a huge increase in capital volume and technological innovation, also referred to as the economic miracle, living standards rose and created a remarkable consumer culture and national confidence, which was showcased at the Tokyo Olympic Games in 1964. Tokyo had become the centre of what was at the time called a middle-class society, whose members were granted relatively equal access to resources (Murakami 1987).

A decisive moment for the unprecedented sprawl of Tokyo came in the late 1960s, when the government made housing loans easily accessible and owning a single-family home became a common aspiration. Continuously rising real estate prices and worsening environmental pollution in central neighbourhoods around the bay, as well as a growing network of train lines, made housing in the periphery increasingly attractive. Thus, numerous satellite towns with detached houses closely packed together and with front yards big enough for some potted plants sprung up in the south-west and north, providing dormitory towns for the workforce of 'salarymen' (Japanese: *salarīmen*) who had to endure long commutes to their jobs in the central area. In fact, the figure of the salaryman became synonymous with a thriving 'Japan Inc'. This model was shaped around the image of a predictable life centred around a male family breadwinner with lifelong job security and a steadily rising income, while his wife dedicated herself to the home and raising the children. A wealth bubble built up that provided an abundance of goods, new technological devices and skyrocketing real estate prices but also created pressure on individuals to conform to a specific way of conducting everyday social life. This pressure was reflected in the growing number of people who withdrew from social life, not leaving their room or home, which is also known as the syndrome (Furlong 2008). Furthermore, and also on the flip side of this orderly yet rigid social structure, was the growing presence of subcultures including music, cosplay and other performance arts. By the 1970s, spaces outside the vortices of the main centralities (including Shinjuku and Shibuya) serving the consumer mainstream were produced. These offered an alternative everyday life and responded to the growing desire for a space that offered a nostalgic escape to the past to people confronted with rapid urban transformation (Hanakata 2020: 261; see Chapter 17). For many, a radical retreat from stressful work and city life became desirable and the compulsion to escape grew, particularly among the youth. There were only a few alternative spaces of encounter and interaction, yet they were important for young people.

## IMPLOSION OF A REGION

The burst of the economic bubble around 1990 marked the beginning of a growing social disparity between baby boomers and younger generations, as well as geographically between the area in and around the 23 wards of Tokyo and its extended periphery. A contradictory pathway of urbanisation emerged in the interplay between the prolonged economic recession, lasting until the present, and the rediscovery of the urban. With a stagnating economy and declining land prices, young people who were born and raised in Tokyo's peripheral dormitory towns started to move back to the core area. Furthermore, various incentives and policies were implemented to revitalise the area within the prefecture of Tokyo, many of which were based on a close consultation between government authorities and private companies. The deregulation of planning rules supported the transformation of urban space into a source of economic growth: selected neighbourhoods within the 23 wards were designated by the city government to be redeveloped to meet the demand of a globalised workplace with internationally competitive office spaces, luxury apartments and all kinds of amenities (Hanakata 2019: 86).

Concurrently, Japan's unstable economy led to the fundamental restructuring of the labour market which put an end to the past model of lifelong security of employment. The number of part-time jobs increased as well as the number of people not in education, employment or training (Bloomberg 2014). Despite attempts to decentralise power structures and various functions since the 1970s, including the idea of relocating the national government, a centripetal movement towards the core of Tokyo has revived since the 2000s, increasing the concentration of people and economic

activities, not only on a regional but on a national scale. One critical element in this dynamic is the reliance on traditional face-to-face communication, which is still practiced in business today. In practical terms, this requires that any form of exchange needs to be performed in the physical space of Tokyo.

In this critical socioeconomic situation, Tokyo was once more confronted with a disaster: in March 2011, the Tohoku earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear meltdown in northern Japan reminded people yet again of Tokyo's fragility. While it appeared to be a turning point for the city and the people at the time, surprisingly, Tokyo's territorial structure again remained unchanged and everyday life continued as usual. This can be seen as a token of the strength and resilience of the urban pattern that had been built up over the previous century. At the same time, however, this series of catastrophes also revealed that the government was arguably too rigid and unyielding to respond to the crisis in an effective and responsible way.

A great hope for change was expressed in the time before the Tokyo Olympics of 2020, with the expectation that the Games might create a catalytic effect similar to that of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. The global pandemic, the postponement of the Games and a complete absence of spectators in 2021, however, limited the effectualness of the event. At the same time, it brought about new developments, in particular by stimulating the city's efforts towards digitisation (Hanakata 2022; Hanakata and Bignami forthcoming, Bignami et al. forthcoming).

Over this entire period, we can detect the gradual renaissance of the urban through a demographic shift from the peripheries to areas in the core where new housing typologies have been introduced. This development has also begun to destabilise the long-standing balance within the urban region by creating an uneven distribution of people, amenities and services between the centre and the periphery of the Tokyo metropolitan complex. As a result, the growing ageing population in the peripheral neighbourhoods, for example, has been transforming everyday life in former dormitory towns by posing new challenges to local communities and governments. While some services and infrastructures, for example the need for childcare, have become redundant, new needs for medical or social care and new requirements for mobility services and more local services (as people are longer commute to the city centre) have increased. Processes of shrinking and degrowth are therefore no longer an issue to be faced in the future but are already shaping the city's current organisation.

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

The Tokyo metropolitan complex consists of several urban configurations, each representing a specific urban condition that is based on particular historical events and anchored at different times of Tokyo's historical pathway. Each of them captures an urbanisation process with a distinct driving force; yet they are highly interdependent and the boundaries among them are often blurred. In order to differentiate these configurations it is necessary to develop a very nuanced understanding of everyday practices, of the different individual conceptions of Tokyo based on experiences in different locations and of people's relationship to the land. These nuances can be captured by examining what I call urban differences: productive instabilities in a relatively socioeconomically homogeneous urban region. The analysis of urban differences, therefore, provides the analytical lens for capturing the nuanced variations that characterise Tokyo's urban condition (Hanakata 2020: 15, 314; Hanakata et al. 2022).

## ARCHIPELAGO OF CENTRALITIES

A key element in the urban configuration map of Tokyo is the archipelago of centralities. This configuration is located within the 23-ward area and comprises key functions such as the local and national government, and the central business and commercial districts. This urban configuration forms a spatially discontinuous but functionally interlinked geography of main regional centralities and decentralised yet functionally important islands of specialised regional centralities. The basis of this archipelago was formed during the Edo period (1603–1868) when the main gates to the city were located in the places that today form the loop of main regional centralities. They were consolidated around the turn of the 19th century when the first railway stations were built in these places. By 1925 they were connected by an electrified tramway, later replaced by a railway line that is today known as the Yamanote loop line. During the previous century, the main individual centralities underwent a dynamic transformation, as some declined and others grew in importance, as well as qualitative changes as, for example, when a former centrality of business also become a cultural centrality, as in the case of Roppongi, close to Shibuya in the south. On a national scale, this archipelago of different functions and spatial qualities has become one amalgamated centrality that constitutes the monocentric urban structure of Japan with Tokyo at its core.

As places of encounter and exchange, the centralities in Tokyo today have specialised functions and distinct urban qualities. They all show

an increase in the density of the built environment in comparison with their immediate surroundings. They are all infrastructural nodes of varying extent and importance. They are centres of work, destinations for commuters and places of transition and interchange. They all have an impact on the urban development beyond their own boundaries. For the main regional centralities, this includes, for example: Shinjuku as a regional political centre and the largest commuter station; Shibuya, a fashion, tech and media centre and a major transit hub for people travelling from and to the south-west; Marunouchi, a financial and business centre of great significance to the national economy while on a daily basis it is only of interest to people who work in the area or who transit between the eastern region and the centre (Hanakata 2019). The specialised regional centralities include, among others, Ueno, an important hub for the north-east and link to the Shitamachi area (see next section); Ikebukuru, with a similar function linking the core and the northern area; and Yokohama, the city's main port town in the south-west.

## SHITAMACHI URBANISATION

Adjacent to the interlinked main centralities to the north-east is the area of Shitamachi urbanisation. During the formation of an urban region in the Edo period this was the commercial and manufacturing centre of the city, where merchants and craftsmen lived and conducted their business. Today, Shitamachi (Japanese: *shita*: underneath, low; *machi*: town, village) conventionally refers to a place characterised by traditional craftsmanship and associated with the past and thus serves as an antipode to modern Tokyo. In the 1970s the first wave of deindustrialisation started in the area of Shitamachi urbanisation. Faced with the growing environmental pollution from the numerous small factories, residents protested against the deteriorating quality of life. In response, a series of policies was implemented by the city government to restrict industrial activities in the area. Thus, over the past century, the area has declined in importance within the city as a place for production and business. Today, the urban configuration incorporates a mixture of residents, functions and building types. With its remaining grid street layout, which was originally modelled on the ideal Chinese city (see Hanakata and Gasco 2019: 21), it is quite distinct from other parts of Tokyo, which display a more organic urban development pattern that often follows the topography of the area.

However, a growing number of big residential developments is currently changing the atmosphere and scale of the urban landscape and in stark contrast to the old, small-scale urban structures. They symbolise the gulf emerging between the nostalgic image of Shitamachi and the reality of everyday contemporary life in the area. I therefore use the term Shitamachi urbanisation critically, to problematise the conventional negative connotation of Shitamachi as a lowly and mundane city. Moreover, I use the term to capture a new kind of urban living, specifically tied to those who moved into this area from areas further out, which is increasingly shaping the urban condition in the area today.

## TŌKAIDŌ AND YAMANOTE URBANISATION

Large parts of the urban fabric of Tokyo are today covered by a seamlessly woven carpet of low-rise buildings. The urban configurations of Tōkaidō and Yamanote urbanisation, which stretch westwards from the archipelago of centralities, are defined by the homogeneous morphology of two to three-storey detached houses, all tied together by an extensive network of commuter train lines. These houses were produced over the last hundred years and represent both the idea of modern urban living and the reality of detached, mass-produced houses in a megacity. They are largely populated by the nuclear families of salarymen, as explained above, whose breadwinner endures long hours of daily commute to central areas for work. This socio-economic as well as morphological persistence is also captured in the comparatively developed concept of 'laminar urbanisation' (see Chapter 15).

Salaryman, commuting to central area. Train junction Noda City, Chiba Prefecture, 2012

Yamanote urbanisation, laminar layer of detached houses expanding to the west. Tama Ward, 2014

Shitamachi urbanisation, mixed functions and several generations of buildings along the rectangular street grid. Taito Ward, 2012

In the case of Tokyo, commuter train lines, mostly laid out in the early 20th century, serve as a structural backbone and as means of supplying goods and services to people and organisations. During the 1920s and 1930s the residential areas in the west of Tokyo were assigned a certain prestige: people seeking a second home or trying to escape from the increasingly busy city here found remote and quiet places at a convenient distance to the centre and close to the mountains (Hanakata 2020: 148). During decades of massive urban growth, these areas provided homes for the exploding population that was unable to find or afford a home in the centre. Today, train stations serve as both commuter hubs and important service points for all daily needs: shopping centres are combined with car parks; cramming schools are conveniently placed next to train exits and entertainment facilities are surrounded by restaurants and bars. In the case of Tōkaidō and Yamanote urbanisation this creates an evenly extending landscape, rhythmically structured by train stations and marked by an increase in activities and the density of buildings towards central areas.

The differences between the two configurations are minimal. The Tōkaidō area is linked to a linear extension of smaller, regional centralities along the coast, extending to the south-west from the central area. Yamanote urbanisation consists of the area west of the core that aligns with the Musashino Plateau, which has provided an elevated and earthquake-safe area for wealthy residents since the Edo period. It stands out for being devoid of any significant centralities or major employment centres. Both urban configurations are today affected by economic restructuring processes that challenge the model of life-long secure employment and the single-family home as the main aim in life. With an increasingly ageing population left behind as many younger people move to more central areas, many questions need to be raised about the future of this densely inhabited urban area (see Koizumi and Wakabayashi 2015: 357).

## PATTCHIWA-KU URBANISATION

The urban configuration of Pattchiwa-ku urbanisation extends to the north of the core area. It is relatively heterogeneous in its appearance and internally differentiated by various logics, rhythms and temporalities which are themselves determined by agricultural activities, residential areas, logistic hubs, transport infrastructure and industry. It is more than just the result of spillovers and urban sprawl, being produced by a spatial overlay of different logics of urbanisation wherein the new logics have not eradicated older ones but added up to form the dispersed pattern that covers the territory today. The simultaneity of different, largely independent urban layers without a prevailing dominant logic is

also captured in the comparatively developed concept of 'multilayered patchwork urbanisation' (see Chapter 15).

Historically, the area was largely agricultural land traversed by the Nakasendō route which linked Kyoto with Edo. In 1894, railroad tracks were built along this route to secure an efficient transport of agricultural goods to Tokyo. Additionally, large-scale military and defence infrastructures were built to support Japan's growing military activities in the region during the 1920s and 1930s for lack of available space elsewhere in the region. This fragmented land use was exacerbated when land-holdings were restricted to a maximum size of 2 ha by the Allied Powers that occupied Japan after the Second World War in an attempt to break the power of large property owners. The National Capital Region Development Plan for the larger region from 1958 proposed the creation of a green belt in this area, but this idea was never realised. The area reserved for the green belt was soon settled by the growing population of Tokyo, adding another layer to this territory. To date, the area's connectivity forms a key for all the various urbanisation logics that are juxtaposed here. While large-scale infrastructural projects continue to be mounted and new industrial sites are set up, the people who moved here between the late 1960s and 1980s have reached retirement age and the number of commuters from Pattchiwa-ku to the core area is rapidly declining. This has laid bare the lack of local amenities and services necessary for daily life in this area, while new services catering to the requirements of an ageing population are urgently needed. Simultaneously, people spend more time in the area and are beginning to invest in building communal activities and networks. The different layers remain dynamic, yet they are largely isolated from each other and form a landscape of clearly distinguishable morphologies and practices.

## KŌHAICHI URBANISATION

To the east of the Tokyo metropolitan complex agricultural land and small settlements cover the territory. Agricultural life and commuters to the core area for work dominate the daily routines in this urban configuration, characterised as Kōhaichi urbanisation. The term can be loosely translated as 'hinterland', and on the map it describes an area that is economically dependent on the production and flow of goods from the fertile grounds of Tohoku and Hokkaido in the north to sites of consumption within the Tokyo metropolitan complex. The railway network in this area was developed relatively late, and until the Second World War it connected only the waterfront area around the bay and its industrial sites. Stops along this route developed into smaller regional subcentres after the war and gradually matured into new centralities for work. While the flow of agricultural goods and local livelihoods depend on these centralities, the area as a whole is deeply rooted in the practice and life of farming, which creates a strong contrast between this area and others within the Tokyo metropolitan complex. The construction of Tsukuba University in the early 1970s created the first larger centrality and it became an important centre for employment. In the same way, Narita International Airport created a new centrality in this area. It was built on and around imperial property in 1972 and its construction was met with fierce protest at the time. To date, the airport remains relatively small and isolated. Since the late 1990s, infrastructural investment by the Tokyo metropolitan government has led to infrastructural upgrading in the area of Kōhaichi urbanisation. This has extended the reach of the centre to commuters and made the area attractive, particularly for young families looking for relatively spacious housing.

## WATERFRONT AND PERIPHERAL INDUSTRIALISATION

Processes of industrialisation and deindustrialisation have been inextricably linked to the development of Tokyo since 1868, at the dawn of our modern time. Within the Tokyo metropolitan complex are two dominant urbanisation processes linked to industrialisation and deindustrialisation: waterfront urbanisation, defining the urban configuration around Tokyo Bay, and a belt of peripheral industrialisation from the north-west to the north-east. They each have their own pathway and development logic but have evolved in close relation to each another. The pattern of waterfront urbanisation is formed by almost seamlessly adjacent industrial plants with access to the bay, reaching from Bosō Peninsula in the east to Miura Peninsula in the south-west, including the international freight port of Yokohama, and thereby framing the configuration of Tokaido urbanisation to the south. In contrast, peripheral industrialisation is much more dispersed and in fact is overlaid with the configurations of Tokaido, Yamanote, Pattchiwa-ku and Kōhaichi urbanisation, forming a broad and scattered arch in the west and north of the Tokyo region.

Waterfront industrialisation began along the benches of the Kanda and Sumida rivers with the erection of various kinds of manufacturing sites that were gradually industrialised at the beginning of the 20th century. Larger industries dependent on seaborne raw materials were established between the port of Yokohama and the centre of Tokyo, or what is today known as the Keihin Industrial Zone. Spurred by Japan's colonial expansion in the first part of the 20th century, these industrial sites rapidly expanded and continuous land reclamation created an extensive network of canals and islands connected by bridges and partly by railway lines.

After the Second World War, industrial production continued to grow in the area as Japan became a leading export economy. The backbone of this production was a flexible network of specialised small and medium-sized enterprises that were able to quickly adapt to new technologies and products: bigger industrial plants were surrounded by smaller subcontractor companies that were integrated with private residences, creating a highly mixed-use urban environment. With the oil crisis and growing environmental concerns in the 1970s leading to the restriction of industrial sites within the core area, waterfront industrialisation started to shrink as bigger plants relocated to the periphery or translocated to countries with lower wages in Southeast Asia.

As described in the Pattchiwa-ku section, peripheral industrialisation started with the construction of large infrastructural sites in the 1920s and 1930s, fuelled by the growing war industry. When Tokyo experienced another dramatic population increase after the war and the economy was growing fast, the first industrial plants relocated to the periphery, where large plots were still available. A more significant shift, however, started when environmentally polluting industrial sites were banned within the core area. At the same time, new creative industries related to the production of anime and video games led to a pattern of closely spaced industrial functions linked to urbanisation processes in the western part of the region. Not needing large infrastructural inputs, these sites consisted of tight networks of primary firms and subcontractors working in closed but flexible collaborative arrangements.

Today, both urban configurations are undergoing another rapid transformation and are faced with different challenges. While the pattern of waterfront industrialisation becomes more and more porous and is interspersed by new developments (see section below entitled ‘Manshon urbanisation’), many areas of peripheral industrialisation are confronted with a gradual decline in the workforce that lives nearby. At the same time, however, new researchand development centres are being set up around Tokyo Bay and, with wages rising in neighbouring countries, the first Japanese companies, including Honda Motors and Casio, have begun to relocate their production sites from countries overseas back to Japan.

Agrarian Landscape. Ibaragi Prefecture, 2009

High-rise mixed use waterfront. Yokohama, 2014

## MANSHON URBANISATION

Manshon urbanisation is the most recent urban configuration. Located around the bay of Tokyo, the emergence of this configuration is directly linked to the contracting dynamic of waterfront industrialisation: as large-scale industrial sites become vacant due to the relocation or closure of factories and are now available for high-rise, mixed-use developments. Located relatively close to the central area and well connected to highways and the public transport system, they are particularly attractive to young people moving back to the city from commuter towns or other prefectures. These new residents introduce new demands and habits to the area and are looking for big apartments or car parking spaces.

Three moments have been particularly formative for the development of this configuration: (1) the abolition of a height restriction for residential buildings in 1970; (2) the planning policy that introduced ‘urban renaissance areas’ in 1986, which provided developers with incentives and exceptions to planning regulations so they could build large development projects in certain areas (Hanakata 2019: 85); and (3) a change in the zoning plan in 1988, which created conditions for the construction of housing and the installation of new building uses in the industrial areas along the waterfront. Together, these changes paved the way for the construction

of new mixed-use mega developments and residential apartment towers, called *manshons* in Japanese. Such developments accommodate as many people as an entire traditional neighbourhood. Projects like the Ōkawabata River City (1989), Shinonome Canal Court Codan (2005) and Kawazaki Lazona (2008) are examples of developments that have been built on former factory grounds. Their names allude to the waterfront as a newly discovered asset and their English or Italian name respectively are meant to suggest a modern and spacious living environment. The construction of large-scale housing projects in the area was galvanised by the preparations for the Tokyo Olympics 2020 and the development of the Olympic Village on Harumi Island, just next to the Ōkawabata River City, with the development of 21 new residential building blocks adding 5,650 new apartments to the housing market in 2020, equivalent to 30 per cent of the annual housing supply within the 23-ward area (Realestate Japan 2018). The postponement of the games, however, led to a large cut in revenue as the new apartments could not be released onto the market as scheduled, but had to be retained until 2021 and the end of the Games.

Manshon urbanisation reflects a re-evaluation of the core area as a space for living. However, many of these new developments remain spatially cut off from the rest of the city by highways or water bodies that previously formed the edge of the industrial zone, thus forming isolated islands of activities and social life. In many respects, this configuration displays another dimension of a periphery that increasingly struggles with a shrink--ing and ageing population.

# DIFFERENTIATING AN URBAN MEGAREGION

Over the past 150 years Tokyo has experienced a changing history of repeated, devastating destruction followed by periods of extreme growth as well as decades lost to economic stagnation. The core of this development and central element on the map is the archipelago of centralities, a network of nodes with different functions and qualities. These centralities anchor the vast urban configurations extending into the urban periphery (Tōkaidō and Yamanote, Pattchiwa-ku and Kōhaichi urbanisation). The related pattern of connected centralities and processes of expansive urbanisation was consolidated over time, particularly at moments of reconstruction (after 1868, after the earthquake of 1923 and after the Second World War). They form what is today the dominant national centre of the Tokyo metropolitan complex.

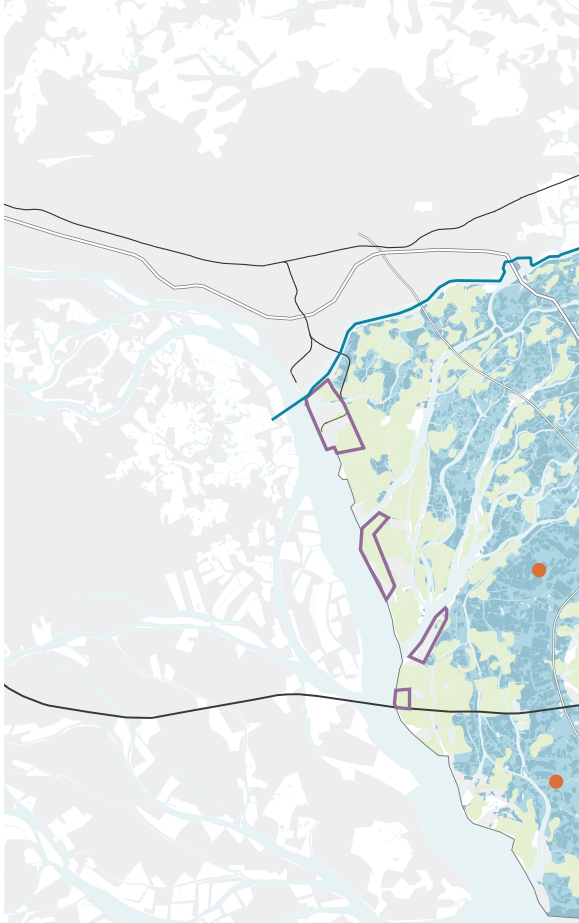
As has become clear in this portrait, and through the analysis of these urbanisation processes in depth and in relation to each other, the various and contrasting urban qualities of the Tokyo metropolitan complex are defined by everyday practices, continuously fostered relationships to the environment and the position of communities in their localities and in the city at large. In theoretical terms, this has led to the production of nuanced differences on the ground through the concrete engagement of people with particular urban qualities, the negotiations among different interests that collide in this megacity region and the hardships inflicted by recurrent destruction of the built environment.

In the 20th century Tokyo's urban structure was continuously and consistently rebuilt and consolidated. Large-scale, top-town planning efforts like the idea of a green belt introduced in the late 1950s were rare and did not change the overall pattern of development. Instead, Tokyo's urban development was determined by the construction of railway lines early on, which became the organising structure of urbanisation that triumphed over several moments of disruption at the end of the 19th century, in 1923 and 1945, and during critical phases of urban growth, particularly in the 1920s, the 1960s and the 1970s. Extending in tangential lines from the centre, these railways formed the basis for a continuous expansion and densification of the urban configurations that are anchored in the core of the city and extend to the periphery. This development has been guided by physical infrastructural networks and its quality has been determined by people's relationship to the urban environment and sustained by persistent tenure conditions and people's close attachment to land. The resulting structural resilience of Tokyo has become a key quality of its urban condition today.

After a phase of continuous outward migration, with new satellite towns being built in the 1960s and 1970s, first in the west and gradually also in the north of Tokyo, the protracted economic crisis starting in the 1990s marked the emergence of a new paradigm of urbanisation and a renewed centripetal movement towards the core of the city. The introduction of new housing types, continuous deindustrialisation and a gradual demographic shift that is creating an ageing population are expediting the renaissance of the urban, resulting in increasingly dynamic urban areas, particularly within the configuration of Kōhaichi urbanisation and around Tokyo Bay. These shifts have started to create a new dynamic within the urban region and to alter the conditions in the core as well as in the geographical peripheries. This is exemplified by the emergence of Manshon urbanisation and the dynamic of industrial sites in the region. In the map, this is captured by using higher colour intensities in the centre, emphasising the concentration of activities in the core area of the city.

More recently the persistency of urbanisation patterns has been demonstrated when the triple catastrophe of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster hit the north-eastern coast of Japan in March 2011. What turned out to be a fatal concurrence of natural catastrophe and human failure did not change the pathways of urbanisation of Tokyo. While the lives and livelihoods of many people have altered, in hindsight this disruptive moment appears to follow the pathway of previous disruptions, which put the city on hold only momentarily. Valiant attempts to revive Japan's economy and Tokyo's urban development, as was the case in preparing the city to host the Olympic Games, fade away or bounce off a lethargic bureaucratic apparatus and entrenched social conventions (Hanakata 2022; Bignami et al. 2023). However, even if the general structure and patterns of urbanisation remain the same, subtle dynamics within and between the urban configurations continue to shape the landscape of urban differences in Tokyo.

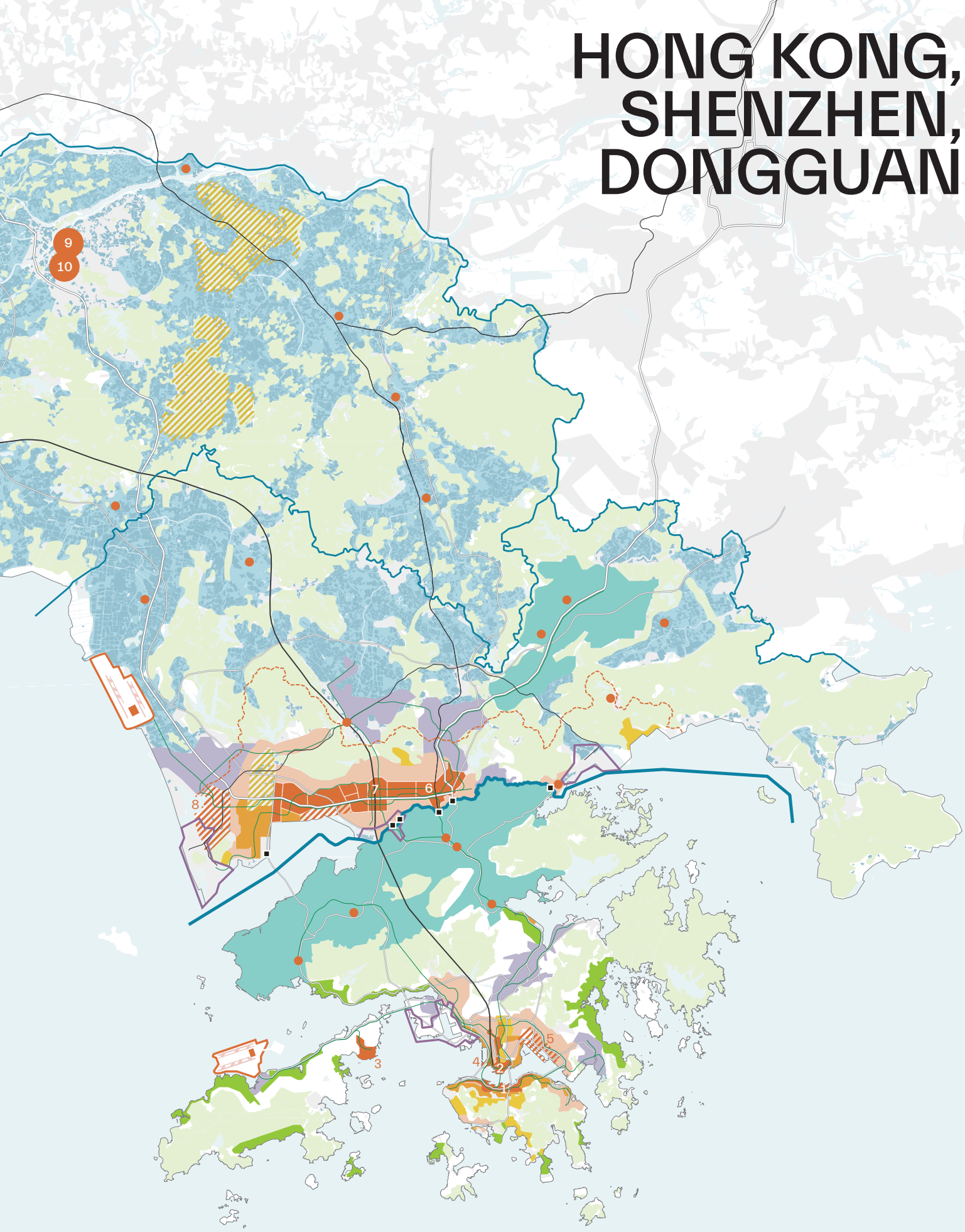
This chapter is largely based on *Tokyo. An Urban Portrait* (2020) by the same author.



- Main regional centrality
  1 Central District
  2 Kowloon
  3 Hong Kong Disney
  4 West Kowloon
  5 East Kowloon
  6 Luohu
  7 Futian
  8 Qianhai
  9 Guancheng
  10 Nancheng
- Expansion of centrality — Strategic, large-scale projects expanding existing centralities
- Subcentre
- Established wealthy area — Relatively stable, prestigious and exclusive residential areas for the urban elite
- Peripheral residential area — Low density areas in Hong Kong, as a result of specific planning restrictions
- Condo development — Large-scale condominium clusters that structure the urbanisation of Hong Kong and Shenzhen
- Commuting area — Mass transit-oriented residential areas in Hong Kong and commuter towns in Shenzhen
- Post-proletarian area — Former industrial areas facing radical socioeconomic change as a result of industrial restructuring and the relocation of factories; large-scale urban renewal projects led by the government or by semi-governmental bodies
- Multilayered patchwork urbanisation — Heterogeneous and multi-territorial areas emerging outside or in between urban centres
- Industrial towns — Typical process of industrialisation in rural areas of Guangdong resulting from the development of designated towns
- Hi-tech development zone — Planned by the city government of Dongguan
- Ecological areas, national parks and country parks — Legally protected zones to preserve natural areas for public use and to limit urban sprawl
- Container port and logistics hub
- Airport
- Urban footprint
- National high-speed railway
- National railway
- Metro line
- Main highway
- Border between Hong Kong and Shenzhen with checkpoint
- Border of the Special Economic Zone (1980–2010)
- City-territory border

0 5 10 20 km

# HONG KONG, SHENZHEN, DONGGUAN



The rise of globalism spells the end of the old empires, but not before the offsprings of these empires, the previous colonial cities, have been primed to perform well as global cities. This makes it possible to explain why, with the end of imperialism, colonialism could take a global form, and why it could decisively abandon the old imperial attitudes and even take on benign characteristics, as in the case of Hong Kong.

Ackbar Abbas, *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance,* 1997

Shenzhen, in fact, displays not only the futuristic and utopian pretensions of the new town eco-city, but also the chaotic—yet somehow effective—combination of the planned and un-planned city.

Tim Oakes, *China's Urban Ideology,* 2019

# CROSS-BORDER URBANISATION

This chapter presents a history of cross-border urbanisation across three large urban territories—Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan in the Pearl River Delta (PRD). The PRD was historically an important trading region in China throughout many dynasties. For a long time Canton, the main walled city of the PRD, was the only trading port in China that foreign traders were allowed to use, and many towns and markets also thrived in the delta area, while significant commercial and specialised agricultural activities took place in the vast rural hinterland. During China's economic reforms over the last four decades the PRD became the state's territorial framework in which city-territories, counties and towns were endowed with special policies and powers. Here the term 'city-territory' refers to the transformation of the traditional form of Chinese cities (walled cities) into a politico-territorial form of city-territories, which emerged with the Chinese state mode of production during Mao's administration and developed further during the period of economic reform after 1978 (Wong 2023). In this process, the central party-state kept constant control over the reorganisation and re-hierarchisation of all subnational territories. This enabled it to control all subordinated governments and their interrelations and thus to produce and regulate different urbanisation processes and the dynamics of their concentration and extension.

In 1994 the institutional framework of the PRD Economic Region included nine large city-territories

close to Hong Kong and Macau, which were the two former colonial trading hubs, to drive industrialisation, export and foreign investment. In 2015 the World Bank noted that the PRD was the world's largest urban area, being bigger than Tokyo and twice as large as Shanghai. The Bank showed that the region has been undergoing explosive urban growth in recent decades. From 2000 to 2010 its built-up area grew from 4,500 $km^2$ to nearly 7,000 $km^2$ and the population increased from 27 million to 42 million (Deuskar et al. 2015). Urbanisation processes did not stop at the borders of the city-territories and thus the PRD evolved into a vast, multinucleated and interconnected urban entity where it is difficult to distinguish one city-territory from another.

Recently, Brenner and Schmid (2015, see also Harvey 1996) invited scholars to change the traditional perspective in critical urban studies from a focus on the city as an entity to urbanisation as a process. They argued that urbanisation should no longer be conceptualised as a container that absorbs the growth of population, capital and activities. As David Harvey (2006b: 78) notes, 'capitalist activity is always grounded somewhere', and that these activities rely on the deployment of various spatial strategies and geographical processes. He also proposed that scholars needed to change their concepts of space from absolute to relative and relational processes if they were to understand the capitalist process of uneven geographical development (Harvey 2006a). Our observations that the urban explosions in the PRD have been spreading across many city-territories and massively transforming vast rural areas, demand that we change our analytical perspective to the analysis of urbanisation processes.

Nevertheless, a change of perspective alone does not suffice to understand this transformation unless we take the role of the state seriously. The rapid, massive, cross-border urbanisation across Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan have arisen from multidimensional complexities, specificities and conflicts in the past decades. The processes leading to the formation of an international financial centre in Hong Kong were not only related to the growth of global capitalist activities unfolding in space and shaping space but were also confronted and interwoven with other political processes, such as the territorial strategies of the Chinese state that shaped the production of space in Shenzhen and Dongguan and later also in Hong Kong itself. In this way, cross-border urbanisation also resulted from the massive deployment of state power. In order to achieve political and economic domination over the entire PRD, the state thus restructured the geographies of capital and expanded space for capitalist accumulation. Therefore, we can see that Hong Kong was not the only centre in the formation of this urbanised region, because the state power of China also produced territories at different scales.

The goal of this chapter is to examine the patterns and pathways of urbanisation across Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan that led to the massive urban transformation of the PRD. The following section critically reviews the limits of the popular conception that an extended metropolitan region (EMR) has been formed in the PRD. It shows that this understanding is still tied to a technocratic framework that has been inherited from economic geography. In developing my analysis, I describe several important dimensions of the complexities of this cross-border urbanisation. My ultimate goal is to offer a different perspective on the historical dynamics and changing power relations that underpin these massive, rapid and controversial processes of urbanisation.

## FRONT SHOPS AND BACK FACTORIES: THE CONCEPT OF THE EXTENDED METROPOLITAN REGION

A popular concept in the studies of mega-regions in Asia is the EMR, which has contributed to a specific understanding of the formation of a new international division of labour under globalisation (McGee 1991). These studies argue that in the case of Hong Kong, EMR entrepreneurs from Hong Kong were at the time seeking out the lowest production costs, including an abundance of low-wage labour and cheap agricultural land to set up their factories, and this led to manufacturing industries spilling into Shenzhen and Dongguan and causing enormous socioeconomic changes there (e.g. see Sit 1996, 2005). This process of capitalist expansion became the economic model that was called 'front shops, back factories'. This meant that Hong Kong performed the functions of the front shop by providing the necessary commerce, finance, marketing, logistics and services, while Shenzhen and Dongguan housed the back factories to drive the growth of export-led industrialisation. The model also identified three types of geographical units: characterising Hong Kong as the core city, while Shenzhen and Dongguan were located in the inner and the outer ring respectively, and together all three territories constituted the space of the Hong Kong-EMR in South China. Located in the outer ring, Dongguan's transformation was called 'desakota', meaning village and city. These terms were borrowed from studies of Jakarta, an area with intensive rural–urban interdependencies and interactions. Lastly, these three geographical types functioned as a gradient descending from the city (Hong Kong) to the peripheries along the main transportation networks.

As I have argued elsewhere, since this model is dominated by the logic of capitalist economic geography, it is less helpful for understanding the processes of urbanising regions in China (Wong

2023). This kind of economic analysis bears the risk of generalising spatial and functional differences in a region and thus neglecting many important aspects of urban processes (Friedmann 2016; Tang and Chung 2000). Its perspective on space and geographical differences depends on the analysis of some economic parameters (especially those of population size, foreign direct investment, industrial production and the value of exports), dictated by comparisons of the relative economic advantages of the area of study and location theory. As space is treated as an aggregate of quantities, qualitative changes that may disturb this model are omitted. This approach obscures the study of power relations, which is necessary for the time at which the People's Republic of China radically changed its state strategies and reshuffled the powers held by different territories, with the aim of making large-scale interventions in social relations and the production of space after 1978 in China. Thus, the conception of a rational and functional space like EMR does not take into account the chaotic and contradictory processes shaping the dynamics of urbanisation. It offers an ahistorical account that does not consider the specific pathway of this transformation.

## ANALYSIS OF PATTERNS AND PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

In this chapter I analyse the patterns and pathways of urbanisation to help us understand the transformation of this huge territory that extends across Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan. I do not treat these territories as individual units of a regional division of labour in the context of the globalising economy, but instead examine the entanglement of urbanisation processes and power relations and the way they have shaped and restructured this urbanising territory over time.

This analysis is based on Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space and uses a dual perspective: on the one hand, it analyses urbanisation processes as a synthesis of transformations of space as it is perceived, conceived and lived, and on the other it analyses the pathways of urbanisation by exploring how space was produced at a particular time, simultaneously in relation to and conditioned by manifold histories (Schmid 2014). In this analysis, I consider the urban level as a mixed and intermediary level between the general level of the state, global markets, knowledge and institutions on the one hand, and the private level based on everyday

life and concrete social relations on the other, as proposed by Henri Lefebvre's theory (Kipfer 2008). This concept of interrelated levels helps to break an artificial divide between the inside and the outside of the urban, because it requires us to take into account the production of space by the simultaneous interactions of different actors, forces and processes and the contradictions among them.

With regard to this urbanising cross-border territory, I pay especial attention to some key dimensions that shape urbanisation processes. Firstly, I acknowledge that Hong Kong is no longer confined to its city limits. To adequately understand its urban dynamic requires us to change our analytical perspective from the city to that of the territory, and to avoid distinctions between an inside and an outside (Schmid 2015). I analyse it within the framework of the dynamics of the larger geographical context, during the colonial period and under the new political and economic situation after 1978, in which the dynamics of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan co-produced a huge urbanising territory. I also focus on the specificities of these urbanisation processes. Hong Kong's urbanisation was subjected to British colonialism and the geopolitics that affected the colony because of its immediate vicinity to China (1842–1941). The relationship between Hong Kong and China underwent a fundamental political transition after the Second World War (1949–1977) and Hong Kong's development into an international financial centre was strongly pushed forward by China's political and economic transformation (1978–1997). Finally, after the handover of the colony to China in 1997, it became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) under China's sovereignty.

Shenzhen and Dongguan, in contrast, took a very different pathway to urbanisation. Shenzhen was the first urban outcome of China's fundamental economic reform after 1978. It was transformed from being a poor agricultural county at the political frontier into a deputy provincial city, designated to become a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Dongguan, like many other territories in the Guangdong Province, became a prefecture-level city-territory in 1988, but it embarked on yet another pathway that was marked by a decentralised form of urbanisation through the industrialisation of towns and villages. In this way, a territory of extended urbanisation emerged between Shenzhen and Guangzhou, orienting itself towards Hong Kong as a global market and centre of foreign investments. All three territories, Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan, are thus embedded in different political systems, territorial regulations, power relations and local practices and thus result in various specific patterns and pathways of urbanisation.

The changes in the political regime over the decades had a salient impact on the political dimension of urbanisation in the three territories. Thus, Hong Kong's urbanisation was greatly shaped by the political changes that brought about China's economic opening up in 1978, and again by its transfer to China in 1997. Both resulted in fundamental changes in its internal power relations. During this time, Shenzhen and Dongguan underwent reconfigurations of state power and territorial structures that conditioned their separate urbanisation processes. Thus, I examine the way different social relations and power geometries played out in these different urbanisation processes. These processes were highly political because they led to various tensions, contradictions and conflicts which simultaneously played out in the three territories.

While each of the three territories experienced very different historical trajectories, they also co-constituted each other and thus their urbanisation processes were entangled with each other at particular times. If Hong Kong was important for the development of Shenzhen and Dongguan during the first stage of urbanisation, these two city-territories considerably expanded their own centres and propelled urban restructuring after 2000. At this time Shenzhen developed its multicentric urban core which in turn had a marked impact on urbanisation processes in Hong Kong.

My analysis of the patterns and pathways of urbanisation is structured into four periods: (1) the formation of a colonial centrality and entrepôt economy of British Hong Kong (1841–1941); (2) the reconfiguration of the centre–periphery relations in postwar Hong Kong through mass housing urbanisation and export-oriented industrialisation (1945–1977); (3) the convergence of political and economic regimes resulting from cross-border urbanisation processes (1978–1997); and (4) the rise of a multicentric urbanised region through territorial restructuring and social conflicts (1997–2015).

In the final section I discuss the contemporary patterns of urbanisation in these territories. I show how urbanisation processes went hand-in-hand with the change of politico-economic regimes that arose from new constellations of forces and social relations in each period. I illustrate the pattern of this urbanised region with the map at the beginning of this chapter showing a qualitative representation of the urban configurations in the research period (2011–2016).

Crossing the PRD. Dongguan–Humen Bridge, 2012

# THE FORMATION OF HONG KONG AS A COLONIAL CENTRALITY

Founded by the British Empire in 1841 at the end of the first Opium War with China, the original raison d'être of this colony was its entrepôt economy. The British Government declared Hong Kong to be a free port and it developed in the interplay of British colonialism and free-trade capitalism. With its deep natural harbour and excellent strategic location at the entrance of the Pearl River Delta, Hong Kong became a port for foreign trade that soon replaced Canton (today's Guangzhou) as a trading hub for South China. The colony was first built on Hong Kong Island, which had been ceded by China in 1841, and was extended to the Kowloon Peninsula in 1860. It was expanded again in 1898 after the 99-year lease of the 'New Territories' north of Kowloon.

It was the pragmatic coupling of colonialism and capitalism that provided the foundation for the urbanisation of Hong Kong throughout its history. Milton Friedman praised capitalism in Hong Kong under British colonial rule as the last bastion of unfettered capitalism (Friedman and Friedman 1980). Hong Kong was a classical colonial city ruled by a European minority and the colonial government asserted that it ruled via 'small government' and 'laissez-faire policies' as a governmental practice (Goodstadt 2005: 3). This included a low tax policy and free tariffs, and the government claimed it refrained from making strategic interventions in economy and society. As shown by many scholars, however, this was more myth than reality, as British enterprises enjoyed many advantages and privileges (Ma 2007; Mizuoka 2018; Schiffer 1991).

The main instrument of domination of the colonial government was the system of leasing 'Crown Land' that constituted the original territory of the colony (i.e. Hong Kong Island and Kowloon), and it was also its main source of income. This system enabled the British not only to control the colony but also to control the land in terms of its supply, disposition, planning and development (Mizuoka 2018). Ever since the colony was founded, land was sold at the highest price possible through public auctions and the tactic of land reclamation was adopted to create additional commodifiable land (Ho 2004: 25–32). This system was used as a model when Shenzhen's first land auction was initiated in 1987, as well as to reform China's system of land-use rights in 1988 (Lin 2009; Yeung et al. 2009).

Hong Kong mainly developed its entrepôt economy around Victoria Harbour on Hong Kong Island. The City of Victoria became Hong Kong's dominant centrality as it had political, economic, logistic, social and military functions. It developed into a colonial outpost of the British Empire, to trade with Singapore (a colony) and Shanghai (a treaty port) in particular. Because of the island's hilly topography and limited stretches of lowlands, the main part of the city was built on the northern shore of Hong Kong Island facing the harbour (Chiu 1973). While influential British and European firms occupied the business centre along the shore, Governor House and the government offices were constructed on a mid-level above the shore. The European residential areas, with their specific architectural forms and exclusive social spaces, were geographically separate from the Chinese neighbourhoods.

After the annexation of Kowloon in 1860 and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Hong Kong experienced rapid urban expansion and developed into a worldwide commercial, trading and shipping hub (Lui and Chiu 2003). The port had one of the largest dockyards for shipbuilding and repairing in the whole of Asia, with British trading houses, godowns (warehouses) and piers. It was an important seaport between the East and the West and South-east Asia, for people and trade (including the trade of opium and labour) and it soon became a remittance centre for the Chinese diaspora (Carroll 2007: 109). The city quickly absorbed people, labour, capital, commerce and social networks from its immediate region, from China and other colonies. Moreover, whenever China experienced political turmoil, Hong Kong offered political stability. This stability became one of the key factors for increasing the thriving trading economy, prompting even more urbanisation. Thus the city grew from 139,000 inhabitants in 1876 to 301,000 in 1901 and 625,000 in 1921 (Tsang 2004: 109). Soon the scarcity of land became a major problem that was eventually mitigated by the new settlements that sprang up along the shore in Kowloon.

To maintain the stability of the colonial regime required the collaboration of Chinese elites (Carroll 1997; Goodstadt 2005; Law 2009). Urban space was controlled by land-use and building regulations, and later the mid-level of Hong Kong Island was designated as a European residential area to maintain racial segregation. While Europeans dominated the Central District of Hong Kong, Chinese firms and communities were located in Sheung Wan, located in the north-west of Hong Kong Island, organising trade between China and South-East Asia and running warehouses, banking and real estate businesses. The colonial government held to its supposedly laissez-faire policies, keeping its administration of the colony at a minimum. To do this it incorporated the Chinese elites as collaborators to govern the Chinese communities, in a type of indirect rule. The rising Chinese Hong Kong elites entered into a 'rewarding alliance' with the colonial government (Goodstadt 2005). These elites were merchants or compradors working for European firms. By agreeing to collaborate, they gained material rewards from the British and benefited from

the growth of Chinese communities. They built their own hospitals, schools, temples and other charitable institutions, thus forming an alternative power centre. This gave rise to the formation of a colonial power structure that Wing-sang Law (2009) calls 'collaborative colonialism'—an enduring but malleable collaboration between the government and elites that continued to dominate the politics of Hong Kong until the end of the British colonial rule in 1997 and even continued in modified form after the hand-over to China.

The further rise of Hong Kong was enabled by the lease of additional land in 1898. It included the areas known as 'New Kowloon' (between Boundary Street and the Kowloon Hills) and 'New Territories' (up to the Shenzhen River). While the former was administered as part of a highly centralised governmental system, the latter was treated differently as 636 'recognised villages' enjoying special privileges and rights. The land lease contract with China was in fact a political invention that created a fundamentally different territorial system than was applied in the ceded territories over which the British Crown had full prerogative authority (Wesley-Smith 1980: 90). In leasing the New Territories, the British government was obliged to respect the customary rights of the villagers on their land. The government soon faced the resistance of 'indigenous villagers', especially the five great clans who controlled landownership and markets in the New Territories (Baker 1966). Consequently, the New Territories were governed in a different way: the colonial government adopted a decentralised administrative system, co-opting some leading elites (Akers-Jones 2004: 14) and imposing a land leasehold system that replaced villagers' private land titles by leasehold interests (Chun 1990; Lai 2000; Wesley-Smith 1980). Yet local villagers fighting for their land rights founded a rural council (Heung Yee Kuk) that served as a centre of opposition against the colonial government. This led to the formation of new power relations that not only shaped postwar urbanisation but also became an important part of Beijing's alliance after the handover of the colony in 1997 (see below).

In short, Hong Kong was a colonial city with a single, dominating centre around Victoria Harbour that drove British imperialism in China. This centre concentrated British administrative and economic power with its linkages to the colonial networks. With the expansion of Chinese communities, urban expansion spread to Kowloon, where the first garden city was built in Kowloon Tong as a suburb for wealthy Chinese and Eurasians, who were excluded from the European district. The New Territories remained a large remote rural area, but they were connected by the Kowloon–Canton Railway to the colony and to China since 1910. The period of pre-war urbanisation was thus important to lay out the foundations of the colonial power structure. The pragmatic coupling of colonialism and capitalism characterised the colonial government's relations to the economy and society, using Crown land leases, the centralisation of political and economic power, racial segregation, collaboration with local elites, and a different system in the New Territories. All these elements continued to be the central forces in the next phase of urbanisation after the Second World War.

# THE INDUSTRIALISATION OF HONG KONG

After the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, Hong Kong did not become independent like other former British colonies but was reinstated as a British colony. However, the radically changed geopolitical situation of the Cold War and the rise of Communist China dramatically reshaped Hong Kong's international role and its internal centre–periphery relations. The colony had lost China as its hinterland for trade and its entrepôt economy was devastated by international trade embargoes on China. It became a frontier territory between the Western and the Eastern blocs and served as the United States' strategic base for the containment of Communism (Mark 2004).

Hong Kong's geopolitical vulnerability to Communist China during the Cold War had a great influence on policy-making and urbanisation strategies. The Civil War and the rise of the Communist regime caused a wave of refugees from China, and Hong Kong's population increased from 600,000 in 1945 to 2.5 million in 1955 (Tsang 2004: 167). The government failed to address the housing crisis or to stop massive illegal squatting. A series of squatter fires in the early 1950s sparked waves of social unrest and anti-colonial activity supported by Communist China and local communists (Smart 2006). The Shek Kip Mei fire of December 1953 finally prompted the official launch of a resettlement policy, which marked the beginning of the colonial intervention in society and economy and profoundly reshaped postwar urbanisation.

The policy of resettlement aimed at the rapid construction of low-cost multistorey housing for squatters and fire victims, with the goal of eliminating illegal squatting and social unrest in the colony (Smart 2006). The construction of resettlement blocks started in Shek Kip Mei and spread at the urban fringes during the 1950s. In the 1960s and 1970s, mass housing urbanisation became a pragmatic strategy to create governable subjectivities and to transform Chinese refugees into hard-working labourers through the production of governable spaces (see Chapter 16). It also provided a large pool of low-cost labour for rapid industrialisation (Castells et al. 1990).

Resettlement housing and later mass housing were built next to factories, which provided local employment, basic facilities and infrastructures. In the mid-1950s, the government started to develop entire industrial towns on reclaimed land in Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan to relocate families and allow Chinese industrialists to set up new factories. This had two main consequences: the shift from the entrepôt economy to manufacturing industries and the emergence of a new working class. This shift was facilitated by a process of 'transferred industrialisation' (Sit 1998), in which Chinese industrialists from Shanghai and Guangdong moved to Hong Kong. It started with the cotton and textile industries in the 1950s which soon became a threat to industries in the North of England (Goodstadt 2005: 64). Manufacturers in other industrial sectors followed, such as electronics, domestic appliances and apparel in the 1960s; Hong Kong became an important exporter to Western markets.

Mass housing urbanisation became the engine of urban expansion in the New Territories, which served as strategic reserve to ensure the colony's survival for self-sufficiency and further development. During the 1960s and 1970s, the New Territories developed into a strategic production zone with housing, industries, agriculture, water supply, infrastructure and transportation. However, as villagers held most of the land (see previous section), the colonial government had to expropriate farmland from the villagers (Nissim 2012). It also introduced the policy of 'small houses', allowing male villagers to build three-storey houses in designated 'village zones' with preferential land prices. These policies constituted a compromise between the government and the Heung Yee Kuk, the rural council that was given a formal status as the statutory advisory body in 1959: in granting villagers' housing rights, the government could gradually strengthen its power by controlling and regulating village land (Lai 2000).

The urbanisation strategies during the 1970s were mainly based on the construction of new towns in increasingly more remote areas of the New Territories. In 1972, the new governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, started a ten-year public housing scheme and a new town programme. His main idea was to develop the already planned new towns of Shatin and Tuen Mun into 'full' cities with their own centralities, access to local employment, better public housing and an improved urban environment providing leisure and public facilities. The goal was not only to enhance the government's legitimation but also to create the new political subject of the 'Hong Kong people' as distinct from the Chinese identity (Lui 2017). With this goal, MacLehose also intended to strengthen the position of the colony in upcoming negotiations with China about the status of Hong Kong after 1997 (Yep and Lui 2010).

In this context, mass housing urbanisation became a strategic political instrument to develop a sense of civic pride. This strategy aimed to solve the contradictions of colonialism through urbanisation: instead of giving people democratic rights, it offered them a sense of belonging. Thus, in public discourse the 1970s symbolised a period of successful governorship, modernisation, prosperity and social stability. And yet, the ideological framing of this kind of production of space used the spatial fetishism of 'home' and 'prosperity' to conceal the contradictions of colonial domination.

Postwar urbanisation opened up a different pathway that significantly reconfigured Hong Kong's

Post-proletarian area and urban renewal of an industrial town centre. Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong, 2012

territorial order and urban patterns: While the factories, the Chinese industrialists and Hong Kong's Chinese working class were relegated to the peripheries in the New Territories, the urban core area was transformed into an international commercial and financial centre with a modern cityscape composed of office towers, hotels and department stores, dominated by British and international capitalists. The already long-established business functions for international trade and industrial development expanded into financial and banking activities (Tsang 2004: 175). British enterprises maintained their domination and expanded their businesses on a global scale. Hong Kong played an important role as a member of the sterling region, while maintaining a high level of autonomy: the government could stabilise its financial and currency system by pegging Hong Kong dollars to the British pound, using it to trade with China and thus bypassing the trade embargo, and also keeping its financial market open for exchange without being restricted by the rule of foreign exchange control as a sterling member (Goodstadt 2005: 58–59). Thus, Hong Kong maintained its free trade and liberal financial system, and attracted capital from Southeast Asia and China during the postwar political turbulences and the rising protectionism at the international level (Schenk 2001). For Hong Kong, the postwar period brought high economic growth; its population increased from 2 million in 1950 to 5 million in 1980 (Tsang 2004: 172). The city was known as one of the four 'Asian Tigers' and competed with Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea.

# INDUSTRIALISATION AND URBANISATION ACROSS THE BORDERS

In 1971, the People's Republic of China was admitted into the United Nations and then American President Nixon restored diplomatic relations with China. In 1976, Mao Zedong died and after a turbulent period of succession, Deng Xiaoping became the top leader and immediately pushed forward radical economic reforms (Vogel 2011). As then Chinese premier Zhao Ziyang noted (2010), this was a political breakthrough that shifted the central focus of the Communist Party from class struggle to economic development. This economic opening towards the capitalist world market brought foreign currencies, technologies and skills to China. It also had marked effects on Hong Kong, which resumed its former role as entrepôt economy through renewed trade relations with China. During the 1980s, different processes of industrialisation and urbanisation transcended the border to Shenzhen and Dongguan and made Hong Kong the most important centre of this rapidly urbanising region in the PRD.

We will see that various actors across different places successfully played the game of comparative advantages and uneven geographical development in the production of space to increase growth and capital accumulation. Hong Kong developed a new territorial strategy of metropolisation in the context of changing political and economic relations with China during the transition period towards the handover to China. At the same time, the Chinese state developed different territorial strategies that led to the formation of two different types of city-territories in Shenzhen and Dongguan. While Hong Kong became a key driver of economic growth in the PRD and developed into a global city, Shenzhen became a thriving export-oriented industrial centre at the Hong Kong border and Dongguan deployed a different strategy of extended urbanisation through rural industrialisation of towns and villages by attracting export-oriented companies and foreign investment.

## THE METROPOLISATION OF HONG KONG

While the British government accelerated the provision of social reforms in the hope of keeping Hong Kong after the expiration of the 99-year lease of the New Territories in 1997, its future became clear when Governor MacLehose in 1977 and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1982 met Deng Xiaoping (Mark 2017). Hong Kong's future was then sealed in the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 that stipulated the end of the

British colonial rule and the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty to the People's Republic of China.

By 1982 several crises had erupted in Hong Kong's stock and property market and in the banking sector, and the depreciation of the currency increased political uncertainty and the economic recession. In 1983 the Hong Kong dollar was pegged to the US dollar at a fixed rate to rescue Hong Kong from a currency crisis. This also provided a stable financial environment for the development of an international financial centre (Lui and Chiu 2003). Hong Kong's banking system and financial markets became important factors in facilitating the development of the real estate market, foreign investment in China and Chinese state enterprises (Hung 2022; Jao 1979).

Although mass housing urbanisation had been previously a crucial part of its social reforms to maintain public confidence and the city's prosperity, the colonial government embarked on a new pathway of urbanisation and shifted its focus from the new town programme towards a strategy of metropolisation that was intended to maintain Hong Kong's prosperity and stability during this phase of political transition. The government also substantially reorganised the entire territory congruent with China's economic reforms and the urbanisation strategies conducted by Shenzhen and Dongguan.

The metropolisation strategy has played a huge part in reshaping Hong Kong's urban pattern (Ho 2018). It was implemented by a range of urban development projects aiming to enhance its status as a global city and to restructure its relationships with the wider region. It included the massive expansion of the central business district (CBD) together with a great number of urban renewal projects in inner-city neighbourhoods, the operation of an international container port in Kwai Chung and a new airport on Lantau Island, together with the AsiaWorld-Expo, Hong Kong Disneyland and Tung Chung new town nearby. It also entailed the expansion of the transport network by the construction of the Tsing Ma Bridge, as well as highways and metro lines, and included the construction of new commercial and residential areas above and around the new metro stations. Among other projects, the Airport Express that links the new airport to the Central District via Kowloon, Tsuen Wan, Tsing Yi and Tung Chung was erected, thus creating an entire new urban corridor. All these projects involved land reclamation at an unprecedented scale in Central-Wanchai (108 ha), West Kowloon (334 ha) and Lantau Island (67 ha) (Ho 2004).

This metropolisation strategy implied a massive shift in capital away from the manufacturing sector to the real estate sector, which constituted a 47.8 per cent share of the GDP of Hong Kong by 1997 (Smart and Lee 2003). This shift had started in the 1970s at a time of great economic growth, when developers raised funds by listing companies on the stock market and expanded land reserves for speculation and land development as well as redeveloping factories into private housing estates. Since the 1980s land and property development has been the driver of wealth and has made up a significant part of the economy (Haila 2000; Tang 2008). In this new round of territorial development, mass housing urbanisation (e.g. in Tin Shui Wai and Tseung Kwan O) was coupled with the expansion and financialisation of the private housing sector, leading to an annual average increase of 23 per cent in the price of housing between 1985 and 1994 (Goodstadt 2005: 128).

The process of financialisation also characterised the strategy of the government-owned Hong Kong Mass Transit Railway Corporation (MTR), which was established in 1975 and partially privatised in 2000. The company started to develop the space above the metro stations with shopping malls and condominium towers through joint ventures with private developers. For this development MTR paid

Flagship development. West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong, 2012

Railway-led condo development. Lohus Park, Hong Kong, 2012

the government only a land premium based on the value of the land before it was developed. It then constructed the real estate project by capturing a substantial part of the increased land value after it had been developed (Yeung 2008). By creating increasing land values and constructing high-density housing, this model was regarded as a success and was replicated in Shenzhen in the 2000s (see below). This strategy of metropolisation, however, was accompanied by the relocation of industrial activities to mainland China, and thus entailed a parallel process of socioeconomic peripheralisation. The dramatic loss of industrial jobs forced working-class people into low-paid service jobs, while the real estate boom led to a massive surge in property prices and rents. Working-class families could choose to live in expensive but intolerably small subdivided or cubicle rooms in the inner-city areas or to relocate to new mass housing estates on the periphery, which offered difficult living conditions, particularly for young families who struggled to get a job in these areas or had to face long commutes to the central areas of Hong Kong.

In this period the New Territories were turned into an in-between space to facilitate all kinds of cross-border activities and to mediate between the process of metropolisation in Hong Kong and industrialisation in Dongguan and Shenzhen (see the following sections). Here, farmland was informally converted into various uses like container yards, open storage facilities and truck parks, through which villagers captured a higher land rent. The village housing stock expanded in number through a process of illegal extension and commodification, because in 1978 a new policy had stipulated that it was permitted to offer small houses for resale (Huang 2017). Thus, a variety of juxtaposing and conflicting land-uses coexisted: old and new town centres, public and private housing estates, urbanised village extensions, various public and private facilities and utilities, new highways and railways, country parks, farmland, wetlands and ecological zones. As the New Territories were determined by multiple logics and heterogeneous practices of urbanisation to accommodate the growth of population and the activities that went with it, they were also a space where conflicts took place among the government, developers, villagers and residents. In this way, a new urbanisation process emerged in the New Territories, which we call 'multilayered patchwork urbanisation' (see configuration map; see also Chapter 15).

To conclude, this period of political transition significantly restructured Hong Kong's urban pattern by using this strategy of metropolisation and demonstrated Hong Kong's prosperity and stability to the world at the time of the handover of sovereignty. Driven by a range of large-scale urban and infrastructural developments, metropolisation was re-articulated by a new relationship between the centre and the New Territories. With ongoing deindustrialisation and metropolisation, the real estate sector and the MTR became motors of economic and territorial development, while the coupling of public housing and industrial production declined in importance. With the increase in interactions and trade relations between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, the New Territories became a fragmented, in-between space characterised by divergent dynamics and orientations. This included a process of socioeconomic peripheralisation that trapped many low-income families which had to relocate from the city centre to the periphery (see Chapter 16).

## THE RISE OF A BORDER CITY: SHENZHEN, A CITY-TERRITORY WITH TWO SYSTEMS

In 1979, before urban development even started, Shenzhen was designated by the state as a city-territory. At that time, it was called Bao'an county and had 314,000 inhabitants, most of whom were peasants (Shenzhen Statistics Bureau 1996). Shenzhen town formed a small urban area of about three $km^2$. In 1980 Shenzhen became China's first SEZ. Deng Xiaoping defined this 'Special District' [or 'Special Region' (特区) (this was the original term)] to make it clear that it was different from the export processing zones found in other countries (Vogel 2011). It was not merely an area supported by favourable policies, but an administrative territorial unit that had specific state powers. The Chinese territorial system is an instrument by which the central government exercises control over all levels of government and thus also regulates urbanisation processes (Wong 2023). The special territorial power granted to Shenzhen aimed to implement radical economic reforms and guide the development of an entire new city-territory. To establish this SEZ, Bao'an county was designated a city-territory and renamed Shenzhen City. In 1981 it was proclaimed to be a deputy provincial-level city and thus elevated to the same administrative rank as Guangzhou. The economic power of Shenzhen's government was increased in 1988 when it became a 'separated planned city' (计划单列市) and thus reached the status equivalent to a provincial level city that was directly subordinated under the central government. In 1992 the city was granted local legislative power, which meant that the city government could enact its own laws for urban planning and management.

The rise of Shenzhen City was shaped by the distinction between two different territories that allowed it to manage its rapid and massive urbanisation process during the 1980s. The Shenzhen city-territory was thus divided into an SEZ (327 $km^2$) and an area outside the SEZ (1693 $km^2$), resulting in the creation of two different borders: one between Hong Kong and China and a second one between the SEZ and the non-SEZ area marked by a

90 km-long fence with checkpoints and controlled by the central state. It functioned according to the principle of 'containing capitalism' to a specific space (LPC 2011). The SEZ and the non-SEZ thus formed two separate territories with different laws and regulations for urban planning and budgeting; the first subjected to the city government and the second to the county government; the first with urban status and the second with rural status. As a consequence, the two zones underwent different processes of urbanisation.

The urbanisation of Shenzhen began at the border to Hong Kong. This location was a well calculated choice, as Deng wanted to connect Shenzhen directly to Hong Kong to take advantage of this global commercial and financial centre. Consequently, the territory of Shenzhen was linked to Hong Kong via roads, railways and sea ports and urbanisation rapidly spread over the entire territory along the main roads. The city government designated three strategic centres to start industrial and urban development, all located close to the border: Shekou in the west, Luohu in the centre and Shatoujiao in the east. They served as growth nodes along Shennan Road which formed the main axis of the entire SEZ (*Shenzhen Urban Planning and Land Administrative Bureau*, 1999). Initially, the master plan for the urban development of Shenzhen envisaged a linear city of about 0.8 million people. This evolved into a more ambitious plan for a hierarchical network city of 4.3 million people along three corridors (Shenzhen Municipality Planning and Land Bureau 1997). In reality, Shenzhen went on to experience the world's most rapid urbanisation at the time, growing from 2 million in 1990 to 3.4 million in 1994 and 4.3 million in 2000; the built-up area expanding from 300 $km^2$ in 1994 to 467 $km^2$ in 2000 (Wang 2003).

The city government developed Luohu into the main political and commercial centre of Shenzhen, with a range of industrial zones and estates, businesses, offices, hotels and resorts established by different state agencies. It included state-owned enterprises (SOEs) from central, provincial and local levels and also a large number of facilities for central government ministries, provinces, municipalities and enterprises to set up 'domestic link ventures' with the SEZ to facilitate exports and getting access to Western technology through Shenzhen (Chen 2017; Ng and Tang 2004a; Vogel 1989, 2011).

One of the largest SOEs was the China Merchants Group, which was affiliated to the China Ministry of Transport based in Hong Kong. Before the founding of the SEZ, in 1979 the China State Council granted this SOE a large tract of land to develop the Shekou Industrial Zone. The China Merchants Group was endowed with certain governmental rights and responsibility for planning, financing, administration, development, management and tax collection (Chen 2017). With its high degree of autonomy and direct relationship with the central government, Shekou became known as 'a special zone within a special zone'. It made full use of Hong Kong's capital market, business and banking networks, and its technologies and knowledge. Electrical power supply was developed by a leading British enterprise (South China Morning Post 1981). Hong Kong tycoons were attracted by various collaborations and projects on offer. Shekou rapidly developed into an industrial area with ports, factories, private housing and workers' dormitories, public facilities and tourist areas. There were other

Bronze statue of Deng Xiaoping, the chief architect of China's economic reforms. Futian, Shenzhen, 2012

Plotting around an old village. Shiyan, outside the former Shenzhen SEZ, 2012

influential SOEs in Shenzhen, such as the industrial and tourist sites of the Overseas Chinese Town and the Shangbu electronic industrial area. These state agencies were important in initiating large-scale urban development in Shenzhen, but they developed an ambiguous relation with the city government over the issues of authority and regulation in Shenzhen (Chen 2017).

While the city government and the SOEs accelerated the pace of urban and industrial development, something unexpected happened in Shenzhen: the emergence of urbanised villages. As village collectives held most of the land in Shenzhen, the city government adopted a land policy to acquire farmland while granting village collectives the right to develop a portion of their own farmland into industrial areas (Wang et al. 2009). This pragmatic solution, which was similar to the land policy in the New Territories in Hong Kong, enabled the city to expropriate land more easily. But it led to the formation of an institutional dualism: it officially enabled villages with rural status to urbanise, while the city government accelerated the pace of land expropriation to develop urban areas. Consequently, this led to a specific form of urbanised villages in Shenzhen; a kind of rural–urban interface that emerged alongside the expanding urban areas controlled by the city government. They were known as, 'villages in the city', widely documented in urban studies of China (see e.g. Hao et al. 2013; Bach 2010). In 2004, 320 urbanised villages (91 in the SEZ and 229 in the non-SEZ) existed in the whole city-territory of Shenzhen (Shenzhen Urban Planning Bureau 2005).

The rapid growth of urbanised villages in the 1990s can be seen as the result of the villagers' resistance to the increasing power of the city government and its ability to expropriate and commodify village land. The Shenzhen government held the first land auction in 1987 and was officially allowed to lease state-owned land for private development in 1988 (Lin 2009), using a model inspired by the land leasehold system in Hong Kong. In 1993 it extended its planning power into the non-SEZ area when its status was changed from that of a county into two directly administered urban districts. The consequence of all these policy changes was that the villagers hurried to construct buildings, extend existing buildings and add storeys; thus defending their land rights and interests by imposing facts on the ground. In our project we called this strategy of urbanisation, based on conflicting land regimes, 'plotting urbanism' (see Chapter 13). Plotting urbanism became an essential component of Shenzhen's rapid industrialisation in the 1990s. Urbanised villages developed into lively, thriving mixed neighbourhoods and plotting urbanism enabled small industries and trades to form clusters, as well as providing cheap housing for migrant workers and making the villagers de facto landlords.

As a result, Shenzhen's three strategic centres developed into a series of urban clusters along Shennan Road inside the SEZ, then extending into three economic corridors in the non-SEZ area along main transportation arteries: the National Road 107 on the west, with the Kowloon–Canton Railway in the central axis and the National Road 205 on the east. Various efforts by the city government, the SOEs, village collectives and individual villagers also promoted the process of land transformation and commodification and by the mid-1990s the development in the SEZ expanded towards the promotion of real estate projects. Luohu started the first urban renewal project to transform a shopping street in Dongmen. The SOEs redeveloped their industrial areas for commercial use so as to extract higher rents (e.g. the Shangbu industrial area) (Ng and Tang 2002). Lastly, urbanised villages were further densified along the expanding central area and those located in the outer districts were also spreading out along the main roads.

## EXPORT-LED RURAL INDUSTRIALISATION: DONGGUAN, INDUSTRIAL TOWNS AND EXTENDED URBANISATION

When Bao'an County became Shenzhen City, the county of Dongguan was also designated a city-territory as part of the state's territorial strategy in the Guangdong Province. Instead of developing

Dongguan into a major city like Shenzhen, however, a decentralised territorial system was established that mainly focused on the rural industrialisation of towns and villages and thus created the fundamental condition for extended urbanisation.

Historically, Dongguan was an agrarian society with the walled city of Guancheng as the seat of the county. By 1979 this county was composed of three urban communes and 29 rural communes, with 545 brigades at the lower level (DMCAB 2019: 50). During the 1980s, Dongguan underwent a radical political transformation after several rounds of re-territorialisation. In 1988 it was declared a prefecture-level city-territory led by the provincial government to propel rural industrialisation. Thus, the walled city of Guancheng expanded to become a city-territory encompassing 2,456 $km^2$ and containing a great variety of urban and rural areas.

During this process, Dongguan's specific form of territoriality set the primary condition for further urbanisation processes (Wong, 2019, 2023). It consisted of 29 towns and 542 village collectives surrounding the old city centre of Guancheng (DMCAB 2019: 51). While the legal governmental framework in China usually dictates that a city is leading counties, Dongguan's three-tier territorial structure—city-town-village—was based on a pragmatic political arrangement: in the absence of counties the towns had greater discretion in making fiscal policies and planning, as well as in economic development and construction, and the village collectives were organised as an extension of the town governments that were in charge of rural industrialisation.

By relying on Hong Kong for foreign investment and industrial development, Dongguan's towns and villages underwent rapid rural industrialisation during the 1990s (Lin 2006). Town governments and village cadres became the main actors of this transformation. Village party-secretaries managed the village territories and dealt with foreign investors to set up industries and businesses. At the same time the village offices started to expropriate farmland from individual village households and used large parts of rural collective land for manufacturing, trading and providing social facilities, roads and infrastructure. Large tracts of farmland were transformed into plots for factories and the land adjacent to the roads was used to construct multistoreyed houses.

In 1992 China announced that the national economic reforms were to be deepened and widened, leading to a nationwide rush to develop land (Cartier 2001). This speeded up extensive urbanisation in Dongguan. In the following years Dongguan increased the process of rural industrialisation, which was referred to as the second industrial revolution. Industrialised towns and villages developed rapidly, especially along the two main transportation lines: one along the Kowloon–Canton Railway on the east of Dongguan and another one along National Road 107 on the west. They connected with the non-SEZ area north-east of Shenzhen, where towns and urbanised villages were also expanding in the 1990s. Thus, two main economic corridors formed that concentrated foreign capital, migrant workers, factories and related industries.

Nevertheless, Dongguan's decentralised territorial strategy also led to divergent political and economic trajectories and generated various conflicts: territorial politics were entangled with land interests and the political actors became the leading economic actors in their own areas (Wong 2023). In the haste to commodify the village, land conflicts also emerged within the villages because there was no collective consensus on land expropriation, land transfer, investments and the distribution of revenues. Corruption and the abuse of political power were also sources of conflicts between the village leaders and the ordinary villagers. In the face of land expropriation, the villagers developed their own way of securing their land rights: they

Factories in a village territory. Tangxia town, Dongguan, 2018

Migrant enclave in a village. Tangxia town, Dongguan, 2013

grasped the opportunity to acquire plots each time land was auctioned by the village office by pooling money from their savings or which they obtained from their relatives in Hong Kong. By owning a building on a housing plot a villager could secure the right to use that land. Thus, many villagers owned several houses, violating the national policy of 'one household, one homestead'. The construction of individual houses that were rented out to migrants became a common practice among the villagers, and plotting urbanism thus spread over the entire territory of Dongguan.

In this way, local state power at the town and village level used export-led industrialisation based on foreign investors and migrant workers as the main model of development, and at breathtaking speed the rural landscape of Dongguan turned into a fragmented conglomeration of countless industrialised towns and villages, forming a patchwork of factories, workshops, village houses, housing blocks for migrants, street shops and wholesale markets that emerged spontaneously between patches of farmland at different times and places. However, this seemingly fluid, amorphous, disorienting space of global production contained uses that did not conform to the legal framework of 'rural land' and violated the national law of the non-alienable and non-transferable nature of village housing land. This posed a major problem when Dongguan launched its new strategy of concentrated urbanisation in the early 2000s.

# THE RISE OF A MULTICENTRIC URBANISED REGION

In the last two decades urbanisation processes have completely transformed spaces and power relations across Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan. The year 1997 marked the beginning of a new period of urbanisation for several reasons. Firstly, it was in this year that the Asian financial crisis erupted, the stock market plunged and the property bubble burst, bringing about an economic recession that lasted until 2005. Secondly, Hong Kong came under the sovereignty of China and underwent a shift in power relations and Chinese leaders and their business collaborators took control over the economy and urban development. Thirdly, China was able to join the World Trade Organisation in 2001 and this reinforced the momentum of Chinese economic growth and state power. In this changing situation, Hong Kong's government developed aggressive new strategies to bring about economic and urban development that in turn created enormous conflicts and struggles. Meanwhile, Shenzhen no longer saw itself as a poor backyard and it deployed a whole range of territorial shifts and urbanisation strategies to increase its power to restructure urban space. At the same time Dongguan developed into the 'world's factory' and became one of the main drivers of export-oriented industrialisation in China, but it was soon hit hard by the financial crisis of 2008. However, Dongguan was also attempting to change its paradigm of extended urbanisation to concentrated urbanisation and its new territorial strategy strengthened the city government's power to address the fragmentation of land-use and manage its multiple centres of power.

Accordingly, once again cross-border urbanisation transformed the urban pattern. Established centres expanded in scale and new centres rapidly emerged in former peripheries. These processes altered once more the relationship between the centres and the peripheries in this region. The boundary between extended and concentrated urbanisation became blurred as urban territories across the PRD underwent various processes of urban densification and intensification. The pathways of urbanisation were redefined by different and new governmental strategies and by the construction of complex transport and railway networks, as well as by various emerging contestations. These developments gave rise to the contemporary pattern of a multicentric, internally intertwined but contradictory urbanised region, with a complex but uneven spatial division of labour and differentiated territorial power relations.

## RECOLONISATION UNDER THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHINA: HONG KONG, 'ONE COUNTRY, TWO SYSTEMS'

When China obtained sovereignty over Hong Kong, a new era of recolonisation began (Lo 2008; Vines, 1998; Luk, 2017). This process was first embedded in the new political framework of 'one country, two systems', a slogan that Deng Xiaoping had originally used when he proposed to unify China with Taiwan and which was then applied to the state strategy to incorporate capitalism to govern Hong Kong after 1997. Hong Kong became a Special Administration Region (HKSAR) in the Chinese administrative territorial system, which introduced a separate system to retain Hong Kong's 'high level of autonomy' in its administrative, juridical, legal, financial and economic systems in accordance with the HKSAR Basic Law drafted on the basis of the Sino-British Joint Declaration from 1984. This territorial strategy also aimed at 'preserving an old system in a new sovereignty' that bound the contradictory socialist and capitalist regimes together in this 'Special Region' (Ghai 1998) and thus also preserved the colonial system of Hong Kong under China's sovereignty. As the Chinese government did not fulfil its promise of universal suffrage given in the HKSAR Basic Law, a process of recolonisation was retained in the new system that kept Hong Kong's colonial land rules and the authoritarian urban planning system, and reinforced the alliance between the Hong Kong government, business elites and developers.

The Hong Kong government continued to enjoy its land monopoly and tried to generate the highest return from its land, while the Hong Kong tycoons' interests were further institutionalised in the political system (Ma 2016). Since the 1980s the local business elites had switched their loyalty from London to Beijing in exchange for privileges and opportunities in Hong Kong and China (Ma 2007). The Chinese Communist Party successfully applied its deep-rooted revolutionary strategy of co-optation and built a 'united front' to form alliances and isolate enemies (Ma 2007, 2016). By fully utilising these two systems, Beijing exploited Hong Kong's 'autonomous' status at the international level by using its capital market to raise funds and invest in foreign countries; by taking advantage of Hong Kong's status as a special customs territory for trading and importing technology from the USA; and attracting foreign investment to China using Hong Kong's internationally oriented juridical and open economic systems (Hung 2022).

The reconfiguration of power relations unfolded in a range of large-scale urban and infrastructural projects that were undertaken after 1997. These projects were branded as 'Asia's World City' in official discourse, aiming to showcase a better Hong Kong under China's leadership. They aimed to produce a 'world-class' urban space through developing railway and other infrastructural projects and urban renewal projects undertaken by public–private partnerships. These projects constituted the centrepiece of the recolonisation process under the collaboration of the government with business elites. Projects such as the Cyberport IT Hub and the West Kowloon Cultural Hub were offered to developers in a single tender with neither public bidding nor public consultation (Sing 2010). These projects were accompanied by top of the range office and retail space and luxury housing, new metro lines and the high-speed train terminal, West Kowloon Station.

Additionally, urban renewal strategies were introduced in 2001, when the Hong Kong government founded the Urban Renewal Authority, endowed with powers to expropriate land and waiver the payment of the land premium, together with a grant of an initial injection of public capital (Ng 2002). It partnered with developers to accelerate the recapitalisation of the old urban districts and post-industrial areas such as Tsuen Wan, with the goal of launching 200 new urban renewal projects. Large-scale land reclamation schemes in Wan Chai and Central Hong Kong also provided new spaces for the expansion of the CBD, restructuring the entire urban core of Hong Kong. This included the construction of a new political centre with the Central Government Complex of HKSAR, the Legislative Council and a military camp of the People's Liberation Army constructed next to the Central District waterfront promenade without the zoning approval of the Town Planning Board.

Many of these projects faced fierce opposition, and post-1997 Hong Kong witnessed the emergence of social movements and civil society protests opposing evictions and displacements and demanding social justice and public participation in planning and policy-making. One example is Lee Tung Street in Wan Chai, one of the traditional street economies that was turned into a space of resistance against an urban renewal project after 2003. It was called the 'wedding card street' by the locals because of its long-established small businesses that were famed for manufacturing wedding cards. This street was an important space of representation for ordinary residents' lives and culture; one of the last standing monuments to 'old Hong Kong'. Affected residents, activists, students, researchers, architects and artists defended the old neighbourhood and its local networks, made alternative plans to the government and resisted displacement, eviction and the power of the police (Chen and Szeto 2015).

Social movements also rose up in 2006, opposing the CBD expansion project in the Central District and the demolition of the Queen's Pier and the Star Ferry Clock Tower. For many, particularly for the new generation of Hong Kongers, these two historic buildings had great symbolic value and protesters demanded that they be conserved, occupying the pier to make it accessible for public use and advocating authentic citizen participation in planning decisions. Struggles against the high-speed rail construction and new town projects also erupted in the New Territories (Cheng 2016). A thousand protestors gathered at the Legislative Council to oppose the government's approval of the railway construction budget and later protested against the construction of a joint checkpoint at the West Kowloon Terminal. These post-1997 projects were not independent of each other. They were part of the systematic reconfiguration of space and power relations by Beijing's alliance to achieve their political and economic agendas. The social movements opposed this collusion between the Hong Kong government and these elites at the expense of the public interest and also opposed the amendment of ordinances and policies to facilitate land acquisition, urban redevelopment and evictions.

Starting in 2006, the government reinforced the strategic importance of the New Territories by promoting a new process of regional integration and real estate expansion. In this round of urban development, Heung Kee Kuk, the political organisation of the indigenous villages, joined the pro-government alliance and supported controversial policies such as the new town projects and the security law (Hui and Au 2016). In the following years, the government constructed new highways and railways, introduced new incentives for private developers and launched three new town projects as public–private partnerships strategically located in areas where developers held large speculative reserves of farmland. This started a process of eviction of residents in some non-indigenous villages.

Another controversial project was the Hong Kong section of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hongkong high-speed railway that required the demolition of a non-indigenous village in Yuen Long to build an emergency rescue station for the railway. The government justified this very expensive railway with the argument that it was necessary to integrate Hong Kong into the PRD—but both activists and experts maintained that there were already several efficient alternative ways of travelling to Guangzhou. Protestors also opposed the construction of a joint Hong Kong–China customs checkpoint inside the West Kowloon train terminal, which allowed Chinese officials to wield power within the territory of Hong Kong, thus threatening the latter's autonomy (South China Morning Post 2017).

These combined urbanisation strategies entailed a large-scale process of re-territorialisation. They not only reshaped the multilayered patchwork urbanisation process that had emerged in the New Territories during the 1980s, but also aimed at integrating the new towns and other real estate projects with urban developments in Shenzhen's centres through railways and cross-border infrastructure. These projects were therefore regarded by the public as part of a state strategy to achieve political and economic integration by blurring the political boundaries between Hong Kong and mainland China.

Struggles against urban renewal in a post-war neighbourhood. Lee Tung Street, Wanchai, Hong Kong, 2007

## SHENZHEN: A POLYCENTRIC URBAN CORE AND STRATEGIC NEW CENTRALITIES

During the mid-1990s Shenzhen experienced the fastest economic and population growth of all areas in the whole PRD. Its population rose from 3.35 to 5.57 million between 1994 and 2003 (Shenzhen Statistics Bureau 2004). The use of land for industrial and urban purposes expanded rapidly from 300 to 467 $km^2$ between 1994 and 2000 (Wang 2003) and reached 720 $km^2$ of built-up area in 2010 (Shenzhen Commercial Press 2010). In view of the spread of economic reforms throughout China and Shanghai's economic boom in the early 2000s, however, local professionals observed that Shenzhen had gradually lost its special status and the dream of Shenzhen of becoming a provincial city seemed out of reach, as Guangzhou was still the leading city in the province of Guangdong (Lao et al. 2004). Furthermore, Shenzhen faced the problem of land shortage for new growth and expansion, because the city was limited by its small territory, unlike Guangzhou, which transformed four of its subordinate county-level cities into urban districts to propel its 'Greater Guangzhou plan'.

In this context, Shenzhen repositioned itself to play a major role in South China by becoming an international city with modernist architecture and high-tech industries, aiming to take advantage of the proximity of Hong Kong as a global city. In the 1996–2000 master plan, Shenzhen had already exhibited its ambitions to initiate city-wide territorial development strategies by extending the SEZ plan over its entire territory. For the following two decades a new territorial structure was envisaged, with the goal of consolidating the SEZ as a polycentric urban core, strengthening the emerging three urban corridors by providing new infrastructural networks and developing new centralities and hubs (Wang 2004). To achieve these goals, Shenzhen chose the territorial strategy to concentrate political and planning power in the hands of the city government and thus to resolve the politico-territorial fragmentation that resulted from its previous strategy.

By 2004 Shenzhen was administratively restructured into a 'city with urban districts'. The county and 18 town governments in the outer areas were abolished, the status of 228 village collectives (270,000 villagers) was changed from rural to urban and the ownership status of village land was reclassified as state-owned land. These laws were intended to give all land an urban status, thereby streamlining urban planning and enforcing urban strategies on the entire territory (interview with a local planner, 2014). In 2008 the city government took back the planning and management powers from the SOEs (Chen 2017) and in 2010, the State Council approved extending the SEZ area to the entire territory, thus increasing the legislative authority of the city government to the outer districts. However, Shenzhen's aggressive urban development strategies again sparked conflicts, particularly in the case of large plotted areas in the urbanised villages which opposed the increasing powers of the city government and defended their land interests.

The city centre of Shenzhen was subsequently developed into a large, elongated urban core with numerous centres parallel to the border with Hong Kong. The obsession to have the biggest CBD in China is a common one. When the first centre, Luohu, entered into a process of urban renewal in the late 1990s, Shenzhen started to build its second centre in Futian as a new political centre and CBD. In this process, remarkable architectural landmarks selected by an international design competition were created to showcase the transformation of Shenzhen from an export-led manufacturing city into a modern international metropolis (also see Cartier 2002). This ambition was prominently underscored by locating a large bronze statue of Deng Xiaoping at the top of the hill of Lianhuashan Park, facing the city centre towards Hong Kong (and the world). The third new centre was Qianhai, which was heralded in 2010 as a 'Hong Kong–Shenzhen collaborative project' aimed at developing the third national free trade zone (a new financial, commercial and service centre) as part of a new plan for the 'Greater Bay Area', which was chosen to be the new name for the PRD development plan. While Futian had been built on a vast agricultural area strategically located on the central axis of Shenzhen close to the border, Qianhai was located at the estuary to the west on reclaimed land and oriented towards the cities in the core of the PRD.

Foxconn Campus. Longhua, outside the former Shenzhen SEZ, 2012

CBD development. Luohu, Shenzhen, 2012

To connect these huge new centralities with the wider territory around it, Shenzhen replicated Hong Kong's strategy of railway-led urbanisation (see configuration map: commuting areas). Initially collaborating with Hong Kong's MTR, Shenzhen founded its own company and expanded its metro network at remarkable speed to a total length of 273 km in 2016. Just as in Hong Kong, the metro system was subsequently used as a value capture mechanism, igniting a real estate boom of constructing condominiums, shopping malls and office towers (Xue and Fang 2015). It intensified and consolidated the development of a polycentric urban core. Urban renewal projects in Luohu and the redevelopment of industrial sites in Shangbu, Shahe and Nanhan created a cityscape for a thriving new middle class of young professionals, homeowners and consumers (Elfick 2011). In Shekou the city government together with SOEs launched several megaprojects and urban renewal schemes to develop it into another world-class city centre and expanded its container port so it could compete with Hong Kong and Guangzhou. In 2006 the government started to build new strategic centralities in the outer districts for high-tech industries and logistics, as well as new town districts, called (新城), such as Longgong, Longhu, Pingshan and Guangming, connected by a complex transportation network (see configuration map: subcentres in Shenzhen). These new towns rapidly initiated a new urban form with high density buildings and top of the range functions, relocating manufacturing industries into planned industrial zones and redeveloping urbanised villages into designated residential areas, thus reorganising these fragmented urbanised districts (interview with a local planner, 2014).

At the same time, the urbanised villages themselves made a contribution to this massive urban transformation. Firstly, plotting left a startling impact on the entire urbanised city-territory. Following the city government's announcement of new regulations to control and legalise village buildings, a new burst of plotting emerged between 1999 and 2001 that almost doubled the size of plotted areas in Shenzhen. Meanwhile, plotting urbanism also remained prominent in the outer districts. One remarkable example of this was the transformation of several entire villages into dormitories and service hubs around the manufacturing campus of the Taiwanese tech giant Foxconn in the Longhua district. This campus alone employed a total of 430,000 workers in 2000 (Pun and Chan 2012).

Secondly, plotting urbanism moved into a new direction when the city government announced its new urban renewal strategy in 2004. This strategy aimed at mobilising 'market forces' to produce new urban spaces by offering developers various incentives (Hin and Xin 2011) and at the same time dismantling a large number of the illegal plotted areas of the urbanised villages. Although urban renewal projects gradually replaced unauthorised village houses and partly integrated urbanised villages into the centralised planning and regulation system, it created new conflicts. This is illustrated by the well-known case of 'nail houses', when villagers rejected the compensation suggested by developers, then asked for their best offer and thus became 'super rich villagers'. Although the official discourse claimed the urbanised villages were 'problematic', they were welcomed by scholars for their profound social and economic significance to the rise of Shenzhen City during the period of economic reform (e.g. Wang et al. 2009).

## DONGGUAN: BOOMING INDUSTRIALISED TOWNS AND VILLAGES WITH EXPANDING CENTRALITIES

The urbanisation of Dongguan was given new momentum after regional restructuring in the late 1990s started a new round of inter-city competition. At that time, Dongguan's economic growth was fuelled by a new industrial boom. While industrialisation had started with the relocation of industries from Hong Kong and then from Shenzhen's SEZ from the mid-1990s, it expanded again as a result of the large influx of foreign enterprises after the 1997 Asian financial crisis. In contrast to other Asian cities hit by the crisis, Dongguan attracted a large number of Taiwanese enterprises that had withdrawn their investments

from South-East Asia and relocated factories to China. Thus, Dongguan became well known as the 'world's factory', hosting a wide range of export-oriented, labour-intense industries such as clothing, footwear, furniture, toys and food processing. Town governments promoted the specialisation and clustering of industries and provided the infrastructure required. For example, Humen became a clothing manufacturing town and a nationwide clothing trading centre. The Taiwanese enterprises also transformed Dongguan into a major computer manufacturing hub (Yang and Liao 2010). By 2007 Dongguan had become the fourth largest exporter in China and the second largest in the Guangdong Province (Yu and Wong 2011). Industrial growth came with a rapid increase in the migrant population, rising from 1.45 to 5.87 million between 1997 and 2006 (Dongguan Statistics Bureau 1998, 2007). However, they had no right to benefit from local welfare, education and social services.

This process of industrial expansion had an enormous impact on the urban space of the towns and villages which had undergone a radical expansion in built-up areas (see configuration map: industrialised towns and villages). In Chang'an, the largest manufacturing town (which specialised in producing metal and mould) in Dongguan, the migrant population grew to 678,000, with 78,000, 83,000 and 84,000 people living in three of its villages in 2004 (Dongguan Statistics Bureau 2005). Large amounts of village farmland had been transformed into dense, self-contained neighbourhoods with factories and multistoreyed houses, shops, trading markets, public facilities and infrastructure. Different social and economic activities flourished, including the construction industry, wholesale and retail markets, entertainment, transportation and various consumer and producer services. Nevertheless, Dongguan soon entered a period of crisis and uncertainty when its exports declined rapidly in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2008. This resulted in the closure or relocation of many factories as well as a drop in the number of migrants.

In the aftermath of the economic crisis, the city of Dongguan turned its attention to large-scale territorial restructuring. This was no easy task. The rapid growth of towns and villages had strengthened the power of town governments and village collectives (see previous section) and undermined the leading role of the city government, which had to face the issue of the fragmented urban pattern (Wong 2023). This extensive and dispersed form of rural industrialisation was regarded as the 'spread of numerous stars in the sky without a large shining moon in the centre' (quoted in Lin 2006) and its city-territory was commonly described as 'a city that does not look like a city; a rural area that does not look rural'. This was exacerbated by the issue of political fragmentation, in which local party officials executed political tasks while at the same time circumventing certain regulations to pursue their own economic interests.

This situation triggered a paradigm shift towards concentrated urbanisation in Dongguan. At the highest level, the central state enforced more stringent land regulations (Yang and Wang 2007). At the city level, Dongguan began a political realignment that tried to recentralise the administrative power and reshape its relationships with the town governments. However, the city government could not get full control over its entire territorial and urban development because, unlike Shenzhen, it could not transform the towns into urban districts.

'Modern' village with high-rise apartments. Tangxia town, Dongguan, 2018

Only in 2015 was Dongguan finally granted legislative authority from the central state to resolve the contradictions of its government. Thus, this turn towards concentrated urbanisation was still strongly influenced by the old city-town-village administrative structure that had produced the fragmented form of Dongguan's extended urbanisation. And Dongguan still lacked a thriving urban centre.

It was in this context that Dongguan started an urban development strategy to build new regional centres and create a new city image with the goal of becoming the third leading city in the PRD. The 'Five-Year City-Building' project launched in 2000 included the construction of Nancheng (the southern city), a large-scale new city centre as the new heart of Dongguan, in contrast to its historic walled-city centre, Guancheng. Nancheng became a political, business and cultural centre with spectacular landscape and architecture emphasising 'size' (大) and 'greatness' (強), rivalling Shenzhen's Futian CBD and Guangzhou's new University Town. Next to it, Dongcheng (the eastern city), became a new residential area attracting urban professionals and the middle classes. Both centres experienced rapid urban growth in the following 10 years, covering a surface area of 35 $km^2$ in total (interview with local scholars, 2014). Dongguan's ambitious plan also included a number of additional new centralities. The most important one was the Songshan Lake high-tech zone in central Dongguan with a surface area of 72 $km^2$, mainly built on expropriated village land on the periphery of four towns and connected to Nancheng by new ring roads and expressways (interview with local planners, 2014) (see configuration map: Hi-tech development zone). Space around the lake and on nearby hills was transformed into expensive condominiums, villas, tourist sites, high-tech industries, a university and the like. It attracted corporations such as Huawei, which relocated its headquarters from Shenzhen to Songshan Lake and built a campus based on the models of European towns.

All these efforts finally led to the spectacular transformation of Dongguan. The city government increased its planning powers in the towns, created new regional centres for top of the range urban development and additional centralities, and it also expanded its railway network, including a metro line, three inter-city railway lines and two high-speed railways. Towns and villages followed suit by expanding their town centres, starting urban renewal projects and constructing high-rise apartments for villagers. This dramatically restructured the existing, fragmented urban patchwork of the town and village territories and shifted urban development towards concentrated urbanisation.

# CONCLUSION

In this study I emphasise the importance of the political and historical context in shaping and influencing the rapid transformation of the cross-border territory of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan. My analysis of the patterns and pathways of urbanisation shows the development of a polycentric, internally complex and closely interconnected urbanising territory. The three cities have undergone divergent trajectories under two fundamentally different regimes: capitalism (Hong Kong) and socialism (Shenzhen and Dongguan). In this conclusion, I highlight the three main features of this territory and consider the conceptual and empirical implications of the production of this particular urban space.

Firstly, although China's open-door policy and subsequent globalisation can be seen as a turning point for the entire PRD region, its cross-border urbanisation processes have to be situated in Hong Kong's colonial historical context and pathway of urbanisation. The urbanisation of Shenzhen and Dongguan since 1979 followed the postwar growth model of Hong Kong, based on export-led industrialisation, which served as the role model for Deng Xiaoping's national economic reforms. Consequently, his strategy was to dock Shenzhen's and Dongguan's urban development onto Hong Kong's urban infrastructure and to take advantage of its established international financial centre. Hong Kong's pathway towards an international financial centre had been anchored in its strong export-oriented industrialisation and its long-established economic function as an Asian trading and capital hub, which took advantage of its colonial privilege of being included in the sterling area and its deliberate lack of capital control. The rise of Hong Kong to a global city was further advanced by its urban strategy of metropolisation.

Cross-border urbanisation processes were also rooted in Hong Kong's colonial institutional arrangements and policies, such as the land leasehold system, the land exchange practices of the villages and the model of railway-led development and urban renewal. These profit-driven mechanisms were replicated in a modified form in developing various state and local governmental instruments in Shenzhen and Dongguan. In turn, the specific urban pathways they took were important in the formation of this rapidly transforming region, which is quite different from Macau, although that city also developed from a former colony into a SAR connected to the Zhuhai SEZ.

Secondly, the development of this cross-border region was greatly determined by the territorial power of the Chinese state, which defined and circumscribed the roles and institutional arrangements of the three city-territories, as well as their interactions and mutual relationships. The

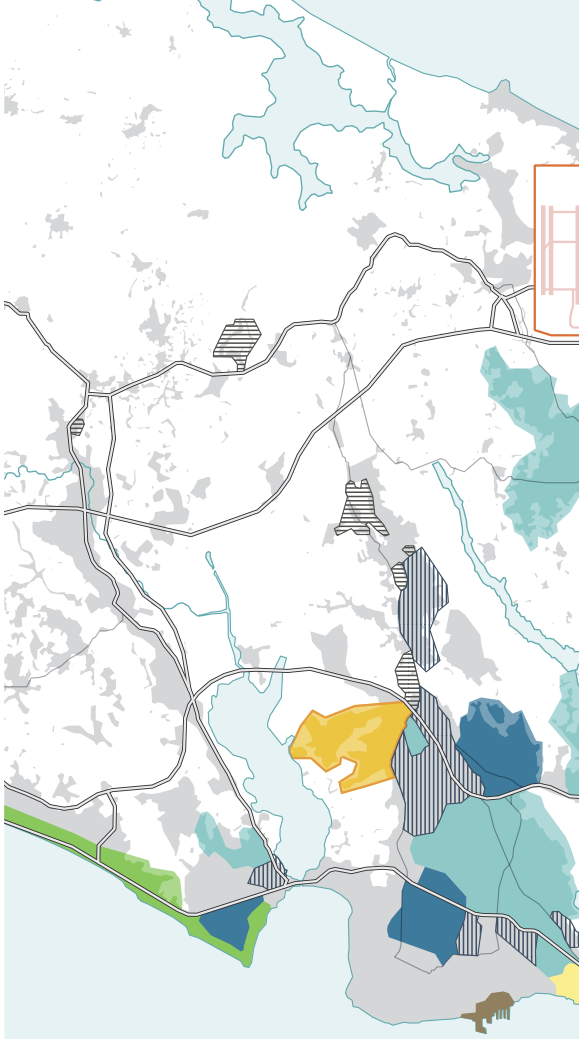
Chinese government adopted a thoroughgoing and flexible political territorial strategy that mediated the forces of concentrated and extended urbanisation in Dongguan (see Wong 2023). Shenzhen experimented with the political configuration of Special Districts for containing capitalism in the bounded space of the SEZ. In Hong Kong, a similar configuration was applied to manage its capitalist arrangements after 1997. The state's specific definition of the city-territories in Shenzhen, and later also Dongguan, served to control the form of urbanisation, infused with new sets of political power and institutional arrangements. In this way, the Chinese state differentiated state powers so that it was able to control all local governments from the outset through several rounds of territorial restructuring.

The borders or boundaries of the political territories can be understood as instruments to manipulate urban change, to add new centres and to create territorial differences. They enabled the relevant authorities to implement different policies to manage the SEZ and non-SEZ areas in Shenzhen and the city centre and town and village areas in Dongguan, and they led to differences in laws and regulations as well as land and property values. In the same way, the political framework of 'two systems' in 'one country', designed to integrate Hong Kong into China's territorial system, was exploited by the state in order to participate in international markets. On the domestic scale, China's land policy was an important tool for commodifying space without privatising the land, and importantly, to exploit migrant workers as a pool of cheap labour for economic growth (Pun 2016).

Last but not least, there is the question of major contradictions and contestation in this cross-border territory. All three city-territories were influenced by different dominant yet shifting political forces, which were challenged and contested in various ways. Hong Kong's pathways of urbanisation was constantly interrupted and reshaped by changing political circumstances, such as its geopolitical vulnerability during the Cold War, and the diplomatic deal that was done for the retreat of the British empire and the handover of sovereignty to China in 1997. The colonial power structure of the pragmatic coupling of colonialism with capitalism was enhanced by Beijing so that the state could strengthen its hold on Hong Kong and institutionalise its interests through its alliances with local elites that would facilitate Hong Kong's regional integration into the PRD, eventually fuelling the growth of social movements throughout the last two decades.

For Shenzhen and Dongguan, two different frameworks of state power were used to combine political and economic interests from the beginning. Both saw a period of rapid growth and radical transformation in the 1980s and 1990s. However, this was accompanied by the fragmentation of governmental structures and territorial relations. As shown in this chapter, the changes in Shenzhen's power framework re-articulated the city government's relation to its city-territory, but this process led to massive rounds of plotting urbanism, which continued even during the wave of large-scale urban renewal projects in the 2000s. As for Dongguan, its decentralised power framework enabled it to become the 'world's factory' in the 2000s. Its three-tier territorial structure had the goal of enabling profit sharing and although the domination by town and village officials guaranteed fast growth and development, it also led to different forms of villager activism so that they could get hold of village land. This period of extensive but fragmented urbanisation would eventually force Dongguan to switch to its current paradigm of concentrated urbanisation.

To conclude, the cross-border region of Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan does not display a continuous economic gradient from central to peripheral areas and it does not form an integrated institutional, political and economic entity, as the official discourse of 'regional integration' wants to make us believe. On the contrary, this urbanised region incorporated the changing political economic regimes that set the larger context, and the three city-territories generated very complex political, institutional and socio-economic conditions on the ground. They worked together to spur several decades of economic growth; however, in recent times, they lost their previous advantages of making use of different forms of export-led industrialisation. As a result, they vigorously enacted a process of large-scale urban restructuring and intensification to maintain their leading roles in the PRD. This development paradigm was recently reformulated in the new strategy of the 'Greater Bay Area' that aims at restructuring the region from the 'world's factory' to an international innovation, science and technology hub with a green environment and a high quality of life. Nevertheless, before achieving these goals, the move of this urbanised region towards regional integration has not only to face and overcome the obstacles of the complex pattern of different administrative systems and territorial regulations, but also the different economic strategies of local governments. In the face of the dominant mode of state planning by Beijing, Hong Kong still struggles to navigate its changing position in the Greater Bay Area. It also faces considerable public opposition against its large-scale development plans and regional integration projects.



Main centrality

1 Commercial, touristic and cultural centre in the historical peninsula
2 Beyoğlu
3 Mecidiyeköy and Gayrettepe
4 Büyükdere Avenue
5 Maslak

Mixed plotted area

Heterogeneous zone dominated by densified popular settlements, plotted neighbourhoods, manufacturing areas, pockets of mass housing and local centralities; urban redevelopment in various locations

Mixed mass housing development

Developed by housing cooperatives, state agencies or private developers; a wide spectrum from low-income to high-profile projects; often high-density

Historic area under urban renewal

Old industrial and residential building stock on either side of the Golden Horn undergoing urban redevelopment and gentrification

Formal middle-class neighbourhood

Formally developed residential areas; predominantly apartment buildings

Suburban gated community

Low-density gated communities inhabited by affluent social groups

Rich residential area

Villas, detached houses, gated communities and apartment buildings at coastal locations historically preferred by the rich

Leisure zone

Dominated by vacation homes; along the coast

Industrial zone

Military zone

Port

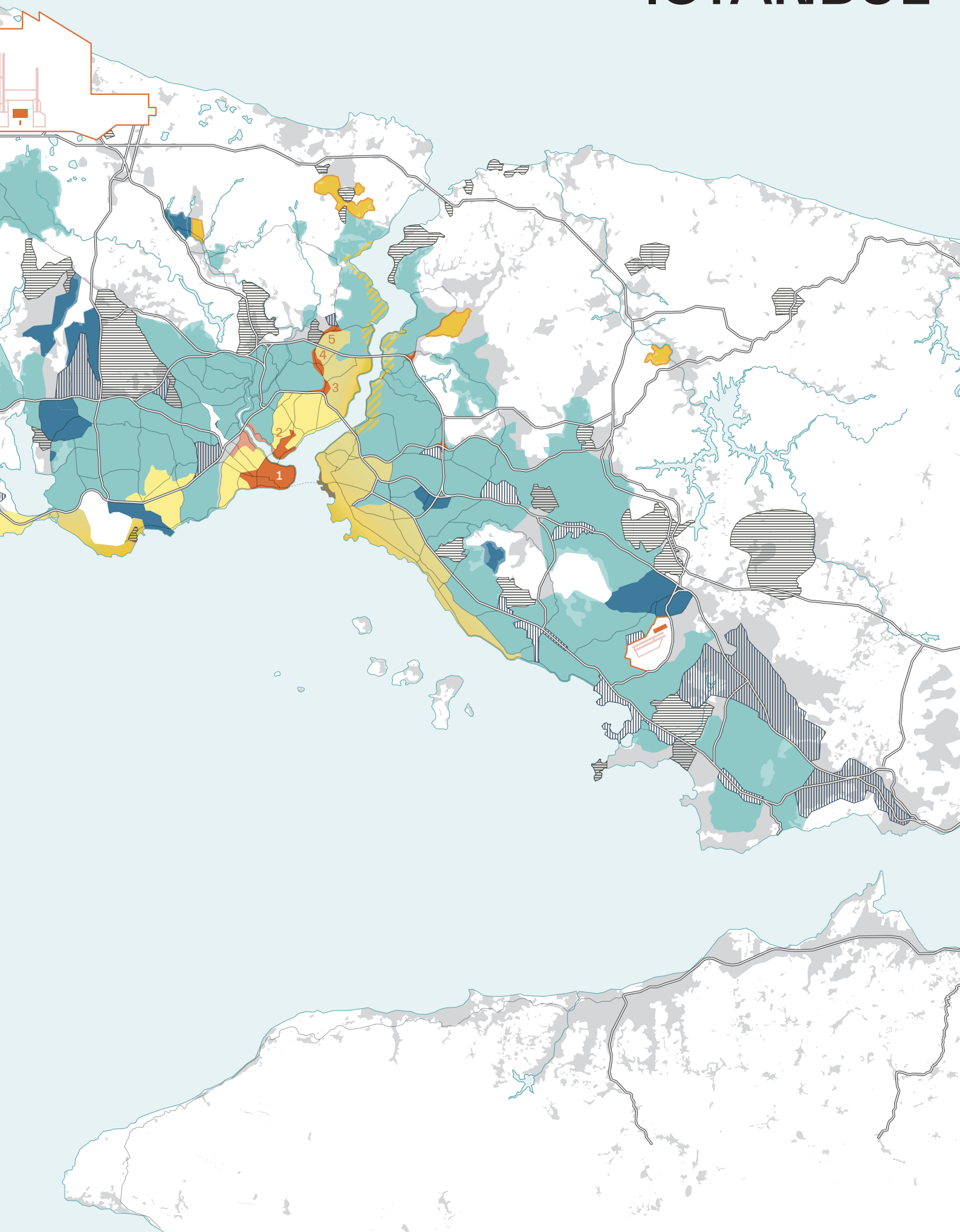
Airport

Urban footprint

Highway, main road

0 5 10 20 km

# ISTANBUL



The age of grandiosity didn't last long. When Vladimir Nabokov alighted here in 1919, he found a city in ruins … There was no physical destruction, but this place used to get the riches of all the Middle East and the Balkans, and then it all vanished, and it was reduced to poverty.

Orhan Pamuk, *Hammer,* 2014

## FROM GECEKONDU TO 'CRAZY' PROJECTS

There is a substantial body of literature on the historical and social geography of Istanbul (see among others Tekeli 1992; Keyder 1999; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Esen 2011; Gül 2009; Bartu Candan and Özbay 2014). Urbanists have used a wide array of theoretical lenses to analyse the intertwined historical layers from the era of imperial cosmopolitanism to the vastly accelerated and multifaceted urbanisation of the modern period, while taking into consideration the specific conjunctures that have, at times dramatically, shifted the relative positioning of the city at regional and global scales. Following in the footsteps of this existing body of work I explain the contemporary

socio-spatial patterns of the urban region via a heuristic approach based on mapping. Therefore, the configuration map will be the main organising principle of this chapter, allowing me to delve into the past so as to excavate pivotal shifts (be they material, regulatory or political) that still have a bearing on the current situation.

The main structuring element of Istanbul's urban footprint at the macro scale is the Bosporus strait, sharply dividing the metropolis into a 'European' and 'Anatolian' side. These geographical designations are firmly rooted in everyday usage and conceptions of the city, even though the two sides are increasingly connected thanks to the expansion of the transportation network, giving more coherence to the urban fabric. The two ring roads (corresponding to the present day D100 and E-80 highways) crossing the Bosporus are crucial in this regard. The significant dates are the opening of the two suspension bridges spanning the Bosporus (in 1973 and 1988, respectively). These ring roads have facilitated the expansion of the urban footprint along the east-west axis, most critically towards the ecologically significant forest areas in the north. The most recent episode in this expansionary wave has been the construction of the third ring road over a third suspension bridge, which was opened in 2016. The territorial limits of this analysis capture these subsequent waves of growth within a relatively continuous urban footprint. The northern and southern limits of the analysis are simply provided by large bodies of water; namely, the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea. The eastern and western ends include the industrial peripheries, second homes, mining zones, agricultural land and forest areas. Undoubtedly this configuration map —by its nature—is partial and cannot capture much of the 'operational landscapes' (Brenner and Schmid 2015) that extend into the hinterlands and beyond. My priority here is to depict as comprehensively as possible the urban configurations that are most relevant to Istanbul's tendencies of agglomeration (i.e. concentrated urbanisation).

It is necessary to understand the enduring centre–periphery duality that has been central to studies on the development of Istanbul. On the one hand, one may observe the central areas including the prestigious coastal neighbourhoods that make up 'old Istanbul' proper, often called the 'real Istanbul', namely the Istanbul that existed in the first half of the 20th century before the beginning of mass migration from the provinces. This Istanbul has been the subject matter of bodies of literature on collective memory, belonging, (lost) cosmopolitanism and heritage (see among others, Bartu 1999; Behar and İslam 2006; Mills 2010). This is also predominantly the Istanbul of artists, tourists and writers, as featured in the renowned works of Orhan Pamuk, for example. Separated by a transition zone of middle-class housing surrounding this core is a vast territory dominated by popular urbanisation and plotting urbanism.

The other Istanbul—much less glorified and venerated than the first—has been the subject matter of research on urban informality, poverty, marginality, clientelism, populism and social mobility (Öncü 1988; Erman 2001; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Keyder 2005). This second Istanbul is marked visually in the configuration map as a vast zone that I call a 'mixed plotted area' that has borne the brunt of explosive urban growth in the past 70 years, and which will therefore be a major focus of this text. This increasingly heterogeneous zone is dominated by densified popular settlements, plotted neighbourhoods, areas of manufacturing, pockets of mass housing and local centralities.

This dual model is necessarily reductionist and needs to be updated as urban configurations and processes continuously evolve; especially in view of recent shifts such as the continual piecemeal replacement of high-density housing stock with homes that have a better quality of construction, large-scale infrastructure projects, the emergence of gated communities and mass housing urbanisation located in the peripheries. The model has nonetheless proved to be quite resilient and retains significant explanatory power in today's Istanbul. In elaborating on the configuration map, I contextualise and complicate the evolution of this dual structure. I begin this chapter by providing a brief historical contextualisation, to the extent that it facilitates the discussion of individual urban configurations, which the bulk of the analysis will then focus on.

Historical centre, Eminönü, 2019

# PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

Having developed at the intersection of Asia Minor, the Balkans, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean around a well-protected natural harbour, for centuries Istanbul was one of the busiest, most affluent and most populous cities in the world. It held this prominent status from the Byzantine era until the decline of the Ottoman Empire—roughly from the 5th to the 18th century. In the 19th century, under Western commercial and cultural influences the first major developments outside the walled city took shape. The city began spilling over towards the north—most notably Galata and Pera (now known as Beyoğlu) and along the shores of the Bosporus and the Sea of Marmara (Tekeli 1992: 6). This period is characterised by first steps taken in the direction of industrialisation as well as the opening up of the economy to Western influences (Kuban 1996: 378, 379).

## EARLY 20TH CENTURY: THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL IN DECLINE

The city experienced relative decline and stagnation during the first half of the 20th century as the country underwent immense political turmoil, including a series of wars in the Balkans and the Middle East, the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence. Istanbul was occupied by the Allies between 1918 and 1923. This period culminated in the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, the founding of the Turkish Republic and the loss of Istanbul's capital city status to Ankara in 1923. The city experienced disinvestment and shrinkage during this period. Between 1897 and 1927 Istanbul's population dropped from 1.1 million to 690,000 (Tekeli 1992: 21). According to a 1924 report, in large swathes of the city 'differing degrees of neglect, desolation, and degradation could be detected even by the most casual observer in residential areas which were partly deserted' (Tekeli 1992: 26).

It was only in the late 1940s, with the beginning of large-scale industrialisation, that Istanbul entered a period of dramatic population growth, which manifested itself in waves of urban sprawl and densification. Its population increased steadily from fewer than 1.2 million in 1950 to 5.8 million in 1985 and 15.5 million in 2019 (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) 2001; Istanbul Istatistik Ofisi [Istanbul Statistics Office] 2019).

## IMPORT SUBSTITUTION INDUSTRIALISATION AND RAPID URBANISATION

In the 1950s the right-wing Democrat Party administration undertook a series of large-scale public works projects. Large sections of the historic city centre were bulldozed to make space for wide boulevards and highways (Kuban 1996: 423–434). After decades of hiatus and disrepair, Istanbul once again emerged as the most prominent economic and cultural centre in the country. The defining feature of these three decades (1950–1980) was a relatively peaceful compromise between the rapidly urbanising industrial workers and the up-and-coming national bourgeoisie under the arbitration of the state (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001). This has to be understood in the context of the import substitution industrialisation policies of the era, which were institutionalised in the 1960s (Keyder 1987), as well as the roll-out of welfare instruments such as job security, access to free or low-cost health care, education and retirement funds (Keyder 1987; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 101) Every social group benefitted from the rapid urban growth in the form of increasing land rents, which in turn provided funding for further urbanisation (Öncü 1988).

The first *gecekondus* (namely low-cost, low-tech, largely improvised housing built mostly on publicly owned peripheral areas in close proximity to factories) were a form of popular urbanisation. They emerged in the latter half of the 1940s and increased dramatically in the following decades (Şenyapılı 1998). Subsequent administrations, often maintaining the fiction that they were fighting against gecekondu formations, ended up caving in to the rapidly unfolding reality on the ground. The handing out of legal title for these homes

High-rise gated community, Gaziosmanpaşa, 2013

before the elections—an inclusionary policy and 'an integral component of the [state's] industrialisation strategy'—became a familiar routine (Keyder 1987: 162).

## GLOBALISING THE CITY

The 1980s were marked by significant changes in the urbanisation regime, in parallel with the dramatic political and economic shifts in the country as a whole, which were contemporaneous with the rise of neoliberalism across the world. The new centre-right administration encouraged entrepreneurship, deregulated the economy and opened up the country to foreign trade after three decades of statist policies based on import substitution and price controls. Under a proactive mayoral leadership, the development of Istanbul's potential as a centre for tourist consumption and globally oriented business in the international market of cities was prioritised, whereas polluting industries were progressively removed from central locations (Keyder 2005). New industrial zones emerged in hitherto rural areas within the large Marmara region far from the metropolitan core of Istanbul (Tekeli 1998: 21). There was a visible increase in the commercial real estate stock (such as office towers, prestigious hotels and shopping malls), as well as expensive housing in prized locations such as the hills overlooking the Bosporus.

The new central business district along the Mecidiyeköy-Büyükdere-Maslak axis in the north began taking shape. Popular urbanisation, a dominant process in the previous period, became marginalised as the competition to capitalise on land rents intensified across social classes, giving way to plotting urbanism (see below). As the urban agglomeration grew the peripheries became more heterogenous, resulting in an increasingly fragmented landscape (Kurtuluş 2005). Gated communities began to proliferate; the more affluent ones equipped with shared upmarket facilities such as swimming pools, gyms and daycare centres (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008; Kurtuluş 2011). In the periphery, these gated communities take the style of garden towns with controlled access and private surveillance. In most other cases, however, in spite of their strenuous efforts to isolate themselves from the rest of the city, these areas are generally separated from low-income neighbourhoods only by major roads or highways (Robins and Aksoy 2003). In the central locations high-rise settlements are common, particularly along main transportation arteries. These are not visible on the map due to their small footprint.

## LAND-BASED GROWTH UNDER THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY (AKP)

Since the early 2000s, wealth accumulation based on urbanisation has intensified under the rule of the AKP (Yeşilbağ, 2022, Bora 2016). AKP leader Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (mayor of Istanbul from 1994 to 1998, prime minister of Turkey from 2003 to 2014 and president since 2014) gradually centralised power into his hands and took all the major decisions related to Istanbul's infrastructure and big projects. Construction and real estate sectors have become the centrepiece of the new administration's economic policy, as well as a major means of enrichment for a select group of contractors and businessmen, thanks to favourable public contracts that transfer most of the risk to taxpayers. The Mass Housing Development Administration (TOKI) emerged as a dominant actor in the housing sector, launching joint ventures on publicly owned lands. The last decade, in particular, has been a period of grand projects, including a colossal new international airport as well as major investments in Istanbul's transportation network.

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

## THE EVOLUTION OF METROPOLITAN CENTRALITIES: STRETCHING OUT NORTH

The overall spatial configuration of the centralities could be understood as a chain of clusters that has extended over the decades (Seger 2012). As a result, the structure is linear in form and reflects a gradual extension northwards from the eastern section of the historic peninsula—namely the Eminönü district and its surrounding areas. Comprising the old imperial palace, administrative quarters, the port area, monumental mosques and the immense central marketplace with covered streets (Kapalıçarşı), for centuries this traditional centre was essentially the economic, cultural and political centre of the Ottoman Empire. The historical peninsula is today the major destination for international tourism in Turkey on account of its architectural and cultural heritage. Despite the proliferation of tourism-oriented businesses, it remains a vibrant commercial, cultural and religious centre for Istanbulites as well.

In the 19th century, under Western influences, a clear differentiation came into existence between the traditional centre in the historic peninsula, dominated by Muslim merchants and shop owners, and a new centre on the other side of the Golden Horn expanding northwards along the Galata–Beyoğlu axis and dominated by foreign and non-Muslim traders and bankers. The new central district in the north hosted new types of buildings for Istanbul: banks and administrative offices that were completely detached from the sites of manufacturing, Western-style cafes, hotels, restaurants, shops, bars and theatres (Tekeli 1992: 5). The Grand Avenue of Beyoğlu (now known as Istiklal Avenue) and the residential areas surrounding became the new high-prestige zone and attracted the wealthy segments of society (Gül 2009). European-run schools and embassies were also established.

The relocation of the imperial palace from Topkapi to Dolmabahçe in 1856 accentuated this shift of the centre of gravity, encouraging the northward flight of the elites and the first wave of suburbanisation (Esen 2011; Tekeli 1992: 20). Beyoğlu region, with Istiklal Avenue as its main axis, still remains an important commercial, tourist and cultural centrality today. This area has experienced rounds of decline and resurgence over the decades. The latest round of reinvestment corresponds roughly to the 2001–2013 period, when Beyoğlu experienced a significant injection of capital in the real estate, retail and hospitality sectors under the AKP administration (Türkün 2021). A massive shopping mall and high-street chain stores gradually squeezed out small old shops and businesses such as bookshops, small theatres and cafes catering to a culturally liberal, Westernised clientele (beyond.istanbul 2018).

With increasing rents and its changing user profile, Beyoğlu began losing its status as a space that accommodated students, artists, activists and alternative lifestyles. This process of the incorporation of differences culminated in the mass revolts of June 2013 (see Chapter 17). This momentous event was sparked by the then Prime Minister Erdoğan's plan to construct a commercial complex in the highly visible central public park, at the north end of Istiklal Avenue adjacent to Taksim Square. This move was made under the pretext of reviving an old military barracks, which had been completely demolished in 1940 and replaced by the present-day public park. The attempt was widely perceived as a literal and symbolic attack on the breathing spaces or 'life spaces' of those weary of Erdoğan's increasingly authoritarian attitude and his economic policy centred on the construction sector (Erensü and Karaman 2017). The effort was also part and parcel of the goal of taming Beyoğlu to rid it of its 'unruly' and 'unsavoury' elements and render it more suitable for tourists and the consumption of goods and services (Adanalı 2011; Karaman 2013c). The project was finally abandoned in the face of immense popular resistance, yet the sterilisation, touristification and banalisation of Istiklal Avenue continues to date.

The duality of structure between the traditional Islamic centre in the historic peninsula and the European, Westernised centre of Beyoğlu persisted for decades (Seger 2012). Notable changes began to occur only in the 1970s after the first ring road and its corresponding highway network were opened in 1973. The main centrality began to expand further north. In the 1980s Osmanbey, Şişli and Nişantaşı emerged as luxurious shopping areas and the Mecidiyeköy-Büyükdere axis became a favoured location for insurance companies, banks, and the headquarters of national and multinational companies (Tekeli 1992: 84). By the 1950s and 1960s pharmaceutical, textile and automotive industries had settled along the Mecidiyeköy-Büyükdere axis, which extended to Maslak in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the largest companies in Turkey (such as Sabancı Holdings and İşbank) invested in additional land along the axis in anticipation of rising land values (Öktem 2011: 31).

Under pressure from large business groups, in the 1980s this area was designated as the location for a prospective international business district (Öktem 2011). Since the 1990s, numerous office towers, upmarket shopping centres and residential towers have been developed. By the 2000s this new business district could be clearly distinguished from the older central areas by its 'globalised' look and glossy office towers (Öktem 2011; Seger 2012). To complement the emergence of this new centrality, various nodes along the highway network such as

Kozyatağı, Ümraniye and Kavacık have also been developed for administrative offices and firms looking for inexpensive real estate to rent (Ozus et al. 2011: 343).

## FORMAL MIDDLE-CLASS NEIGHBOURHOODS

The first zone of expansion encircling the traditional centralities is dominated by middle-class housing in the form of apartment buildings.

The apartment type—which would later radically transform the face of Istanbul—had been introduced in Beyoğlu in the 1930s (Kaptan and Enlil 2009: 29). Nonetheless, vast sections of Istanbul —including the walled city—retained their low density 'garden city' characteristics up until the 1950s (Kuban 1996: 372). In the three decades that followed, significant densification and the construction of middle-class residential areas took place (Öncü 1988; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 102–110), together with the increasing prominence of secondary centralities such as Bakırköy, Beşiktaş and Kadıköy.

The proliferation of apartment buildings relied on *yapsatçılık,* which means 'the practice of building and selling'. It is a unique financial model, the likes of which can be found in few other Mediterranean countries (Esen 2011; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 102–110; Tekeli 1998). The absence of a well-developed credit market, a fragmented ownership structure and small plot sizes made it difficult for big construction companies to step up as the main producers of residential urban space. Under such circumstances, yapsatçılık emerged as a response to housing demand and was driven by small contractors. In the standard model, the owner of the plot and the contractor come to an agreement on their share of the flats to be constructed. This is usually calculated in terms of percentages. In areas where demand is high, the share of the lot owner could be as high as 60 per cent. No monetary transaction is involved in acquiring the land for development, which significantly reduces the contractor's initial costs, and the latter bears all the costs of construction in full (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 102–110). A typical apartment building would have five to seven storeys, each containing two to four flats. The ground floor is typically allocated to small businesses and shops.

As Işık and Pınarcıoğlu (2001: 102–110) explain, from the contractor's point of view, the system provides many flexible possibilities for absorbing possible risks. The contractor acquires the land from the landowner at no cost and the bulk of the funding for construction is procured through pre-sale of units to third parties. The construction-related risks are shouldered by the subcontractors, who are commissioned on a task-by-task basis. As the model does not require large amounts of start-up capital, this initial stage of urbanisation was largely driven by small developers. Yapsatçılık mobilised the large reserves of unskilled labour employed in the construction sector; a demand met by men migrating from rural areas to the cities.

The Condominium Law, passed in 1965, enabled people to own an individual apartment, thereby providing a legal impetus for the rapid replacement of Istanbul's detached housing stock with apartment buildings (Öncü 1988: 49). Today, the few remaining detached houses that exist are either in serious disrepair or have been renovated for other functions.

In recent years individual buildings in many of these areas (such as Kadıköy) have been undergoing further redevelopment. To do this, property owners take advantage of recent legislation—most importantly Law no 6306 on the 'Transformation of Areas under Disaster Risk,' which allows extra development rights to encourage the upgrading of buildings. This increases density even further.

## MIXED PLOTTED AREAS

The most visible and extensive urban configuration in terms of the area on the map is shaped by what we have called 'popular urbanisation' and 'plotting urbanism' (see Chapters 12 and 13). The first historical layer of this configuration pertains to the gecekondu phenomenon. At later phases, unauthorised constructions on illegally subdivided agricultural lands also increased in number. All this was enabled by the steady rural–urban migration that started in earnest in the late 1940s. This usually took the form of chain migration, in which migrants maintained their ties to the countryside long after they relocated to the town (Erder 1996). The first settlers, mainly single men, were soon followed by their immediate kin (wives and children), relatives and acquaintances from the same region, and a gecekondu neighbourhood would incrementally emerge as migration paths connecting certain rural regions of Turkey to specific gecekondu neighbourhoods were established.

By 1949 there were 3,218 gecekondus in the Zeytinburnu-Kazlıçeşme area immediately west of the old city walls (Tekeli 1992: 39). Other first-wave gecekondu neighbourhoods emerged in Mecidiyeköy, between Paşabahçe and Beykoz and in many other locations within the city centre as well (Tekeli 1992). 'The inhabitants in Zeytinburnu formed a Society for Beautification and Organisation and with the money raised, the main road was paved with stones, wells were dug, a first aid service was established. With the opening of grocery stores, coffee houses, barber shops and tailors, a proper neighbourhood was built' (Tekeli 1992: 38). With elements of self-help housing and grassroots organisation, this initial phase was dominated by the *use value* of housing (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu, 2001: 113); namely its value as a shelter and place of social reproduction.

The state reacted to this form of popular urbanisation largely by ignoring it as long as the buildings did not encroach on military lands, and they often enacted ad hoc measures to regulate it. Amenities such as paved roads, running water, sanitary infrastructure and electricity were soon provided thanks to clientelist networks. Gecekondu neighbourhoods had double legitimacy as both the habitat of the working class and as a major voting pool in elections. Laws were frequently passed to eliminate, contain or regularise gecekondu settlements. But overall, these proved to be ineffective in curbing what officials called 'irregular urbanisation', and in most cases ended up by providing incentives for these settlements to expand by periodically legalising unauthorised constructions—not only those built by relatively poor people, but by all sections of society.

As Istanbul grew rapidly, informal land markets burgeoned and the construction of gecekondu neighbourhoods became increasingly commodified and a source of wealth for those who had participated in the early rounds of land occupation (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Öncü 1988). Over time gecekondus were more solidly built, and tenancy rates increased. Multistorey buildings became increasingly common, especially along major streets and in desirable locations. The main turning point in the evolution of this popular urbanisation occurred in the 1980s, when the government enacted a series of amnesties for construction-related violations and laws on tenure (Tercan (2018). These populist laws were exceptional in that not only did they define a path of legalisation for existing gecekondus, but they also offered additional construction rights, thereby encouraging the densification of the neighbourhoods (Ekinci 1998).

As a result, there was significant densification of the urban fabric from the mid-1980s onwards. At this stage popular urbanisation—a process distinguished by the grassroots organisation of the acquisition of land and the construction of shelters for their direct use—became a marginal phenomenon. Here the very same mechanism of *yapsatçılık* discussed above—which transformed formal housing areas in the period 1950–1980—came into play, this time transforming old gecekondu neighbourhoods—which were typically in the style of garden towns—into dense urban neighbourhoods (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Esen 2011). We propose the notion of 'plotting urbanism' to characterise this highly commercialised process of densification (see Chapter 13). The early generation of squatters gained financially from this process. New arrivals, on the other hand, had to participate in the system mostly as tenants. Moreover, their prospects of wealth accumulation by making use of informal property markets were significantly curtailed in the 1990s as popular urbanisation ceased to be a viable option (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001).

By the early 2000s this configuration had already become heterogenous, with local centralities, elements of plotting urbanism, some vestiges of popular urbanisation, the very rare newly constructed gecekondu neighbourhoods and apartment buildings of various heights on illegally subdivided agricultural land. The latter (Yonder 1987) often displayed aspects both of popular urbanisation and plotting urbanism, depending on the varying degrees of legality and rentability of the dwellings and the resources of the residents.

Since the mid-2000s, the AKP administration has been pushing for an urban renewal programme with the goal of upgrading substandard informal housing stock and preparing Istanbul for the next expected earthquake (Kuyucu and Ünsal 2010; Lovering and Türkmen 2011; Karaman 2013a; Türkün 2014; Soytemel 2017). Despite a few controversial

Mixed plotted area. Mustafa Kemal neighbourhood, also called 1 Mayıs (May Day) neighbourhood, 2012

Mass housing urbanisation. Bezirganbahçe, 2008

cases—particularly in low density areas, which ironically pose no major risk in terms of earthquake readiness—the urban renewal policy has had a limited result. This failure could be attributed to shortcomings in the institutional structure and in the legal framework of this policy, as well as to the social movements that were able to launch effective challenges to it (Kuyucu 2020). In the meantime, just as in the formally developed apartment building stock, many of these plotted areas have been undergoing redevelopment at the level of individual buildings in recent years. Plotting continues today, but to a much lesser extent than in the 1980s and 1990s.

## MASS HOUSING URBANISATION

For decades, particularly from the early 1950s until the late 1990s, the housing needs of most new Istanbulites were met largely via popular urbanisation and plotting urbanism. Until the mid-1960s, in rare instances when public agencies were directly involved in housing provision via direct subsidies, these ended up 'catering mainly to upper and middle level bureaucrats of state enterprises, state owned banks, etc.' (Öncü 1988: 49). Prominent examples of this kind of development are the low-density suburban housing in Merkez Bankası Evleri, Etiler, Gayrettepe, Levent and Atakoy (Öncü 1988). Today these areas are considered prime real estate and are inhabited by affluent groups.

State-administered mass housing schemes that actually target low-income groups have been a recent occurrence in Turkish cities and became prominent only in the 2000s. In 1984 the Mass Housing Law was passed, prescribing the establishment of a state-administered mass housing fund and an organisation to oversee it, which is known today as TOKI. Up until the early 2000s TOKI's main role was limited to giving credit to housing associations (Altınok 2012). Between 1984 and 2002 it offered credit support to construct around a million housing units, while its direct involvement in housing production remained low. Only 43,145 housing units were built on its own land (Çetin 2002: 172).

Most of this support, however, benefited middle-class families who had regular incomes and were able to furnish significant sums as down payment (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 133–135; Sarica 2012: 19). It therefore remained out of reach for the low-income groups for whom popular urbanisation and housing in plotted areas remained a more realistic option. Some of the mass housing clusters visible on the map, where housing associations have had a significant impact, are Beylikdüzü on the European side and Kurtköy on the Asian side (Narin 2010). These are today major peripheral agglomerations of middle-income housing.

In the 1990s, municipalities controlled by the conservative Islamic Welfare Party (the antecedent of the ruling AKP) implemented mass housing policies on municipal lands based on long-term payment plans (Çavuşoğlu 2011). The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) did this through its mass housing firm KİPTAŞ. During his term as the mayor of Istanbul (1994–1998), Erdoğan initiated a large mass housing project called Başak Konutları, catering specifically to his conservative constituency. Today it is a major population centre. Upon the electoral success of the AKP in 2002, the KİPTAŞ model was expanded to the whole of Turkey by increasing TOKI's activities (Uşaklıgil 2014).

Subsequently, the AKP administration further expanded TOKI's sphere of activities and authority (Altınok 2012: 124–126; Turk and Korthals Altes 2010), allowing the latter to undertake for-profit projects, to found private companies or own shares in them and to implement urban renewal projects. TOKI was also granted authority to make master plans in constructing its housing projects. It has as a consequence emerged as a major player in the AKP-led construction boom, accounting for 9.1 per cent of the housing sector in Turkey and the construction of more than 500 thousand housing units between 2002 and 2012 (Konutder 2013).

TOKI's primary asset is the publicly owned land to which it has priority access. Istanbul has comprised an important part of TOKI's portfolio. Prime land in profitable locations is typically used for what TOKI calls revenue-generating projects catering to upper-middle class groups. It claims to use the revenue generated via luxury projects to fund social housing projects. The term 'social housing', however, is misleading, as it has nothing to do with the European type of municipal rental housing, but is ownership based (similar to the

Singaporean model) (Karaman 2013a). Those meeting the eligibility criteria—which include not already owning a house—participate in a lottery. The fortunate winners then effectively buy into a state-facilitated mortgage scheme and are required to pay for the cost of their houses in instalments over a period of 8 to 20 years (TOKI 2010).

A controversial part of TOKI's projects has been its urban renewal ('gecekondu transformation') projects. In its standard urban renewal model (Palancioglu and Cete 2014: 132), property owners with varying degrees of security of tenure within an urban renewal zone are offered mortgage plans to pay for the difference between the new houses to be built and the expropriation value of their shortly-to-be-demolished unit. In effect, urban renewal is therefore tantamount to the dispossession and displacement of tenants and those with insufficient means to participate in the payment plan. For those who are able to participate—through a mixture of being subjected to coercion and giving their voluntary consent—it functions as a disciplinary tool, both in terms of adjusting their finances to a rigid payment scheme and to the new living environment (Karaman 2013a, 2014).

The predominant housing types by KİPTAŞ and TOKI are towers in open landscapes. The surfaces in between are allocated for car parks, playgrounds and green spaces. The overall result is a densely built-up and repetitive environment with a lack of well-defined streets and open spaces. This is in dramatic contrast with the less well regulated and sparsely populated gecekondu neighbourhoods, as discussed earlier. Examples of these towers can be found in TOKI's Bezirganbahçe housing complex, a resettlement site for the Ayazma renewal project in the borough of Küçükçekmece. Besides their difficulties in meeting their monthly payment schedules, the downsides mentioned by relocated ex-gecekondu residents include the poor quality of construction, dense living conditions, restrictions on use of common areas and open spaces, diminished contact with neighbours, increasing anonymity and a perceived lack of security (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008; Uzunçarşılıoğlu Baysal 2010).

## HISTORIC AREAS UNDER URBAN RENEWAL

In central zones largely along the Golden Horn, parts of Beyoğlu and the ancient city walls, the old building stock, partly dating back to the late 19th century, has been undergoing significant redevelopment and upgrading. A diverse range of processes can be observed, such as state-led urban renewal, gentrification (Behar and İslam 2006), the incorporation of differences and some new developments in areas that previously had industrial and port-related functions. Until the 1980s the Golden Horn was a major industrial zone. Most of these industries were relocated in the 1980s and 1990s to make space for public parks, but there are still some remaining vestiges of this type of use that are being transformed. Two prominent projects are the Haliç Congress Centre and the renovation of the Silahtarağa Power Plant. A vast mixed development project called Tersane Istanbul that incorporates some of this industrial heritage was being implemented at the time of writing.

On the southern side of the Golden Horn, the historic Fener and Balat neighbourhoods have been renovated using funds from the EU (Akkar Ercan 2011). Besides this, there have been two very controversial cases of state-led renewal in Sulukule and Tarlabaşı. Both neighbourhoods, which are located on the edge of the central areas, had fallen into disrepair and experienced a major economic downturn. The local municipalities launched top-down renewal schemes invoking the recently passed urban renewal law, in the name of revitalising these neighbourhoods and preserving their cultural heritage.

Sulukule—a neighbourhood on the western edge of the historic peninsula—has been home to a Roma community for decades. Tiny, family-run music clubs known as entertainment houses used to be a significant source of revenue for Sulukule and gave it its distinct identity in the popular perception. With the closure of these clubs by the authorities in the 1990s on the grounds that they were hosting illegal activities, the neighbourhood's decline accelerated. In 2005, in a joint agreement between the local municipality, the IBB and TOKI, Sulukule was declared an urban renewal zone. In the following few years the entire neighbourhood was demolished except for a few classified historic houses—and reconstructed at a higher density.

To participate in the renewal scheme imposed on them, registered homeowners were required to pay the difference between the estimated value of their existing property and the price that they would get in the new development in instalments of up to 15 years. In the face of this unforeseen financial burden, many of the property owners chose to sell their homes to third parties. The tenants were offered resettlement options in a remote TOKI development on the western periphery of Istanbul. The end result of the whole operation was the displacement of most of the original residents (for details on the Sulukule case see Karaman 2014; Karaman and Islam 2012; Uysal 2012).

Positioned just to the north of Istiklal Avenue, Tarlabaşı's fate has been closely tied to the fortunes of this main avenue. The neighbourhood took its current shape in the early 20th century, with a distinctive vernacular style consisting of five-storey brick houses. Predominantly inhabited by middle-class non-Muslims, Tarlabaşı went through a period of decline following the founding of the republic. The economic downturn combined with policies that directly targeted minorities resulted in the dispossession and displacement of its original inhabitants. Starting from the 1950s, the new owners partitioned the flats and rented them out to newcomers. Thus, Tarlabaşı became one of the first points of entry and a stepping stone for rural migrants to Istanbul (Türkün and Sarıoğlu 2014). As their situation improved, they would move to more spacious housing often via popular urbanisation.

In the 1990s however, Tarlabaşı reached rock bottom. This was primarily due to the decline of Beyoğlu discussed above and decreasing opportunities for upward mobility via popular urbanisation. Tarlabaşı became a dead end for migrants who came mainly from the eastern provinces. Another factor of this decline was the opening up of a major thoroughfare that significantly reduced Tarlabaşı's connection to Istiklal Avenue. Against this backdrop, Tarlabaşı was declared an urban renewal area in 2006. The first stage of the project began in 2007. Unlike Sulukule, instead of TOKI, a private developer (Gap İnşaat) was put in charge following a successful bid. The developer was authorised to increase the density in the area and was entitled to own 58 per cent of the built-up area. This left the property owners with much smaller floor areas than before. The project resulted in a thorough displacement of tenants who made up the majority of residents (for details on the Tarlabaşı case see Kuyucu and Ünsal 2010; Türkün and Sarıoğlu 2014).

Urban renewal. Sulukule, 2012

İstiklal Avenue. Beyoğlu, 2023

## 'CRAZY' PROJECTS

The post 2002 era—particularly the last decade—is characterised by an intensification of the urbanisation-based accumulation strategy based on rent extraction and construction under the rule of the AKP. A major facet of this has been large infrastructural projects linked to transportation.

Conducting these grand building works has always been a major policy of previous right-wing administrations. In the 1950s under the Democrat Party, a series of extensive public works were undertaken. Large-scale demolitions were carried out in the historic city centre to make space for wide boulevards and highways so as to adapt Istanbul's archaic transportation system to automobile-based transportation (Kuban, 1996: 423–434). Other major public works in subsequent decades were the construction of the first and second trans-Bosporus bridges (in 1973 and 1988) with corresponding ring roads. These highways have had major consequences in terms of the overall form of the urban region.

The AKP era has witnessed the visible proliferation and scaling up of such interventions. There are now three new routes across the Bosporus, including a highway tunnel (the Eurasia Tunnel) that was opened in 2016 and a railway tunnel (Marmaray) that was opened in 2013 for public transport within the city and in 2019 for freight traffic. Finally, the third suspension bridge in the north opened in 2016 with its ring road cutting through the northern forest areas and linking up with another mega project, the new Istanbul Airport. A vast terrain (76.5 $km^2$) by the European Black Sea coast was reserved for the new airport and its auxiliary functions (for more information on these projects see Karabey et al. n.d.). Like the Eurasia Tunnel and the third bridge projects the funding model is that of build-operate-transfer. Meanwhile, all the operations of the old Istanbul airport were formally transferred to the new airport in 2019. When it is fully completed it is expected to be the biggest airport in the world. The future of the site of the old airport is not clear.

The Istanbul Canal project, promoted as 'crazy' by President Erdoğan, is the latest in this series of grand projects. Even though it was not even at the bidding stage at the time of writing it is worth mentioning, as its scale and ambition have already sparked intense land speculation in peri-urban zones close to the new airport, as well as heated debates over its speculative character and the impact it will have on the environment. The project proposes an alternative waterway to the Bosporus, which is expected to ease international maritime traffic in the strait and create a new axis of urban growth. Even though it is still too early to tell how these recent and planned interventions in Istanbul's immediate hinterlands may affect its overall model of urbanisation, they are likely to encourage further sprawl.

These large-scale projects have been vital to the discursive arsenal underpinning the neo-Ottomanist authoritarian regime that Erdoğan has been consolidating since he came to power. In this regard they serve a twofold purpose. Firstly, thanks to the lucrative contracts that transfer most of the risk to the public domain, a business class that is totally dependent on state contracts and loyal to Erdoğan has been created. Secondly, these projects are discursively deployed in the international arena as highly prestigious and tangible accomplishments, serving to underpin the fantasy that we are witnessing a 'new Turkey' that is reclaiming its long lost commanding position on the world stage, to the imagined dismay of its envious foes both inside and outside the country (Kursunlugil 2019).

# CONCLUSION

Istanbul has experienced explosive growth since the 1950s. Consequently, its traditional monocentric structure has evolved to comprise a hierarchy of centralities that have been formed in relation to the expanding highway network. Some studies have suggested it is transitioning to a polycentric urban model, as is consistent with the experience of many other rapidly growing urban regions (Dökmeci and Berköz 1994; Ozus et al. 2011). Despite some tendencies towards polycentricity, however, the main string of centralities on the European side stretching from the historic peninsula all the way to Maslak in the north is clearly dominant at the metropolitan scale. Thus, within the continuum of monocentric to polycentric forms (taken as ideal types), Istanbul still appears closer to a monocentric model.

The duality between the formal and the informal city has been a recurrent theme in studies of Istanbul. Even though it is much less relevant in the current context, some of its manifestations are traceable in the present configurations. This duality has historically corresponded to a centre–periphery duality, between the historic core of the city and the formally developed areas versus the semi-peripheral zones titled mixed plotted areas. The latter is the most visible element in the overall configuration of the city and is the key to the main arc of Istanbul's story of massive urban growth. This vast belt has been shaped mainly by three processes or historical layers. The first is the layer of popular urbanisation, which refers to the working-class grassroots urbanisation from the late 1940s onwards, namely the emergence of gecekondu neighbourhoods in close proximity to manufacturing industries.

The second is that of plotting urbanism; namely the highly commercialised densification and expansion of these predominantly residential areas. Plotting has been a step in the direction towards the formalisation of the housing stock and consolidation of the urban fabric. At the same time, it has been a means of capital accumulation via the acquisition of land-based rents. The last layer is state-led urban renewal, which has aimed at the complete regularisation and formalisation of these areas with the official goal of rendering them resistant to an imminent earthquake. While large-scale urban renewal schemes have largely been a failure and have had limited transformative results on the ground, piecemeal, building-by-building redevelopment of the housing stock has been having a more visible impact.

Besides plotting and redevelopment of the housing stock, peripheral growth dynamics have also challenged the dual city model. Since the 1980s gated communities, master planned mass housing projects and new industrial zones have

contributed to an increasingly segregated and heterogenous pattern of urbanisation (Kurtuluş 2005). Over the last decade in particular there have been substantial state-led investments into large-scale infrastructural projects (such as the third ring road and the new international airport in the north), which encourage further growth towards the northern hinterlands. Like its right-wing predecessors, the AKP administration, which has been in power since 2002, has given construction and real estate a pivotal role in its economic policy, but at a significantly bigger scale than they attempted. Under an increasingly centralised and clientelist regime, a few large developers have benefited immensely from public–private partnerships in which the public ends up bearing most of the risks. In this context, infrastructural interventions, such as highways, airports, tunnels and bridges, have dramatically reshaped the urban–rural interface of Istanbul (see Erensü and Karaman 2017).

Decades-long processes of reconfiguring centralities, the densification of the urban fabric and its extension into the urban–rural interface have been marked by the shortcomings and selective interventions of successive administrations. The result is a dynamic composition of multilayered and increasingly heterogenous urban configurations in this territory.

Main regional centrality

1 Lagos Island: centre of the 'hustle'; historic core, very high density of housing and markets
2 Ikeja: centre of Lagos State Government; cluster of central functions
3 Victoria Island: upmarket commercial centre
4 Admiralty Way: emerging centrality in the bypass axis

Nodal centrality — Markets, transport interchanges

Planned large-scale project

1 Eko Atlantic: new luxury island
2 Lekki Free Trade Zone: planned industrial zone with new port and airport

Plotting urbanism — Systematic piecemeal development and redevelopment of residential neighbourhoods

Central — Densely plotted well-located neighbourhoods with some redevelopment, e.g. Itire

Far — More recent densely plotted neighbourhoods that require a three-to-five-hour commute to the centres, e.g. Ikotun

Peripheral expansion — New plotted developments in the periphery

Popular urbanisation — Highly insecure housing on topographical peripheries

Bypass urbanism — Rapid development of new urban axis consisting of privately managed residential estates and excised traditional land; served by new transport infrastructure funded through public-private partnerships

Formally planned area — Settlements with planned layouts and higher levels of centrally provided infrastructure; includes neighbourhoods with colonial layout, privatised public housing and wealthy residential estates

Lagos elite — Concentration of wealth and privilege in low-density residential areas

Industrial zone

Airport

Urban footprint

Administrative boundary

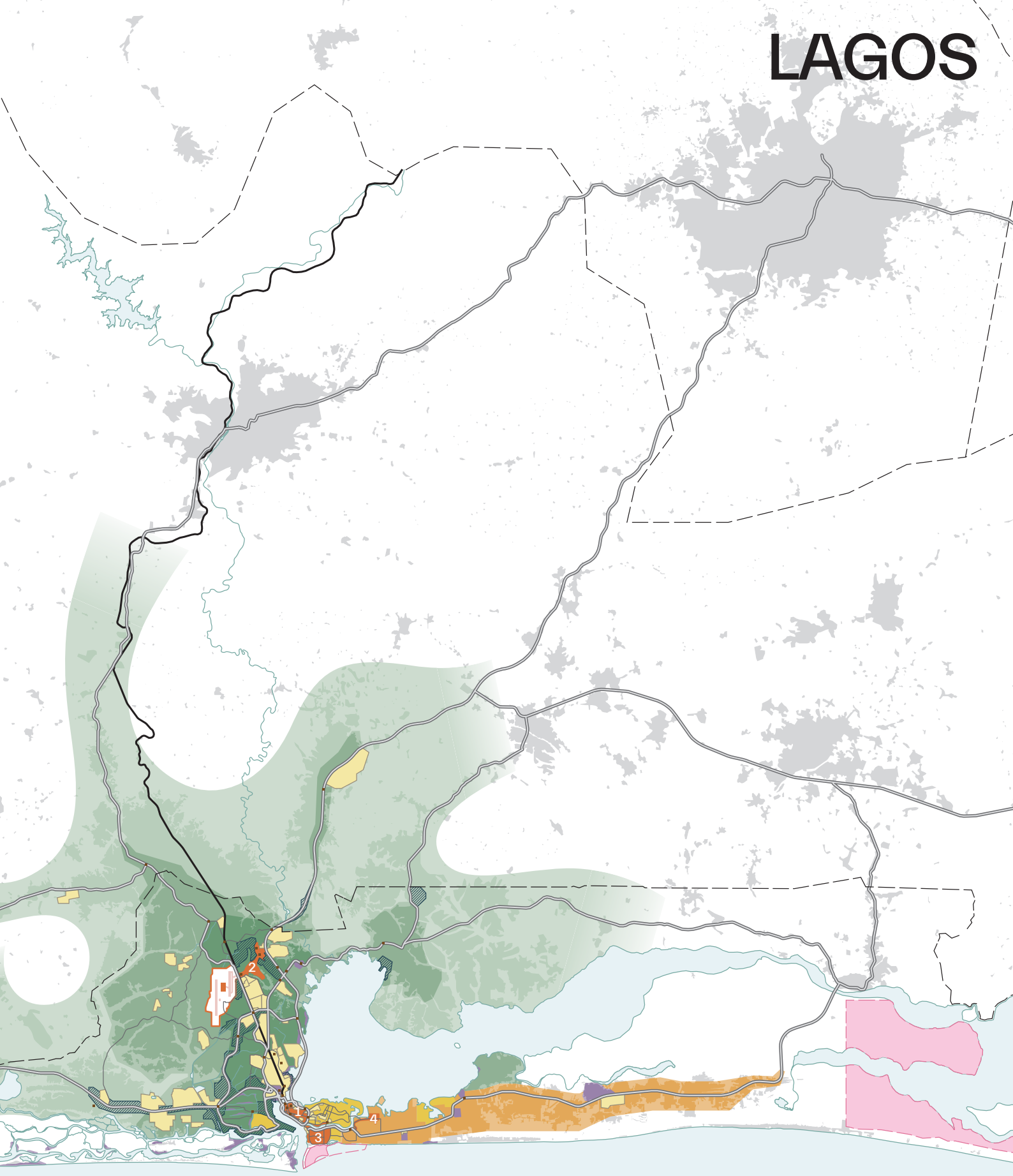
Highway

Road

Railway

0 5 10 20 km

# LAGOS



They have patterns I can't see, but they keep perfect rhythm and time … speaking not your language, *arranged not like you have been taught to know.*
Binyavanga Wainaina, *One Day I Will Write about This Place,* 2012

# A SOUTHERN PARADIGM OF URBANISATION

Lagos is a magnetic centrality with regional, national and transnational reach. It is the nexus of several important urban centres in south-west Nigeria including Ibadan and Abeokuta, drawing people and trade from the country as a whole and from along the West African corridor that stretches from Lagos to Abidjan (see Choplin and Hertzog 2021). Lagos has the largest population in Nigeria and quite possibly the whole continent. Fuelled both by migration and natural growth, its population falls somewhere between 15 and 23 million people. Lagos State is the smallest Nigerian state by area yet makes the largest contribution to Nigeria's GDP as a hub for economic activity. Lagos has a vibrant cultural scene and is a cultural powerhouse, producing globally relevant music, art, movies and fashion.

Lagos became a regional centrality during the 19th century as long-established regional trade routes gained in importance (Mann 2007). It was colonised by the British between 1851 and 1861 and became the capital of newly formed Nigeria in 1914. The British were never able to establish overall control of Lagos. They pursued racialised spatial segregation, limiting their administrative focus to the central and European areas of Lagos Island and Lagos Municipality (Peil 1991). They relied, covertly, on traditional authorities to govern the rest of Lagos, where urban development went unchecked (Barnes 1986). This uneven colonial planning and policy inscribed lasting patterns of spatial, social and economic disparities and dualities onto Lagos that are still visible in its urban configurations. Formally planned areas are tightly bound exceptions to the vast, unplanned fabric of plotting urbanism.

Further, land law in Lagos has never been able to overcome the coexistence of customary and statutory tenure systems that weak colonial control allowed (Akinleye 2009; Sawyer 2016). Following Independence in 1960 and throughout the second half of the 20th century, the urbanisation of Lagos was characterised by spectacular growth within the context of overwhelming political and economic disruption (Othman 1984). Frequent regime changes between 1966 and 1999 inhibited any effort at coordinated planning, exacerbating existing spatial disparities and allowing plotting to take hold as the dominant process of urbanisation. Further, public trust in institutions was eroded or was never able to develop (Ekeh 1975). Nigeria rapidly shifted to an oil-based economy and suffered deeply in the global oil crisis of 1979, which triggered two decades of crisis. Lagos's urban environment deteriorated as the population continued to increase. The return of democratic rule to Nigeria in 1999 began a period of unprecedented stability and urban reform, as the Lagos State Government has prioritised an urban agenda and investors and the diaspora have been drawn back to Lagos (Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017). The process of bypass urbanism has emerged in the past decade as a forceful new process that is currently restructuring the entire urban territory.

The dense centrality of Isale Eko. Lagos Island, 2012
Nodal centrality. Pen Cinema, 2013

# PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

## LAGOS ESTABLISHED AS REGIONAL CENTRALITY: 1807–1899

Lagos Island once constituted the entire city of Lagos. Although it was for a long time merely a stop on regional trade routes (Mann 2007: 25, 139), it gained in regional importance after the British outlawed slave trading in 1807, as its sandy creeks were ideal for accommodating the continuing covert trade in enslaved people. Over the next decades Lagos grew in size and importance as the British sought to replace the slave trade with more legitimate trade with a view to extracting resources to support its burgeoning industrial revolution (see Chapin Metz 1991; Mann 2007). To this end, the British bombarded Lagos in 1851 and established Lagos Colony (roughly the current Lagos State boundary) in 1861 (see Smith 1974). Their gradual and messy takeover of the colonised area and extensive hinterland culminated in 1899 by starting construction on the Lagos railway terminus and Iddo wharf. This established Lagos as the administrative and trading centre for the nascent 700 km-deep hinterland of what was soon to become Nigeria (Mabogunje 1968: 249; Abiodun 1974: 343).

## UNEVEN COLONIAL INVESTMENT: 1897–1939

During the period between the turn of the 19th century and the Second World War, the colonial urban strategy employed in Lagos graduated from being a minimalist approach—developing just enough infrastructure to support resource extraction from the interior—to more ambitious goals of racialised public investment (Mabogunje 1968: 112–114). This investment was implemented unevenly both within the central areas (where racial segregation was strong) and across the wider territory of Lagos, which received almost no investment, initiating deep-seated disparities between the two areas and shaping the urbanisation patterns of Lagos throughout the entire 20th century. Lagos Municipality was created in 1899 and extended in 1911 to include Lagos Island, Ikoyi, Victoria Island and Apapa, Surulere, Yaba and Ebute Meta. In the following decades it became the main focus of state investment, development and governance.

Settlements quickly began to mushroom in the territory outside Lagos Municipality—which was renamed Lagos District from 1927—but were largely left to urbanise in an unregulated way without investment and control. Until 1983, when the capital was moved to Abuja, Lagos's central areas were under various different overlapping jurisdictions (state, federal and local government) that created confusion, competition over prime land and fraught intergovernmental relations (see Williams 1975). The hulking skeleton of the Federal secretariat building in Ikoyi is testament to this confusion, having been abandoned by the Federal government when the capital moved to Abuja. Since then, the State government has been blocked from developing this prime site. Lagos is littered with such sites.

The planning of Lagos Municipality during this period was informed by a hygienist discourse to justify racialised spatial segregation, hugely stigmatising the indigenous population (Gandy 2006: 375). The scientific link between the *Anopheles* mosquito and malaria had been made in 1897, leading to a planning focus in colonial times on filling in swamps and using spatial segregation to separate the European populations from mosquito breeding areas. The British used garden city principles to establish European Reserve Areas, the first being Ikoyi in 1918 (Bigon 2013; Tijani 2004: 255; Towry-Coker 2011: 135). The areas where the indigenous population lived in the core of Lagos Island, which had become increasingly densely populated, were mainly neglected by planning measures at this time (Immerwahr 2007). After outbreaks of bubonic plague on Lagos Island, the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) was set up in 1927 to improve housing and sanitation (Peil 1991).

## TRANSITION TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE: 1939–1960

The war and post-war years saw great political shifts as well as changing attitudes to urbanisation in Lagos. Anticolonial and independence movements in Nigeria and in colonised nations in general forced Britain to grant self-rule to Nigeria in 1951, beginning a transition period towards Independence, which was finally attained in 1960 (Peil 1991). Many factors contributed to a dramatic increase in migration to Lagos, including a general shift away from agricultural occupations in Nigeria, the policy of employing ex-servicemen in the public sector after the war and the promotion of manufacturing (Mabogunje 1968: 255). Formal industrial estates in Apapa and Yaba and unplanned industrial estates outside the municipality in Mushin and Iganmu started to be constructed in 1948, attracting large numbers of workers to Lagos. The improvements to sanitation and the environment achieved in the previous period, including over 1000 acres of swamp that had been reclaimed since 1900 also contributed to the increase in natural population growth (Mabogunje 1968: 259). The LEDB was very active throughout the 1930s and 1950s, building more European Reserve Areas at Apapa, Ikeja and Ilupeju and undertaking slum clearance, including

in the centre of Lagos Island, as well as building a planned neighbourhood at Surulere to rehouse residents of inner Lagos Island (Marris 1962: 10; Mabogunje 1968: 259; Abiodun 1974; Peil 1991: 167; Towry-Coker 2011: 135).

Outside the municipality urbanisation continued to spread without much control, and plotting urbanism started to emerge as a dominant process in the 1950s. As an indication, the population of Mushin increased from around 36,500 in 1955 to 260,500 in 1963 (Barnes 1986). Between 1954 and 1967 the administrative split between Lagos Municipality and Lagos District further entrenched socioeconomic and spatial disparities. In the political wrangling of the independence era, some ethno-religious political groups feared that too much power would be centralised in Lagos (see Vaughan 2000). As a compromise, Lagos Municipality became Federal Territory and the rest of the state was subsumed under the government of the neighbouring Western Region where Ibadan was the capital (see Williams 1975). Lagos State was reunified by the first military government in 1967.

## INDEPENDENCE, POPULATION AND OIL ECONOMY BOOM: 1960–1981

Shortly after Independence in 1960, there was a period of chaotic regime changes starting in 1966, with frequent military-led coups occurring until 1999 at an average of one regime change every four years. After the Nigerian Civil War from 1967 to 1970 Nigeria shifted to an oil-extractive economy and as global oil prices increased in 1973, the country experienced dramatic increases in revenue. This period also witnessed a huge increase in the population of Lagos. Although estimates vary, the trends are clear: 230,000–354,000 in 1950; 900,000–1,454,000 in 1963 and 2,572,000–4,390,000 in 1980 (Mabogunje 1968; Barnes 1986; Peil 1991). This exponential growth in the population occurred mostly on the mainland. Clear statistics are particularly hard to come by for areas outside Lagos Municipality, but again the trends are clear: from around 12 per cent of the population living on the mainland in 1950 to somewhere between 39–66 per cent by the early 1960s to about 68 per cent by 1975 (Olukoju 2013; Mabogunje 1968; Peil 1991). At this point, there was no longer a visible physical boundary between Lagos Municipality and mushrooming suburbs such as Mushin (Barnes 1986: 49)

The boom period was a time of intense, if sporadic, urban development and investment of public funds, with contradictory effects. The network of expressways built by the military governments, for instance, enabled rapid travel between the airport, military bases and Lagos Island but it was inadequate for the needs of the fast-growing population at the time (Fapohunda 1976; Olukoju 2004). There was a crucial lack of east-west connections on the mainland, causing crippling congestion and imposing the now infamous bottlenecks at its cloverleaf junctions (see diagrams in Koolhaas et al. 2000: 675). Further, only 66,000 planned houses are estimated to have been built between 1955 and 1979, at a time when the population increased fivefold (Towry-Coker 2011: 115).

The shape and character of Lagos Island changed dramatically during this period through extensive land reclamation to accommodate various government-led development projects, particularly the spectacular Marina skyline and the elevated ring road. FESTAC 77, the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, was hosted by Lagos in 1977 and was used by the government of the time as an opportunity to showcase independent Nigeria with an ambitious agenda of public works that included the FESTAC housing estate, the National Theatre and the development of the Nigerian part of the West African Coastal Highway towards Abidjan (see Chimurenga 2019), which involved the displacement of existing communities, with effects that are still felt today (Morka 2011; Sawyer 2019).

## OIL CRISIS AND BUST PERIOD: 1981–1999

The boom period was followed by a devastating period of bust between 1981 and 1999, brought on by the global oil crisis of 1979. By this time Nigeria had become wholly reliant on oil: by 1980 oil provided 84 per cent of its annual government revenue. During the boom period this revenue had not been invested into building institutions or developing industry or agriculture, so Nigeria's economy was deeply vulnerable to changes in the oil sector. Both periods witnessed shocking extents of high-level corruption and graft (Othman 1984; Ekpo and Umoh 2012). Rural–urban migration continued to be strong during the bust period and was further amplified by a devastating famine in 1984. Nigeria adopted a structural adjustment programme from 1986 to 1993 and a period of guided deregulation from 1994 to 1998, both of which proved disastrous, severely worsening living conditions and increasing rates of poverty (Anyanwu 1992; Owusu 2003; Seibel 1994; Njoku 2001). Nigeria gained notoriety during the cruel regime of Sani Abacha (1993–1998) and Lagos became infamous as a dangerous city (Davis 2006). The severe crises of the 1980s and 1990s saw both infrastructure and the urban environment rapidly deteriorate, and any planning efforts that existed stalled or were abandoned. At the same time, the population of Lagos continued to explode from 2.5 million in 1980 to 7.3 million in 2000 (UN 2018),

which worsened the situation considerably. Population densities increased dramatically on the urbanising mainland (see Barnes, 1984; Peil 1991) and also on Lagos Island. As the prime business area, the Marina also suffered and central business functions became displaced to Victoria Island, which was rapidly transformed from being an elite residential area into a commercial centrality through the illegal conversion of residential property.

## URBAN REFORM AGENDA: 1999 TO THE PRESENT

1999 began a period of unprecedented political stability for Lagos State, governed by a series of city governors committed to financial and urban reforms and the peaceful transition of power at the federal level. The first governor of the period, Bola Tinubu, radically increased the internally generated revenue of Lagos and won the political support of Lagos elites for urban development projects towards urban development (Gatt 2012; Kuris 2014; Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017). This stability also made it possible to attract international investments and loans, and to establish public-private partnerships to undertake infrastructural projects, creating the conditions for bypass urbanism to emerge. Tinubu's successor, Governor Babatunde Fashola, was then able to implement or initiate a wide variety of projects under the banner of the Lagos Megacity Project.

These projects first targeted Lagos's deteriorating urban environment and transportation. Waste management was overhauled, a beautification programme was implemented for road verges and small public spaces and a taskforce, Kick Against Indiscipline, was set up to control public behaviour. These measures produced relatively quick and very visible changes and began to generate new expectations and nascent public trust in the effectiveness of the State government, constituting a radical break from previous periods (Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017). Traditional markets on the mainland, such as Oshodi and Tejuoso, have also been a focus, with frequent and often contentious waves of clearances and remodelling (Komolafe 2016). The ban of *okada* and *molue* (motorcycle taxis and large buses) from all main roads, beginning in 2012, has had perhaps one of the biggest impacts on the character of Lagos's streets. The bans were, like many aspects of the Lagos Megacity Project, typical in terms of their punitive effect on the poor and financially struggling majority who used or made a living from them.

The implementation of a bus rapid transit (BRT) network was one of the centrepieces of Fashola's reforms. To implement it, he had to negotiate with the National Union of Transportation Workers about the semi-informal *danfo* (Lagos's ubiquitous yellow buses), run by the notorious *agberos* (transport fee collectors), and both forms of transport now coexist. However, danfos are still dominant (Agbiboa 2018, 2019). These developments have largely taken place in the same old central areas: Lagos and Victoria Islands, Ikoyi and the mainland up to Ikeja and a new avenue of rapid urbanisation along the Lekki-Epe peninsula. However, the neighbourhoods beyond these areas have remained relatively untouched. They have been able to access waste management and schemes such as street naming and numbering, but plotting still dominates, okada still ply the unpaved and flood-prone roads and it can still take hours to reach the BRT or main motor parks (transport exchanges). Ordinary neighbourhoods experience other forms of transformation: once ubiquitous face-me-I-face-you (multi-occupancy housing with lines of rooms facing one another across a corridor) housing is now only being built in the periphery and older units are being upgraded or replaced by self-contained flats (Sawyer 2016). The peripheries are still rapidly expanding in a pattern of 'road meets development', a common phrase used to describe how plots are developed before roads are laid, which is clearly visible in satellite imagery. Bypass urbanism, too, reinscribes the same old spatial and socioeconomic disparities and inequalities, though on an unprecedented scale. For instance, although the Lekki–Epe Expressway and Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge have been the first pieces of public infrastructure to be built in Lagos for decades, they have tolls and the bridge does not allow public transport to cross it.

The high-rises of Marina seen from the street markets of Isale Eko. Tinubu Square, 2012

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

## CENTRALITIES

To many, Isale Eko, or Lagos Island, *is* Lagos. To claim to be a (near-mythical) true Lagosian is to claim to come from the heart of Isale Eko. Originally an island, it is now separated from Ikoyi only by a canal that was built by Governor Macgregor in 1904 and the ring road built in the 1970s. Its congested urban fabric has retained its pull and power as the prime centrality of Lagos, and embodies the hustle mentality of Lagos. Lagos Island is a core centrality for trade and contains buildings with some of the highest property values in Lagos.

The core of Lagos Island is the dense tangle of streets where the city originated around the Oba's Palace, the seat of the traditional ruler of Lagos. Despite continual transformation, Lagos Island retains its commercial bustle, with goods mounted up outside the concrete facades and spilling onto the streets, as well as its special character as the cultural and historical heart of Lagos. Recently, traditional markets like Jankara, Oluwole and Sandgrouse are being razed to the ground by the state government in favour of modern markets (Komolafe 2016). Similarly, Agbole (family compounds) are being replaced by their owners by vertiginous multistorey blocks, producing ever-increasing densities and rents. Owners often involve developers for this, giving them fixed-term leases on some of the resulting flats in return (Jeliliet al. 2021). Land ownership is rarely, if ever, sold on Lagos Island, although there are many conflicts about it within family descendant groups (Marris 1962 is still relevant here).

Broad Street and Marina Street run along the south coast of Lagos Island and were developed as the colonial centre throughout the period from 1899 to 1939 (Baker 1974). Some of the old colonial institutional and civic buildings retain their functions to this day, such as the cathedral, the governor's mansion, the hospital, morgue and cricket ground. Others have been repurposed into arts and cultural spaces, such as the former prison that became Freedom Park. Neighbouring Onikan has also become a focus of cultural development. Lagos Island has some outstanding examples of tropical modernism (Immerwahr 2007), reflecting the brief optimism of the independence years. The formerly genteel promenade of Marina Street has been extended into the skyline of Marina's somewhat shabby high-rise towers and out into an enormous car and motor park that also houses the huge generators for the high rises.

Victoria Island, across Cowry Creek from Lagos Island, emerged as a commercial centrality when Marina became neglected in the 1980s. Originally planned as an elite residential area, it now features a curious mix of luxury housing, office buildings, hotels, restaurants, nightlife venues, luxury shops and embassies, all mainly located along roads with huge potholes. The new city quarter of Eko Atlantic, originally planned as a sea wall to protect Victoria Island from coastal erosion, will offer a massive extension to, or perhaps a replacement of, this elite centrality.

A new centrality has emerged as part of the bypass urbanism process along Admiralty Way next to Lekki Phase I. Like Victoria Island it was initially residential, but now has a competitive mix of restaurants, nightlife and shops that attract a fashionable young crowd. The EndSARS protests of October 2020 took place around the Lekki tollgate nearby and were motivated by the violent harassment of Nigeria's upwardly mobile youth by the police.

Ikeja, 20 km from Lagos Island, is the main centrality on the mainland and has a cluster of functions: it is the seat of Lagos State government, a locality for the prestigious if disreputable nightlife of Allen Avenue, the informal trade hub Computer Village, Palms shopping mall, expensive estates, event centres, industries, markets and transport hubs. Ikeja was put forward as an alternative capital to Lagos in the 1910s but emerged as a centrality from 1954 to 1967, when it was developed by the then Western Region government during the separation of Lagos into different administrations (Williams 1975). The construction of the airport from 1975 consolidated its prime location. Among these centralities, Lagos has an idiosyncratic

pattern of centrality that we call nodal centralities. These are the main motor parks and markets, often located on the key junctions around which Lagos pivots. These are the names you will hear shouted from passing danfo: CMS, Oshodi, Ojuelegba, Ajah. The main markets have a long precolonial history and are often known for their specialties (Mabogunje 1964).

## LAGOS ELITE

The colonial logics of spatial segregation and garden city design are still very visible in the contrasting urban fabric of Lagos Island, neighbouring Ikoyi and the green buffer zone around Obalende and Awolowo Road, which still feature a polo ground, golf course, cemetery and the grounds of a private school. Ikoyi was the first European Reserve Area in Lagos and still bears signs of a quiet leafy grandeur with dusty, tree-lined streets, old colonial villas and enormous new mansions. It remains the prime elite residential area of Lagos and has been expanded through land reclamation with the additions of Park View, Osbourne and Banana Island estates. Even Lekki benefits from its prestige, being directly linked through the Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge. Ikoyi is now the scene of rapid transformation, which has been sparked off by new planning regulations that allow and encourage the construction of multistorey buildings. High-rise condominiums are now commonplace and a slew of shiny new office towers above the main Alfred Rewane Road are completely transforming the area. Only a few other estates that are not directly connected to Ikoyi can claim to be of the Lagos elite configuration: Apapa, built as a European Reserve Area near the port; Victoria Garden City as the first estate on the Lekki axis and Chevron, a company estate built for oil workers on the mainland.

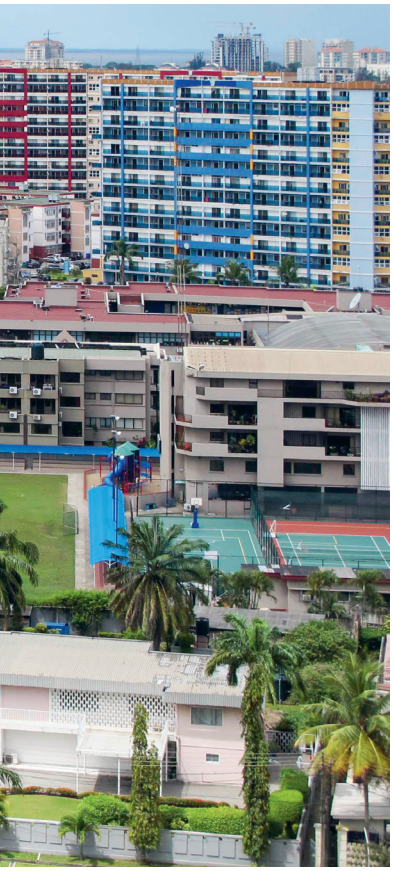
## FORMALLY PLANNED AREAS

The urban configuration of Lagos's formally planned areas has an unusual pattern. It appears as sharply delimited spatial exceptions to the general urban form that constitutes vast areas of plotting urbanism. These two configurations are closely related and can be seen as representing the dual outcomes of uneven urban development, unequal investment and the socioeconomic and spatial inequalities that this has brought about. Formally planned areas are spaces that have had planned layouts and often relatively high levels of centralised infrastructure. They include colonial-era layout plans such as those of Yaba and Ebute Metta, institutional layouts such as the National Theatre or the University of Lagos, industrial areas, federal and state public housing estates and wealthy residential estates. Formally planned areas are often gated and guarded, indicating socioeconomic inequalities and the fears this brings about (Uduku 2010). They increase an area's desirability and have often acted as catalysts for plotting urbanism; the former providing employment, the latter cheap housing. For instance, when the planned development Surulere was constructed to rehouse residents from a Lagos Island slum clearance in the 1950s, neighbouring Itire began to be rapidly plotted (see Barnes 1986). A similar relationship exists between the European estate of Apapa and neighbouring plotted area Ajegunle (Peil 1991).

Many formally planned areas are residential estates. Some of these are government layouts, which means that the government prepares levels and parcellises the land, and then allocates plots—supposedly by lottery or on application. Lekki Phase 1 is an example of this. Private developers carry out much the same function for the private residential estates. The residents are then responsible for building their homes and for putting in place much of the infrastructure, as is the norm across Lagos (Sawyer 2014). In 2014, Governor Fashola introduced the heavily promoted Lagos HOMS (homeownership) scheme that set out to provide affordable housing estates. However this has provided only a few thousand homes that are affordable only to those who are already wealthy (Lagos Development Envision Lab; LAGDEL 2017). It is extremely hard to build new formally

planned areas on the mainland as the contradictions and confusions of plotting inhibit the consolidation of large plots. Even the government has struggled to find locations for Lagos HOMS developments, which have often involved the forced eviction of areas where popular urbanisation exists (e.g. Ijora Badia; see Sawyer 2019), or expensive land reclamation (e.g. Ilubirin estate). In order to build large-scale planned developments, developers and the government have turned to the Lekki-Epe peninsula, spurring the process of bypass urbanism.

Lagos elites playing on Cowry Creek. Seen from Victoria Island, 2013



Privatised former public housing estate and high end, low density fabric. Victoria Island, 2012

## PLOTTING AND THE URBAN MAJORITY

Yet though each square inch was distinctive,
the city remained as general as an insult
shouted on a crowded street.
Abani 2004

Away from the main axes of development, the ordinary urban fabric of Lagos stretches as far as the eye can see—or an *okada* (motorcycle taxi) can carry you. It consists of what we have called plotting urbanism; referring to areas that are not planned but show a consistent pattern of rapid urbanisation, developing plot by plot and quickly transforming peripheries into dense residential areas (see Chapter 13). Plotted areas are overwhelmingly residential but there is a fine-grained heterogeneity that reflects the broad spectrum of people who live there: a majority that is neither rich nor poor. It stretches from once peripheral and now central areas like Mushin, Ajegunle, Agege and Bariga to recently and rapidly urbanised areas far from the main centralities like Ikotun and Ikorodu and then to currently peripheral expansion zones well beyond the Lagos State boundary and extending into neighbouring Ogun State. Plotting is constantly pushing the urban frontier to the north and west, generating new movements of people and investment as they navigate a rapacious land, property and rental market (Sawyer 2014).

Plotted areas are characterised by what are commonly called face-me-I-face-you buildings that are idiosyncratic to Lagos. These are rooming houses with shared services that accommodate very dense living, also known as face-me-I-slap-you because of all the drama they cause (Nairaland 2012). There is a mixture of housing types in plotted areas, but the face-me-I-face-you buildings are the backbone of the plotting process, absorbing the millions of people who have come to live in Lagos over the last few decades. Because most of these residents are tenants, the rooms available for rent suit a variety of budgets (Aluko 2012b). As these buildings can be built simply and cheaply and are often built in incremental stages, they offer an affordable route for plot owners to maximise returns on their plot. Plot owners and landlords are often established residents who have saved for around 10 years to buy a plot and build on it (Barnes 1986: 66–67; Ifesanya 2012; Sawyer 2016). Face-me-I-face-you buildings are now being phased out in central areas, as there is a growing preference among young couples for self-contained flats without shared services. This is fuelling peripheral urbanisation as those on the lowest incomes are squeezed out of the central areas and landlords use their profits to buy cheap plots further out and construct new buildings (Adedire 2018; Sawyer 2014).

Without enforced planning regulations there are few controls on development, and without state investment there is little central infrastructure beyond the provision of main roads and refuse collection. This often leads to a very degraded urban environment: there is little green or open space; flooding is common, streets are packed with parked cars and drains are blocked with refuse. As with the whole of Lagos, each plot has its own configuration of piecemeal infrastructure in terms of the provision of power, water, sanitation, drainage and security (Sawyer 2014). Landlords associations and community development associations tacitly organise this infrastructure on the level of the street and cluster of streets respectively, using the monthly dues collected from all residents. In this way, conditions can vary enormously from plot to plot, dependent on the wealth of the owners, landlord and tenants. While they are almost exclusively residential, plotting areas are full of life: each area has markets; there are spots for drinking, eating, watching football or films; face-me-I-face-you buildings often have stalls out front and hawkers are ubiquitous. Each plotted neighbourhood can be finely differentiated into gradients of low and high areas (Ifesanya 2012; Aluko 2012b). The high (higher quality) areas are generally indicated by their lower density, more gates and fewer face-me-I-face-you buildings, and are quieter and have less commercial activity than the low ones.

Plotting became the dominant process of urbanisation in Lagos as the result of a confluence of factors and a number of catalytic events. It emerged from the 1950s after the population in areas of Lagos State grew dramatically at a time of diminished state control over urban development and where customary land tenure is prevalent. Plotting became entrenched after three further catalysts which were the administrative split between Lagos Municipality and Lagos District between 1954 and 1967, political discontinuity between 1966 and 1999 and the economic and political crises of the 1980s and 1990s.

In colonial times development in Lagos focused almost entirely on Lagos Municipality (Baker 1974: 276) and there was weak government presence or control outside the municipality. Colonial authorities instead relied on customary authorities to govern this area, although never officially recognising this relationship and in fact attempting to curtail official customary powers using successive measures (see Akinleye 2009). Customary authorities have been consistently adaptive and responsive and have been able to maintain their political and social relevance (Vaughan 2000), thus establishing a kind of a territorial compromise leading to a dual land regime of customary and statutory systems (Akinleye 2009). While English land law introduced the commodification of land to Lagos it was never able to fully displace the existing customary system, which morphed and adapted in response (Smith 2008: 11). Notions of freehold and leasehold fit well with customary ideas of inalienable land ownership and the granting of usufructuary rights (Barnes 1986: 52; Marris 1962: 19), and landowners quickly exploited the notion of private title for their own personal gain (Baker 1974: 95). This had the immediate and irrevocable effect of creating confusion, ambiguity and contradiction over what rights titles actually conferred between the two tenure regimes. The Land Use Act introduced in Nigeria in 1978 attempted to resolve this confusion with a unified and simplified tenure system. However, it left room

Face-me-I-face-you housing and street stalls in plotted neighbourhood. Itire, 2014

for crucial ambiguities that continue to the present day to be navigated and exploited, allowing the operation of the dual land regime to persist (Smith 2008: 51, 52; Butler 2012: 2, 3; Aluko 2012a:120; City Plannetics 2005: 6, 8).

While you may be able to build without government consent, it is impossible to settle anywhere in Lagos without the explicit permission of the appropriate traditional landowning family and without secure it with a payment (Akinleye 2009). However, fraudulent activities and contestations are widespread. A Yoruba phrase for traditional landowners, *omo onile*, has come to be associated with fraud and illegal land grabbing (Akinleye 2009). It is estimated that 90 per cent of plots in plotted areas do not have a Certificate of Occupancy (CofO) or full formal tenure, (but all have a formalised agreement with the customary landowning family, even if it is often open to dispute. Unlike popular urbanisation, however, the government turns a blind eye to this most ordinary of transgressions. One probable reason for not tackling it is the sheer scale of plotting: if this form of housing were demolished or regularised, where would 70 per cent of Lagos's population go and who would rebuild it, and how?

## POPULAR URBANISATION: THE INSECURE MARGINS

The popular settlement of Makoko, with its wooden structures built on stilts in Lagos Lagoon, has become one of the most iconic images of Lagos. Spectacular drone imagery and many references to it in journalistic pieces perpetuate misleading slum city myths about Lagos and the global South more generally. In reality, most people in Lagos live in heterogenous plotted areas under a wide variety of living conditions, and areas of popular urbanisation occupy only small pockets in the margins of the city. Makoko is not representative even of the popular urbanisation process as it has a unique size, form and history. It is by far the largest popular settlement, with several *baale* (local traditional leaders) of its own. Its roots lie in the culture of the Egun people, whose tradition of building houses on stilts is common along the West African coast (Adeyemi 2012) and whose language still can be heard in Makoko. Very few popular settlements are built on stilts outside Makoko, even though they are mostly located in marginal pockets in and around marshes and creeks.

Popular urbanisation shares many of the features of plotting: face-me-I-face-you housing is common, permission must be sought from local traditional authorities in order to settle, these plots have market prices and must be negotiated and paid for, buildings are constructed in incremental stages and constitute a significant investment to households; tenants are in the majority in this form of urbanisation. Moreover there is differentiation between and within areas and the infrastructure is piecemeal (see Chapter 12). However, two key differences between the two make it a distinct process in Lagos: material insecurity and tenure insecurity. Though on a sliding scale with cheaper and more expensive plotted areas, living conditions are much poorer in areas of popular organisation in general. Even though the plots are paid for, they are smaller than the standard plot sizes in plotted and formal areas, and are often not located on solid land but are situated on the margins of Lagos. People work to transform these undesirable pockets of marshes and creeks into habitable spaces by reclaiming the land themselves with sand and plastic waste infills. These materials are not free to the owner, but constitute a significant personal investment in their home (Sawyer 2019). These plot owners then build what they can afford, which is often face-me-I-face-you buildings or additional spare rooms, and provide the cheapest rents in Lagos (Aluko 2012b).

Popular urbanisation reveals the pernicious aspects of Lagos's dual land regime, showing how its power dynamics can be skewed against the poorest residents with very real human costs to them. The territorial compromise achieved through plotting is not found in popular urbanisation. The state does not give its tacit consent to this kind of urbanisation, but instead actively and often illegally (Amnesty International 2018) attempts to remove these dwellings. At the same time, customary authorities can choose to renege on tenure agreements, producing the fundamental insecurity of tenure that characterises popular urbanisation. Residents of these areas become vulnerable through their visibility to speculators or landowners wishing to capitalise on their newly reclaimed and often centrally located piece of land, and to a state offended by the untidy-looking buildings. Forced eviction and demolition are carried out both directly and indirectly by the state, with familiar hygienist and criminalising narratives (Agbola and Agunbiade 2009; Amnesty International 2013). Recent examples of forced eviction occurred in Otodo Gbame (in 2019), Tarkwa Bay (in 2020) and Monkey Island (in 2021). The threat and policy of eviction reinforces people's material insecurity, as they are unwilling to invest in what may be destroyed sooner or later. Ultimately, these skewed dynamics inhibit the consolidation that could transform these areas into liveable communities (see Chapter 12; see also Caldeira 2017).

A scar on the conscience of Lagos is the violent razing of the huge settlement of Maroko on the Lekki peninsula in 1990 (Soyinka 1999). This event clearly demonstrates the dynamics of the process of popular urbanisation. Maroko emerged in the 1950s when people were resettled from slum clearances on Lagos Island onto the customary land of the powerful Oniru family. Its population grew to 300,000. No area of popular urbanisation has since reached this scale. Once peripheral land,

Maroko came to occupy a prime location between the upmarket centrality of Victoria Island and the Lekki peninsula, which was identified as an avenue of development by both the government and the Oniru family in the 1980s, and who began agitating to demolish Maroko when the initial 25-year lease agreements between the resettled residents and the Oniru family came to an end. A coup against the Babangida military regime in 1990 provided the pretext for clearing these homes when Babangida falsely named Maroko as the source of the coup. A total of 63 people were accused of plotting the coup and executed and Maroko was brutally razed to the ground in July 1990. The residents received little to no compensation for their homes and few were rehoused (Agbola and Jinadu 1997). The destruction of Maroko cleared the way for the development of Lekki and the emergence of bypass urbanism as a new process of urbanisation in Lagos.

## BYPASS URBANISM: NEW LAGOS?

The spatial structure of Lagos is currently being profoundly transformed by the formidable new process of bypass urbanism (see Chapter 14). Bypass urbanism is the accretion of different scales of development over a massive peripheral space, which is forcefully transforming the spatial structure of Lagos. This new process of rapid urbanisation hinges on the Lekki–Epe Expressway, stretching 50 km east from the first tollgate in Victoria Island through Lekki, Ajah, Ibeju Lekki and Epe to the mega-project of the Lekki free trade zone. This marshy and sandy peninsula is sandwiched between Lagos Lagoon and the Atlantic Ocean and is rapidly being filled with housing estates of all sizes and provenances (private, state and customary), excised communities resembling plotted areas, businesses, churches and mosques, markets and malls, private schools and private university campuses, factories and large-scale industries such as the new Dangote cement factory and the free trade zone. Eko Atlantic, the new city quarter for the elite being built on reclaimed land next to Victoria Island, is also a key part of this process.

The brutal clearance of Maroko in 1990 opened up the peninsula for development, but the conditions for bypass urbanism became established only after the return of democratic rule to Nigeria in 1999, bringing the long-term political stability needed to secure finance, investments and loans for infrastructural development and the establishment of an agenda of urban reform (see Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017; Sawyer et al. 2021). In the last 15 years the Lekki area has become a vibrant and prestigious place to live and socialise. Curving around Lekki Phase 1 estate, Admiralty Way has turned into a new upmarket centrality for Lagos. Lekki is a location for the very privileged, linked to the existing centrality of Victoria Island via the new expressway and to the elite area of Ikoyi via the new Lekkoyi bridge. However, apart from these toll roads there has been no further large-scale infrastructural development along the entire peninsula and, while several masterplans are in place, urbanisation has already outpaced planning (Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018). There is dense development up to Ajah and rapid infilling continues into Ibeju Lekki, particularly towards the Atlantic. Moreover, there is already heavy congestion along the expressway. There are currently few employment opportunities along the peninsula, creating a commuting funnel into the existing centres. Furthermore, the emerging communities and estates are accessible only from the expressway as no lateral road connections are being built, creating a disconnected and largely monofunctional residential fabric. With few planning controls, the new pattern has some features familiar to the rest of Lagos: the area suffers from flooding caused by land reclamation and from building over natural drainage lines (Adelekan 2010), together with congestion, ecological destruction, piecemeal infrastructural provision, inadequate public transport and poorly distributed employment centres.

Customary landowners are still easy to find, but a crucial distinguishing dynamic of the process is the possibility of a relatively clear and unambiguous regime of land and property titling. The entire peninsula was subject to a global acquisition by

Land reclamation and luxury towers under construction. Eko Atlantic, 2018

the military government in 1993 and, unlike previous government land acquisitions on the mainland, it has been much more effective in asserting control over overall land ownership (though not over development). After government acquisition of the peninsula, the numerous landowning families there have been able to apply to take back portions of their land into their ownership and control; a process known as excision or village excision (Oshodi 2019; LAGDEL 2020). Powerful families, such as the Oniru and Elegushi, own prime land in this area. In other areas of excision such as Awoyaya or Langbasa, less powerful families have parcellised and leased land in a way similar to the plotting process. The government has introduced development guides to try and control the urbanisation of these excised villages, but as extensive development has already occurred this is difficult. To build private estates, developers can apply for Global CofO straight from the government without the need to negotiate with omo onile, and subsequently transfer titles that are relatively free from ambiguity and contestation to residents. With the sheer volume of available land and clarity of root titling, bypass urbanism offers unprecedented opportunities to private developers, entrepreneurial traditional families and people wishing to build or own their own house.

While many people and developers are taking advantage of this new clarity, the current peripheries of the peninsula offer different yet familiar possibilities. Numerous land-buying and home-ownership schemes have sprung up, offering plots and properties in return for small deposits. These are often on virgin land and the plots are sold before there is even a layout. Developers often negotiate directly with landowners and do not necessarily seek a global CofO. How tenable this is, and how tolerant the government will be once development begins, is not yet clear. Unsurprisingly, many cases of fraud are emerging, as bogus developers run off with deposits or fail to come through on promised infrastructure or titling documents. In large-scale developments such as the Lekki free trade zone, the government has been accused of taking unjust dispossession of customary lands, offering inadequate compensation to landowners and taking advantage of the latter's isolation and lack of knowledge of their rights and the legal procedures open to them (Tagliarino et al. 2018).

Several large-scale projects are currently being built and planned and form a key part of this process. The Lekki free trade zone is a model mega-industrial city built in conjunction with Chinese developers (Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018). It will include a new airport, new deep sea port, new industrial and manufacturing zones, and residential developments and tourist facilities. Aliko Dangote, known as one of the richest men in Africa, is also constructing a highly anticipated new cement factory together with workers' housing. Both these developments spur on land speculation in the far eastern peripheries of Lagos State. Products from these developments will be transported via new transportation links to the rest of Nigeria, including a planned fourth mainland bridge. Entirely bypassing the existing city will have deep effects on the structure and function of the mainland.

At the other end of the Lekki peninsula, Eko Atlantic is planned to be a new and exclusive city quarter. Its enormous footprint (25 $km^2$) lies on land that has been reclaimed from the Atlantic Ocean and the first skyscrapers have been erected. Eko is the Yoruba name for Lagos, but it is often (conveniently) assumed to mean eco by foreigners. Eko Atlantic is to be entirely self-sufficient in terms of planning, construction, operation and services. Lagos State Government has been involved only to grant permission and give its rhetorical support. Despite the expected volume of 250,000 daily commuters to Eko Atlantic, it is not integrated into the existing city and it is hard to imagine the extra congestion it will incur on Victoria Island. Ironically Eko Atlantic was sold as a barrier to defend Victoria Island against coastal erosion, when in fact its effect is to deepen and destabilise channels around the islands and increase coastal erosion all the way up the Ibeju Lekki coast (Lukacs 2014; Mendelsohn 2018). An environmental report that predicted the effects has been ignored (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Nigeria 2014) and there is little oversight of its social and environmental impacts. Nevertheless, the

shining, Dubai-style towers and cooled walkways of Eko Atlantic are eagerly anticipated by investors and residents alike (Côté-Roy and Moser 2018).

It is hard to imagine a Lagos where Lagos Island is not the prime centrality. However, the sheer scale of bypass urbanism and the large-scale projects currently under construction suggest the future will be different in many possible ways. The free trade zone and Dangote's factories, combined with the fourth mainland bridge, will reorientate Lagos's urban structure as it becomes the prime avenue for trade. There are still large tracts of undeveloped land north of the lagoon between Ikorodu and Epe and east of the free trade zone, presenting opportunities for speculation and new population movements. Epe itself is already booming and developing and is well located to become another new centrality. Moreover, Lagos State is extremely vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including rising sea levels and regional migration caused by climate change, which will very likely further impact on the shape and structure of Lagos in the coming decades.

# ARRANGED NOT LIKE WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO KNOW

The paradigmatic pattern of urbanisation in Lagos subverts much of what we have been taught about urban development. The urbanisation of Lagos has never been under control as such. Instead, planned development has been limited to defined areas while endogenous modes of urbanisation and governance have evolved and remain dominant. Urbanisation has been fuelled by dramatic and continuous population growth throughout turbulent periods of political and economic disruption. People have continued to be drawn to its magnetic centralities, throwing themselves into the 'hustle', finding space to live and work in plotting and popular areas while hoping to graduate to the Lagos elite. The tenacity of customary authorities and customary tenure throughout the colonial and postcolonial regimes has forged an obdurately dual land regime; a territorial compromise that is partially acknowledged in Nigeria's land laws but that operates mostly through tacit knowledge. In this way, plotting urbanisation became the ordinary way of things and it has rapidly urbanised the peripheries of Lagos since the 1950s so that it now stretches from the dense old neighbourhoods like Mushin to newly dense areas like Ikotun and into the far reaches of Lagos. Unlike in Mexico City and Istanbul, popular urbanisation has not been able to take hold as a dominant process in Lagos and occurs only in spatial margins, again subverting the assumption that Lagos is a slum city.

Popular urbanisation in Lagos is an expression of what happens when the state withdraws its tacit consent from the territorial compromise: areas are targeted for forced eviction and consolidation into plotting or formalisation is not possible. The newly emerging process of bypass urbanism sees a different configuration of the paradigmatic pattern writ large over a huge tract of undeveloped land. With more explicit and formalised tenure made possible by the state's global acquisition of the land, formally planned areas have flourished and the plot-by-plot parcellisation of customary land has been confined to excised villages. Even so, urbanisation is still not under control, as it outpaces planning rules and infrastructural development and ordinary, non-state modes of urban governance remain dominant. As the paradigmatic pattern continues to be followed, the new large-scale planned developments such as the free trade zone and Eko Atlantic will very likely lead to an expansion of plotting in the far eastern and north-eastern peripheries. The entire urban region, as well as its vital centralities, will undergo a reconfiguration as Lagos urbanises on a new scale and with new structures.

Main regional centrality

Paris and Saint-Denis have been structuring the region since the 12th century, Versailles has done so since the 17th century

Diffusion of economic and symbolic power of main centrality

Specialised regional centrality

Includes the La Défense business district, the airport business hubs, shopping malls, the centres of the villes nouvelles, the amusement park Eurodisney, the technopole Saclay and the Plaine Saint-Denis

Concentration of wealth

Densification of classic bourgeois neighbourhoods in the west of Paris, around Versailles and in former rural areas

Prospering upper-middle class

Longstanding processes of accumulation of wealth in morphologically diverse residential areas composed of dense urban neighbourhoods, zones with detached houses and villages in the urban periphery

Embourgeoisement

Longstanding process of reinvestment and upgrading of neighbourhoods in the city of Paris and the banlieue, often accompanied by radical transformation of their social composition and urban morphology

Metropolitan heterogeneity

Transformation of parts of the banlieue, leading to social, functional and morphological heterogeneity; resistance to rapid embourgeoisement due to the high number of existing grands ensembles

Post-proletarian

Concentration of poverty and racialised peripheralisation in the fragmented and heterogeneous urban fabric of the northern and western parts of the red belt around the city of Paris

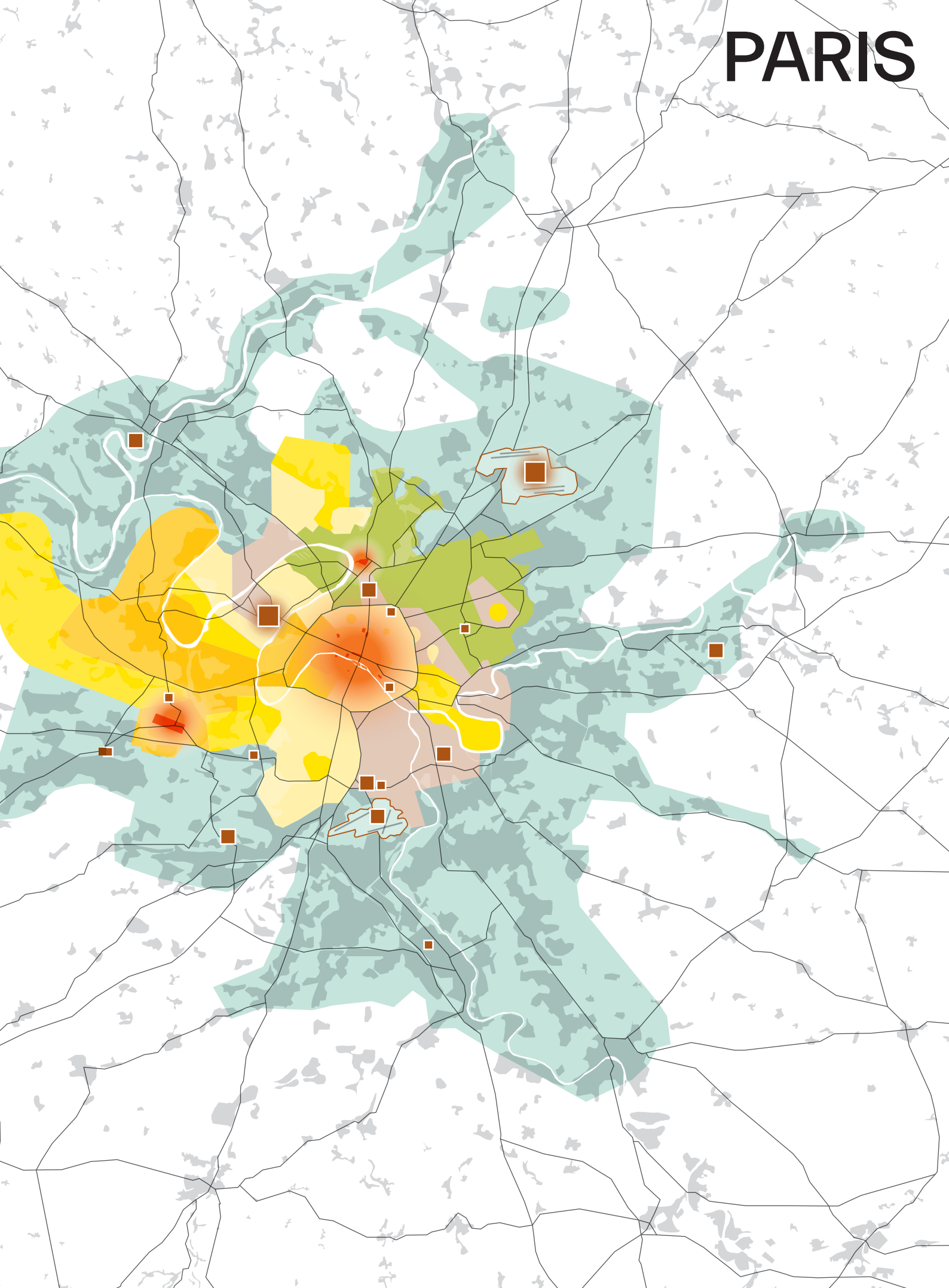
Multilayered patchwork urbanisation

A large-scale process of urban restructuring resulting in a patchwork of urban fragments with very different histories, dynamics, logics and functions

Airport

Urban footprint

0 5 10 20 km


PARIS

Christian Schmid
Anne Kockelkorn
Lara Belkind

The phantasmagoria of capitalist culture attained its most radiant unfurling in the World Exhibition of 1867. The Second Empire was at the height of its power. Paris was confirmed in its position as the capital of luxury and of fashion.

Walter Benjamin, *Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century,* 1969 [1938]

# BETWEEN CENTRE AND PERIPHERY

It is difficult to write anything original or novel about a city that has always held an iconic place in the world's literature, painting, cinema, history, social sciences and urban design. To characterise the experience of Paris and to present it as an urban model is thus not the goal of this chapter. Rather, we analyse the main traits of the patterns and pathways of urbanisation that have unfolded in the Paris Region to identify specific aspects, moments and features that help us to better understand its contemporary urbanisation processes. Seen from this perspective, and in contrast to widespread assumptions, Paris is not an exemplary model for

urban development in general—even not for western Europe—but rather a very specific paradigm of urbanisation.

Paris has a long history dating from before the Roman era. Over this history, various structures became embedded and inscribed into the urban fabric, such as the east-west and the north-south axis and a historic core that has partly survived the maelstrom of urbanisation over centuries. The regressive-progressive method we applied revealed one main lasting contradiction: the centre–periphery relationship, and related to that, the struggle for centrality.

## THE PRODUCTION OF A DIVIDED REGION

Paris is in fact a dual centre, being both a city at the heart of a region and the capital of France. In the past, Paris was not only a city surrounded by rural feudal territories but was part of a multipolar region, the Île-de-France, that assumed a central function for France from the Middle Ages. It includes first of all the city of Saint-Denis, which in the 7th century became an important second centre of the region when King Dagobert granted its monastery independence from the Bishop of Paris and the right to have its own market which attracted merchants from all over Europe. In the following centuries, the French royal house maintained close ties to Saint-Denis and most French kings were buried in its Basilica, replaced by the magnificent Gothic cathedral in the 12th century. In the 17th century, Saint-Denis became a centre for weaving and spinning mills and dye houses that laid the foundation of the industrialisation of the north of Paris.

Between the 16th and 18th century, the feudal French regime built sumptuous châteaux in parks with opulent water pools and fountains throughout the Île-de-France. Places such as the royal town of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, whose château was used as a residence by numerous French kings, or Fontainebleau, with its celebrated royal palace and Italian Renaissance garden, made the region of Paris—and not the city—the real centre of French absolutism and of the French colonial empire from the 16th century onwards. In 1682, Louis XIV, known as the Sun King, moved his court and government to the Palace of Versailles west of Paris, which became the seat of the French monarchy until the French Revolution, thus moving the centre of the region from the east to the west. The strong population growth of Paris in the 17th and 18th centuries led to a thorough restructuring of this territory to serve the needs of the growing bourgeoisie. Agricultural production was improved, among other things, by the construction of drainage systems and new roads, bridges and canals to deliver food to the capital (Picon 2012). In the areas close to Paris, the predominantly mixed farming was reoriented to horticulture and the specialised production of fruit, grain, bread and grapes. At the same time, the Parisian bourgeoisie acquired land on which to build country houses, which led to significant social polarisation in the villages of the region (Muchembled et al. 2009).

While the region became a productive territory catering to the needs of the feudal state, the city of Paris remained a walled city that developed in a concentric manner for more than a millennium. The sites of the city walls have left marks that still persist of the historical phases of expansion, like growth rings in an old tree trunk. During this process, Paris extended further and further outward from its centre, creating a succession of peripheries, the *faubourgs*, meaning settlements that are located outside the city walls but still belong to the city. They were at the periphery of the city but were not necessarily excluded from it and, after one or two centuries, they were incorporated into the city by the construction of a new wall.

The last defensive wall in Paris, built by Thiers in 1845, contributed greatly to the consolidation and petrification of the opposition between centre and periphery. At a time when city walls were being demolished in most European cities to make way for new city extensions, as well as for industrial areas and workers' housing, Louis Philippe I, King of France, wanted to protect Paris, this precious centre of French civilisation, against all possible enemies and perils from the outside. The city of Paris is still referred to as Paris 'intra muros' (inside the

View from the zone of wealth towards la Défense (left) and the city of Paris (right). Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 2023

walls), with the result that everything outside its walls—'extra muros'—is seen as the periphery. Although the Thiers' wall was removed after the First World War, it still lingers on as an almost impenetrable physical obstacle, having been replaced by a huge ring road, which has been named *le périphérique*, and still marks the boundary between the city and its periphery. By contrast, since the 19th century the term *banlieue* has meant the people and territories beyond the city that belong to the city, but assume different functions from it.

A stark divide between centre and periphery has thus arisen and deepened since the late 19th century. The divide has become even more pronounced with the huge expansion of the Parisian banlieues after the Second World War. To this day Paris intra muros remains the privileged space that concentrates most of the important cultural social, and economic centralities of the Paris Region and of France, while the banlieue is where all sorts of functions have been relegated, from support functions and logistics to the sites for factories and labourers. This divide between the centre and the periphery is one of the most intractable problems that Paris has to deal with, despite efforts undertaken by numerous governments to upgrade the periphery by means of massive investments in infrastructure including new metropolitan highways, a regional network of rapid metropolitan railway connections (RER), and even new tramlines in the banlieues—and by constructing new universities and business clusters, new centres and entire new towns (*villes nouvelles*) (Le Galès 2020).

In a similar way, representations and images of the urban may develop an impressive continuity and, like material structures, ossify and become fixed stereotypes. The division of Paris is a typical example, with glamorous urban Paris inside the périphérique and the ordinary banlieues outside it. Many tourist maps of Paris still show only the inner zone and completely ignore the banlieues. The message to visitors and tourists is clear: the outskirts of the 'true' Paris are not worth a visit. And yet the outer zone is home to almost five times as many people as the inner zone, and thus it is the dominant reality of daily life in Paris.

Of all eight urban territories we examine in this book, Paris manifests the clearest contrast between the centre and the periphery, which not only divides the city but has become an active contradiction through history. It is not really astonishing that 'centrality' became the key concept for Henri Lefebvre's urban theory. He understood centrality as a social resource that brings together the most diverse elements of society and in this way becomes productive. The struggle for centrality thus emerges from this analysis as the fundamental contradiction of the urban, and Lefebvre continually demanded the right of all members of society to access the possibilities and opportunities of the centre (see Schmid 2022).

## EMBOURGEOISEMENT: FROM HAUSSMANN TO GRAND PARIS

The most famous historical example of the primordial role played by the centre was the large-scale transformation of Paris under the regime of Napoleon III and his prefect Baron Haussmann. In a still-unrivalled strategic urbanistic intervention, Haussmann imposed a new order on the city of Paris, which continues to occupy contemporary generations of architects and urban scholars (see e.g. Harvey 2006c; Jallon et al. 2017). With the construction of the boulevards, he cut through the dense weave of the urban fabric to reorder the city, dissolving the socially and functionally mixed neighbourhoods and in so doing driving large numbers of people out into the periphery. The magnificent newly built boulevards opened the city to accommodate the capitalist economy. They allowed the circulation of people and goods and set the stage for the celebration of the reign of the commodity. For Walter Benjamin, Paris thus became the capital of the nineteenth century (Benjamin 1969: 169).

To pursue his aims, Haussmann systematically deployed an urbanistic strategy whose main elements were already present in Paris. By constructing axes and central squares forming the node of streets that radiate outward in all directions like the points of a star, he restructured the city, turned it into a site of public spectacle and into a governable entity. Parts of this urbanistic strategy were subsequently used in numerous cities in the French colonies. The use of axes and radiating central squares also reappeared in postwar developments in the Parisian banlieues, and became an urbanistic tool to design the villes nouvelles.

Haussmann's 15-year project to restructure central Paris led to the destruction of large parts of the old inner city. According to Lefebvre's analysis, the transformation of Paris led to the deportation of the proletariat to the periphery, the invention of the banlieues, and the embourgeoisement and depopulation of the centre. It manifested an inherent class logic, driving the rational coherence of the state to its pinnacle: the state itself was the highest instance, and not any other institution that intervened. But to contemporaries, Lefebvre argues, the ideology that underpinned and supported this rationality did not appear as such. Many admired the new Paris; others lamented the loss of its soul. But the fact that the city was fragmented by becoming bourgeois was hardly apparent to their contemporaries. What did it take 'for the truth to become apparent'? Revolutionary urban practice, with its concrete utopia (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 109–110).

## THE COMMUNE

In the spring of 1871, the insurrection of the Paris Commune shook the city to the very foundations—it was a wake-up call and a model to so many

Embourgeoisement in the city of Paris. Ménilmontant, 2010

revolutionaries of the time. In Lefebvre's words: 'The workers, chased from the center of the city to its outskirts, returned to the center occupied by the bourgeoisie. Through a combination of force, luck, and good timing, they took control of it.' (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 110). In *La proclamation de la Commune* (1965), Lefebvre meticulously reconstructs the chronology of events on the basis of detailed archive work. Inspired by his discussions with the Situationists, he interprets the 1871 uprising as the attempt to elevate the city to the arena and the ground of human reality, and characterises it as the first urban revolution.

In the periods that followed, urban contradictions and struggles over the urban have repeatedly flared up in Paris. One example was the events of May 1968, which can be read not only as a rebellion against imperialism and the bourgeois order, but also as an urban revolt, as a reappropriation of the city. It was in this context that Lefebvre wrote *Le droit à la ville (The Right to the City, 1996 [1968]).* Analysing the dialectics of this urban situation, Lefebvre asked if it was really in the interest of the political establishment and the hegemonic class to extinguish the spark of revolt and thereby to destroy the city's reputation across the world as a centre of resistance and experimentation (Lefebvre 1991 [1975]: 386). Nevertheless, subsequent development has led to Paris intra muros becoming a largely privileged, pacified urban space that is increasingly shaped by embourgeoisement and commodification. It has thus faced an intense process of incorporation of urban differences (see Chapter 17), and lost an important part of its urban qualities.

# PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

After Haussmann's renovation of Paris and the defeat of the Commune, Paris developed into a metropolis. Paris was the centre of France and of the French colonial empire, and attracted visitors from all over the world. However, there was another side of this fast-growing metropolis: the banlieue. Outside the walls of the city of Paris developed a vast urban periphery that soon became the social space of the industrial working class. After the Second World War, the Fordist boom led to a thorough modernisation of the Paris Region. While the city of Paris was facing various urban renewal projects, the banlieue was transformed by mass housing urbanisation. From the 1970s to the 1990s, the economic crisis, the national turn towards neoliberal urban politics, and the implementation of new regional urban strategies led to the socioeconomic polarisation and polycentralisation of the Paris Region. Most recently, the long-entrenched opposition between the centre and the periphery is being transformed again, as a new urban strategy of forced metropolisation is currently extending the metropolitan core area towards the banlieue.

## PARIS METROPOLIS AND THE PRODUCTION OF THE BANLIEUE

Between the time of the Commune and the Second World War, the city of Paris expanded across its boundaries. The former city, covering approximately the area from the 1st to the 11th arrondissement, became a polycentric core zone and the former faubourgs developed into urban neighbourhoods. The bourgeoisie occupied the neighbourhoods in the west and south-west while the proletariat was driven back to the hills in the north and east, from Montmartre to Belleville and Ménilmontant. With its mixed urban structure and its popular centralities, from Montmartre to the Quartier Latin and the Place d'Italie, Paris was still a very lively and unruly place. From the roaring 1920s to the moment of the *front populaire* on the eve of the Second World War, Paris's reputation grew as one of the most exciting metropolises in the world.

However, there was another side of Paris. By 1860, Haussmann had organised the incorporation of all the municipalities inside the Theirs wall into the city of Paris—and with this act he fixed the size and shape of Paris to this day. This created, in turn, the banlieue. This term was used at the time to designate a place *(lieu)* that is located outside the city but is still subject to its control (*ban*). The banlieue developed first as the result of a spillover of the production of the metropolis during the Belle Epoque (1860–1914). It then became the expansion zone for activities that were vital to the functioning of the

city but needed large amounts of space or were disruptive in all sorts of ways, from large infrastructure such as railyards and freight train stations, to slaughterhouses, waste disposal facilities, water purification plants and cemeteries. Most importantly, the banlieue became the location for the extension of industry, particularly in the vast plain between the city of Paris and Saint-Denis.

Thus, the banlieue was developed into the social space of the fast-growing industrial working class. The inner part of the banlieue, the *petite coronne* was dominated by mainly modest single-family homes *(pavillons)*, which were often self-constructed in an incremental way. This created a typical pattern of small housing plots and large-scale industries and infrastructure, punctuated by small centralities emerging in former village cores. The *grande couronne,* located further from the centre, was much less densely settled and developed mainly along railway lines and important roads.

After the local elections of 1924 the banlieue became the political stronghold of the French Communist Party. The city of Paris was thus surrounded by a ring of communist municipalities, the *couronne rouge* (red belt) that applied local strategies influenced largely by the concept of municipal socialism (Subra 2004, Fourcaut 1986). In this way, the opposition between city and banlieue was renewed and turned into the contrast between the still socially mixed metropolitan centre and the social space for the working class.

During this phase, the entire region of Paris developed in the politically intended absence of encompassing regional planning. As the mayoral post had been abolished after the Commune, Paris was governed by the prefect of the Département de la Seine and the prefecture of the police, and thus was directly subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior until the institution of the mayor of Paris was reinstituted in 1977. This resulted in the specific governmental structure of Paris: while Paris formed an institutional unity under the direct control of the central government, the banlieues developed into a mosaic of small but rapidly growing communes. Overall, the entire region Île-de-France has no less than 1,260 municipalities, turning it into a small-scale territorial patchwork where each municipality has its own specific relation to the affluent centre of Paris. However, the end of the interwar period was marked by a strong political unity of the petite couronne encircling the city of Paris, dominated by the communist party.

## LES TRENTES GLORIEUSES: URBAN RENOVATION AND MASS HOUSING URBANISATION

After the Second World War, like most Western countries France experienced a postwar boom and embarked on a Keynesian-Fordist development model based on coupling mass production, mass consumption and a rapidly expanding welfare state. This period between 1945 and 1975 was labelled *les trentes glorieuses*—the 30 glorious years. The Paris Region (which corresponds more or less to the official Région Île-de-France) was the centre of industrialisation in France and experienced unprecedented economic growth and strong immigration from other parts of France as well as from Spain and Portugal. The Algerian War of Independence and the process of decolonisation drove about one million refugees to France, many of whom fled to Paris. As a result, the population of the Île-de-France increased from 7.3 million in 1954 to 9.8 million in 1975. In the early 1950s, the beginning of this population growth caused a severe housing crisis because of the dilapidated state of the existing housing stock and the modest rate of housing construction after the Second World War. After a public outcry, the French government launched a national mass housing programme based on a system of prefabrication which linked market interventions, civil engineering and military strategies, a combination of legal tools and disciplinary knowledge that was initially developed and applied in the former French colonies (Kipfer 2019; Fredenucci 2003; Henni 2017). The strategy of state urban intervention was strengthened with the advent of the Fifth Republic, established by General Charles de Gaulle in 1958, a few months after a military coup in Algeria had led to the collapse of the Fourth Republic (1945–1958). De Gaulle installed a political system that granted the president and the prime minister special executive powers and, in the following years, French urban planners introduced comprehensive territorial projects using top-down procedures (Vadelorge 2014; Effosse 2005). In 1958 the Gaullist government created priority urbanisation areas called ZUP (*zone à urbaniser par priorité*), an administrative tool that made it possible to acquire land to construct settlements with at least 500 apartments equipped with public facilities. This urban strategy materialised in the construction of modernist high-rise estates called *grands ensembles*, which were usually a combination of high-rise towers and slabs (*tours et barres*) located in large open spaces (Lacoste 1963). The construction of grands ensembles went far beyond the perimeter of the already dense petite couronne and added to the rapid urbanisation of the grande couronne.

At the same time, the administration of the City of Paris launched a series of urban renewal programmes, demolishing many popular neighbourhoods and forcing low-income people to relocate to the banlieue. It ceded the cleared areas to private developers who constructed housing for the middle classes. Examples of this state strategy of renovation and deportation (*rénovation-déportation*), as critics called it at the time (Groupe de sociologie urbaine de Nanterre, 1970), are the Place d'Italie, at the heart of the 13th arrondissement, and the Place des Fêtes,

at the top of Belleville. In the course of the 1960s, as a result of further modernisation and urban transformation programmes, Paris developed into an international business centre (see Coing 1966; Lojkine 1972).

At the same time, this urbanisation paradigm was the heyday of the banlieue rouge. The communist municipalities of the banlieue, applying the urbanisation strategy of municipal socialism, tried to combine a politics of modernisation with the strengthening of solidarity and social cohesion. They initiated and achieved the construction of entire new mass housing neighbourhoods. This development can be understood as the result of a tacit territorial compromise between Gaullist top-down planning and communist local initiatives. In this modernisation process the life routines of the upper working and lower-middle classes were catapulted from the 19th to the 20th century, providing the grounds for the formation of a consumer and leisure society that Lefebvre called 'the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption' (Lefebvre 1971 [1968]). Contemporary intellectuals and political activists criticised this form of authoritarian modernisation and, over the course of the 1960s, contestations and protests erupted against the demolition of popular neighbourhoods in the city of Paris. In the banlieue, in turn, protesters and action groups criticised the poor provision of infrastructure and amenities in the grands ensembles and demanded improvements in public transport and the provision of public space (see Godard et al. 1973).

In May 1968, the protests of the working class and the metropolitan milieu came together and sparked an uprising in the streets of Paris. Lefebvre, at the time a professor at the newly built University of Paris Nanterre, which was located in a poor, run-down neighbourhood in the western banlieue, describes the historic moment when the students experienced the periphery and launched protests in the centre of Paris in his *L'Irruption—de Nanterre au sommet* (translated as *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Upheaval,* 1969). For a short time, students and workers fought side by side against the repressive French government, imperialism, the Vietnam War, and for a different Paris.

## ECONOMIC CRISIS AND NEOLIBERAL RESTRUCTURING: POLARISATION AND POLYCENTRALISATION

In the early 1970s, urban conditions changed radically, giving way to the development of a new paradigm of urbanisation greatly influenced by the economic crisis of the mid-1970s, neoliberal restructuring after 1978, and particularly the marked and lasting deindustrialisation. The Île-de-France lost about half a million industrial jobs between 1975 and 1990 and another half a million by 2002 (Subra 2004). By the 1980s, many neighbourhoods, particularly those in the northern and eastern banlieues, manifested clear signs of socioeconomic peripheralisation, precarisation and social crisis. Hand in hand with these developments went the disintegration of social networks and solidarity structures. Communist control of the banlieue rouge had reached its apogee with the elections in 1977. Simultaneously, the dissolution in 1968 of the powerful Département de la Seine that encompassed the city of Paris and the petite couronne, which was a stronghold of the Communist Party, weakened the influence of communist officials and their distributive policies. The administrative splitting of this département into the département of Paris and the three départements of the petite couronne—Hauts-de-Seine, Seine-Saint-Denis and Val-de-Marne—increased the territorial fragmentation of the Paris Region and strengthened the power of central government. The only département that the Communist Party continued to govern until 2020 was Seine-Saint-Denis.

In contrast to the north-east, the entire south-western part of the Paris Region—extending over the départements Hauts-de-Seine, Yvelines and Essonne—had largely escaped industrialisation and was therefore much less affected by deindustrialisation and unemployment. As a result of these developments, the pre-existing regional polarisation between a prosperous south-west and a declining north-east deepened. This polarisation overlaid the marked divide between the city of Paris and the banlieue.

The socioeconomic peripheralisation of the north-eastern part of the petite couronne began at the same time as the construction of five state-planned villes nouvelles on the outskirts of Paris. This large-scale territorial project completely restructured the outer banlieue, spurred the further extension of the grande couronne and led to a more polycentric form of urbanisation. The state-led development of new centralities had started in the late 1950s with the planning of La Défense, Europe's largest business district at the time, in a dilapidated part of the banlieue close to Nanterre. It was strategically located just beyond the boundary of the city of Paris at the prolongation of the *axe historique* leading from the Louvre to the Champs-Élysées and the Arc de Triomphe. It was led by the Établissement public pour l'aménagement de la région de la Défense and constituted a major tranche of state investment into transport and urban infrastructure. Though it was originally conceived as a mixed commercial, residential and cultural centre, it developed during the 1980s and 1990 into a business district with numerous skyscrapers accommodating global corporate headquarters, and adorned by the landmark Grande Arche de la Défense. At the same time, another strategic business hub was being developed at the Paris

Charles de Gaulle airport—a workspace for 88,600 employees in 2016, and another one around the Paris-Orly airport and the international wholesale food market, Rungis.

The result is an urban pattern that Philip Subra (2009) as well as Thérèse St.Julien and Renault Le Goix (2007) call a hierarchised polycentrism (*polycentrisme hierarchisé*). It can be understood as the overlap between a long-standing, monocentric organisation of a territory and a large-scale polycentric periphery. Thus, the city of Paris still houses all relevant central functions, from state ministries to corporate headquarters, businesses, offices and logistics; from education and culture to shopping and leisure. Paris is the label, the brand name of the entire territory. In contrast, all other centralities of the Paris Region are specialised, such as the global business hub of La Défense, the business hubs of the airports Charles de Gaulle and Orly, the different new centralities of the villes nouvelles and also the scientific and research hub of Saclay that is currently being developed in the south-western grande couronne.

The phase between the late 1960s and the early 2000s thus led to a new paradigm of urbanisation that fundamentally changed the urban pattern of the Paris Region. On the one hand, it initiated a shift towards polycentric urban development. On the other, it led to the bifurcation of development between the marginalisation and peripheralisation of northern and eastern parts of the banlieue and a prosperous south-west. In contrast, the city of Paris has developed into a global city, a place for the science economy and residence for parts of the French upper and upper-middle classes which, as Préteceille notes (2007: 12), generally favour living in central neighbourhoods.

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CENTRE–PERIPHERY RELATIONSHIP

In the last two decades the Paris Region has undergone further change and evolved from a territory that was dominated by a central core to a more complex and diffuse assemblage of emerging centralities and differentiated territories. During this time, the double socioeconomic polarisation of the region was further aggravated. At the national level, the region enjoyed a rise in GDP of more than 25% from 2001 to 2015, which was well above the national average (Institut d'aménagement et d'urbanisme Île-de-France, IAU 2016). At the same time, the city of Paris turned into a privileged space for the global economy, attracting ever more highly qualified specialists and executive employees. Many social groups, apart from the wealthiest, could not afford the increased rents and left the city of Paris for the petite couronne, while parts of the middle classes settled even further out in the grande couronne (Berger et al. 2014; Lefèvre 2017; Subra 2012).

In parallel, socioeconomic polarisation in the Paris Region increased further, widening the east-west territorial divide. The executive class, service sector firms and affluent residential areas are situated in the south-west of Paris and its adjacent banlieues. In contrast, the north-east contains the region's poorest residents, centres of immigration and abandoned industrial zones. Here, unemployment rates are among the highest in France and the poor state of public services in health and education contributes to poverty, social isolation and a precarious life for many residents. We discuss these situations in our urban configurations of *embourgeoisement* on the one hand, and *post-proletarian urbanisation* on the other.

Another important process is the dissolution of the boundaries between Paris and the banlieue. On a large scale, processes of embourgeoisement continue seamlessly across the boundary of the city of Paris. On a small scale, this cross-boundary process is evident in the development at the outer side of the périphérique. Over recent years, numerous redevelopment schemes have been constructed and today, the motorway constitutes less a boundary and more a ring that is lined on both sides by offices, hotels, shops and various facilities.

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

Since the Second World War, the population of the Paris Region (Île-de-France) has increased from about 6.6 million to 12.3 million. At the same time, the population of the City of Paris has decreased from 2.7 to 2.1 million (INSEE database). Until 1970, the main part of this growth occurred in the petit couronne, which today has a population of about 4.6 million, while the grande couronne absorbed the population growth of the last 50 years and counts today 5.4 million people. During this time, the city of Paris was transformed into an exclusive metropolitan core, while mainly three processes of urbanisation were shaping the banlieues: multilayered patchwork urbanisation, post-proletarian urbanisation, and embourgeoisement. Multilayered patchwork urbanisation has been developing in almost the entire grande couronne, which today forms a polycentric, fragmented and splintered urban space. Post-proletarian urbanisation dominates the north and north-east of the petite couronne; it is marked by strong processes of peripheralisation. The third main process is embourgeoisement that started in the city of Paris and has since gradually transformed the banlieue in the west and south-west.

## MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION

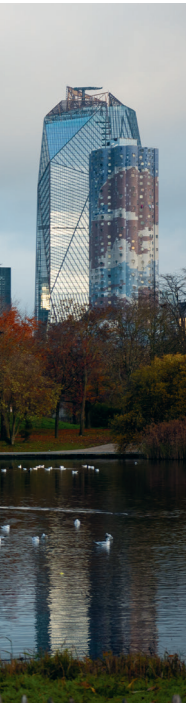
The largest urban configuration we identified in the Paris Region is dominated by a process we call multilayered patchwork urbanisation. Our conceptualisation of this process was inspired by our experience of travelling through large parts of the grande couronne by bus or car, and losing our orientation in the patchwork of contrasting urban elements that were lacking in spatial coherence. Our reconstruction of the pathway of urbanisation of this configuration found that this seemingly haphazard urban pattern was composed of the overlap of different historical layers. Each layer corresponds to a distinct paradigm of urbanisation that was determined by a different logic, thus creating a configuration of multilayered urbanisation, which was sometimes a juxtaposition, sometimes an overlay and sometimes was in contradiction to the other elements.

The first layer consists of remnants from the time when the Île-de-France constituted the core region of the French monarchy and the support space for the capital of the colonial empire from the 16th century to the French Revolution. The second layer was produced between the mid-19th century and the Second World War, when the banlieue came into existence. Towards the north, the inner banlieue developed into a dense industrial and working-class district and towards the south and west, into bourgeois neighbourhoods. The outer banlieue was also affected by these processes but in a less intensive manner, expanding further out mainly along railway lines and main roads.

The third layer results from the major transformation during the Fordist period, when mass housing urbanisation dominated the urbanisation process. In the grande couronne, the grands ensembles were mainly erected on agricultural land in the meshes of the urban fabric, often adjacent to motorways, railway lines and industrial sites. They thus formed territorial enclaves cut off from local centralities and often far away from public transport, leading to logistical peripheralisation (see Chapter 16). Newly constructed shopping malls initiated by the central state and built according on the North American model became the new centralities of this zone, leading to the demise of the small retail trade and the depletion of public space (Tenhoor 2012; Cupers 2014).

The production of the fourth layer started in the late 1960s with the construction of the villes nouvelles and new regional centralities. The planning of this large-scale territorial project had been started in the 1960s and became a prime example of the top-down mode of the Gaullist government. In 1961 Paul Delouvrier, the former delegate general of the French government in Algeria (Henni 2017), was appointed delegate general of the newly founded District de Paris. As he had extensive power to act, he largely disregarded existing communal institutional and political structures. Under the framework of the regional master plan from 1965 (Schéma directeur d'aménagement et d'urbanisme de la région Parisienne, SDAURP), he proposed a development plan that envisaged the controlled decentralised growth of the grand couronne by constructing five villes nouvelles. It was a radical strategy to manage the predicted doubling of the population of the Paris Region until 2000 (Murard and Fourquet 2004).

In many respects, this project was seen as the antithesis of the model of the grands ensembles, as it prioritised urban infrastructures over housing and envisaged large areas of relatively low-built density and family-friendly housing for the middle classes (for a more differentiated evaluation see Vadelorge 2006). Each of the villes nouvelles aimed to become a 'real city', with shopping, leisure and culture facilities, and also with 'more jobs than bedrooms'. Construction started in the late 1960s but was soon hampered by the economic crisis of the mid-1970s and the related decrease in population growth rates. As a result, the five villes nouvelles initially attracted only a fraction of the inhabitants they had been planned for, and in the early 1980s they were additionally struck by the subprime mortgage crisis which had originated in the neoliberal reforms of 1978. Nevertheless, until 1990 the villes nouvelles absorbed the largest



Financial centrality in the banlieue. La Défense, 2023

part of population growth in the region, and extended far into periurban areas (Berger and Orfeuil 2004).

The new centralities of the villes nouvelles were the main drivers of the restructuring of the grande couronne, particularly the mixed urban centres of Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines and Cergy, as well as the university and science hub Cité Descartes and the amusement park Eurodisney in Marne-la-Vallée. However, these are partial centralities, and are largely lacking the qualities of the former *quartiers populaires* in the city of Paris with their dense webs of facilities, shops, venues and meeting places that still attract visitors and tourists. Additionally, some of these new centralities, such as Évry, Noisy-le-Grand (Marne-la-Vallée) and Trappes (Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines) faced racialised socioeconomic peripheralisation occurring in its centrally located social housing estates (Kockelkorn 2017; Wieviorka 1992).

As a result, the villes nouvelles did not contribute to the controlled reorganisation of the urban structure of the banlieue but became themselves part of the development of a fragmented and splintered urban space and merged with the existing urban patchwork of the grand couronne. This was the moment that finally generated the configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation.

## POST-PROLETARIAN URBANISATION

Parallel to the territories of multilayered patchwork urbanisation, a related but quite different urban configuration emerged in the northern and north-eastern part of the banlieue. This area, which used to be the centre of industrial Paris and constituted the core of the couronne rouge in the interwar period, experienced notable processes of racialised socioeconomic peripheralisation that started in the early 1970s in the wake of economic crises, deindustrialisation and the implementation of neoliberal policies. Accordingly, we call this urban category post-proletarian.

Historically, the industrialisation of this region was partly facilitated by its location along the road to the Channel ports and to the rapidly industrialising Flanders and the Netherlands. The Plaine-Saint-Denis, the huge plain directly adjacent to the city of Paris, developed into one of the most important industrial zones of Europe in the early 19th century (Vieillard-Baron 2011). At the same time, when heavy transport infrastructure was sited there—rail tracks, canals and roads—it contributed to the splintering of its urban fabric by cutting residential neighbourhoods off from one another.

The practice of evicting poor populations from the city centre to the banlieue during the rule of Baron Haussmann and the deportation of communards after the defeat of the Commune in 1871 made this area a refuge for dissidents (Castells 1983; Harvey 2006c). During the interwar and postwars period of the 20th century, it became an important arrival city for working-class migrants from occupied Algeria and southern Europe (Lillo 2004). Today, this area still remains a hub for new migrants, and is home to some of France's poorest social groups.

Starting in 1950, the contradictory processes of population growth and deindustrialisation set the framework for the deeply racialised, socioeconomic peripheralisation of this area in the following decades. Initially, the communist-governed municipalities sought to meet the needs of their working-class electorate by constructing grands ensembles using local housing associations; many of which were later classified as part of the national heritage

Post-proletarian urbanisation. Bobigny, 2023

Post-proletarian urbanisation. La Courneuve, 2023

because of their architectural quality. They also accommodated the working-class population that was displaced by urban renewal projects in the city of Paris. Between 1958 and 1971 the municipality of Saint-Denis lost 13,000 jobs; in 1962, 60 per cent of the jobs in Saint-Denis were non-skilled. In 1968, 40,000 people lived in squatter settlements in the Paris Region, of whom 4,000 lived in Saint-Denis (David 2010).

In the late 1960s, when deindustrialisation and the loss of employment became palpable, the municipal governments started to be reluctant to grant the migrant groups living in squatter settlements the same degree of inclusion as their white French electorate. Municipal records evoked the fear that the metaphor of the ghetto might be projected on their territory, thus fuelling conflicts and struggles for recognition between non-skilled workers with or without a migration history (David 2010; Masclet 2003).

At the same time, national housing policies shifted towards a stronger market orientation, particularly promoting home ownership. The shift from people's right to housing to their duty to participate in the housing market following the 1977 neoliberal reform programme fundamentally altered the composition of the social housing sector (Kockelkorn 2020). Incentivised by subsidised subprime mortgages, higher income groups left the social housing sector while low-income French citizens and racialised social groups who had previously been excluded from social housing gradually gained access to it. However, investment in social infrastructure never really improved and thus added to the degradation of already deprived housing estates.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the deindustrialisation of the Paris Region mostly affected the north-eastern part of the petite couronne, and the industries of the Plaine-Saint-Denis were abandoned. Deindustrialisation and peripheralisation had a devastating effect on the neighbourhoods concerned, led to the gradual disintegration of the industrial working class and spurred racial conflicts over access to resources and infrastructure. In this way, the process of post-proletarian urbanisation started.

The grands ensembles, which in the early 1960s represented the collective experience of solidarity, comfort and modernity, came to epitomise decline and despair. In 1986 Debussy, a high-rise housing apartment block in La Courneuve, was publicly demolished. This marked the symbolic beginning of a first sporadic and, after 2003, systematic demolition of grands ensembles (see Kipfer 2022). However, the grands ensembles were not the only places where living conditions were precarious, as inhabitants of single-family homes were experiencing excess indebtedness due to increasing mortgage interest rates combined with rising unemployment in the 1980s (Taffin 1987; Kleinman 1996). In the 1990s urban uprisings erupted in the banlieue almost every year, culminating in the riots of autumn 2005 that flared in the north-eastern banlieue of Paris and soon spread across France. The north-east still includes high numbers of these precarious urban areas, classified as 'sensitive urban zones' (*zones urbaines sensibles*, ZUS). They often consist of grands ensembles and are characterised by high rates of unemployment and high levels of poverty, higher than average numbers of immigrants, young people and large families, and lower degrees of education and health than in the overall population (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques, INSEE 2011).

In the 2000s, French urban scholars began to use the term 'ghetto' to describe the process of racialised peripheralisation in the grands ensembles (Lapeyronnie and Courtois 2008). However, following the arguments of Loïc Wacquant (2007), it is important to differentiate this term carefully according to context. In the Paris Region the French state has never withdrawn from investing in the built environment nor from social policies in the banlieues, including the deprived north-east with its highly diverse population. This is a stark contrast to the structural historical isolation at mass scale of African American communities in the USA, for example in South Central Los Angeles, as discussed in Chapter 11.

The response of the French government to this process of peripheralisation was to change its urban strategy. In 2004, it founded the Agence Nationale pour la Rénovation Urbaine (ANRU) and launched a major national programme to demolish and reconstruct grands ensembles, in combination with infrastructural measures and incentives for home ownership to increase the social mix of

neighbourhoods. This programme was relaunched in 2018. Because of its gentrifying effects, many scholars and activists were highly critical of this strategy. As Nina Guyon (2016, 2017) has shown, while the average income has risen in areas targeted by ANRU programmes, low-income households have been displaced by these projects and relocated to substandard housing in the private sector. Stefan Kipfer (2022: 206, 232) indicates that these programmes are a political response to subaltern mobilisations and also highlights the racialised and neo-colonial dimensions of social mixing from above.

Parts of the post-proletarian areas are currently also heavily affected by strategies of urban redevelopment, such as the Plaine Saint Denis. Communist, and recently socialist, political leadership in Seine-Saint-Denis has lobbied for decades to ensure that new developments benefit residents living on site or in the vicinity. However, physical transformation of the brownfield sites and a dramatic increase in land values has intensified the displacement of these lower income groups. Once the historic industrial core of the area, the Plaine Saint-Denis has become the stage for several large-scale schemes for commerce and leisure led by the central government. The first highly symbolic project to be constructed was the Stade de France, for the 1998 FIFA World Cup men's football championship, which became the centre of new commercial and service developments in the area. Nearby is Gare Pleyel, a major new rail hub under construction that has the potential to establish a new regional centrality. Further investment in infrastructure, including new tramlines and new stations for the Grand Paris Express, have created real estate opportunities, and an even larger-scale redevelopment is underway, including a 2024 Olympic Athletes Village in Saint-Denis and an Olympic Media Cluster near Le Bourget.

## METROPOLITAN HETEROGENEITY

The areas located in the south-east of the petite couronne have undergone a related but less peripheralising pathway of urbanisation, characterised by small-scale territorial fragmentation and morphological, functional and socioeconomic heterogeneity. They include industrial zones, grands ensembles, dense metropolitan apartment buildings, single-family neighbourhoods, town centres and public transport axes but only limited green spaces. These areas are today dominated by contrasting processes of peripheralisation and embourgeoisement kept in fragile balance. The historic imprint and presence of industrial production and grands ensembles prevents rapid embourgeoisement, while their proximity to the city of Paris fosters it, especially in the vicinity of train, metro and tram stations.

Historically, these areas are defined by the spillover processes that accompanied the growth of the city of Paris in the second half of the 19th century, creating the territorial dominance of the metropolis over its surroundings, as well as a relationship of co-dependency. Establishing these infrastructures of exchange required a tight web of informal and formal relationships and commitments between municipal and national politicians on both sides of Paris's municipal boundaries (Fourcaut et al. 2007). In the late 19th and early 20th century, the interstices of this infrastructural landscape were filled in with small-scale single-family settlements. The major traffic arteries of local centralities, in turn, were often lined with more densely built perimeter block developments and equipped with an increasingly dense tram network that provided direct connections to the centre of Paris. Beginning in the mid-1930s, this tram network was dismantled and replaced by buses and automobile transport, leading to an increasingly abrupt physical separation between the city of Paris and its peripheralised surroundings that culminated in the construction of the périphérique ring road in 1973.

We call this urban category, which is composed of a mix of relatively affluent neighbourhoods and working-class areas, metropolitan heterogeneity. It is best illustrated by the south-eastern département Val-de-Marne which includes conservative municipalities, such as Vincennes, as well as communist strongholds such as Vitry-sur-Seine, Villejuif and Ivry-sur-Seine (Bellanger and Moro 2014).

Since the 2000s, the spillover from Paris has been a process of continuous upgrading, embourgeoisement, and territorial fragmentation that is currently also transforming parts of post-proletarian areas in the north into zones of metropolitan heterogeneity. At the southern edge of Seine-Saint-Denis at Aubervilliers and Pantin, for example, there has been an increasing concentration of more affluent households since the mid-2010s, and this is one of the few areas of the banlieue not in western Paris where this class is represented (IAU 2019).

## EMBOURGEOISEMENT, PROSPERING UPPER MIDDLE CLASS, AND CONCENTRATION OF WEALTH

As the preceding sections show, the third dominant urbanisation processes in Paris has been the process of embourgeoisement. This process has to be distinguished from gentrification, even if there are many parallels such as the upgrading of physical structures and the displacement of lower income groups. Embourgeoisement can be understood as the expansion of bourgeois and upper-middle class groups into central urban areas. This process started as a result of the fundamental transformation of Paris initiated by Haussmann and the fight for the urban centre ever since has been a constant

theme in the development of the Paris Region. In the postwar period, low-income groups were pushed out of the city of Paris by state strategies of modernisation and urban renewal. Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s Paris developed into a global city and thus embourgeoisement became an almost generalised process in less wealthy neighbourhoods across the city (Clerval and Delage 2014, 2019). In the last decades, the concentration of wealth in the city of Paris has intensified and extended westward throughout the inner ring département of Haut-de-Seine and beyond, consolidating around historical aristocratic strongholds such as Saint-Germain-en-Laye and Versailles. Today, urban spaces shaped by embourgeoisement range from densely built neighbourhoods at the heart of the city to postwar single-family housing enclaves in the banlieue, and to renovated rural villages on the periurban fringe.

To the east, isolated sites where upgrading is taking place include Montreuil, bordering the city of Paris, where upper-middle class households have settled along a key Metro line adjacent to the Château and the Bois de Vincennes. Another example is Le Raincy, a wealthy, right-leaning municipality in the working-class département of Seine-Saint-Denis and the post-proletarian zone of our analysis.

At the same time, the middle class itself is being forced to leave the city of Paris due to skyrocketing house prices which have tripled between 2000 and 2020 in the region (OECD 2023). Arrondissements in the city of Paris, especially the western 6th, 7th, 16th and 17th arrondissements, have become the exclusive domain of wealthy elites. Because space is becoming unaffordable to the middle class, and more affluent social groups occupy larger apartments, the population of Paris intra muros is shrinking while that of the petite couronne is increasing. This displacement from the centre is exacerbated by the prevalence of temporary tourist accommodation offered on platforms such as Airbnb, which remove regular residences from the rental market. For the same reasons, regional population growth has shifted to the east, where more affordable and modest homes and centres of immigration are situated, while homes and employment for the wealthy have shifted west (Institut Paris Région 2021). As a result, the western banlieue proche has undergone an intensive process of embourgeoisement, as upper and upper-middle class households move in.

Embourgeoisement in the eastern petite couronne. Montreuil, 2022

Embourgeoisement in the western petite couronne. Levallois-Perret, 2022

According to a detailed empirical analysis by Edmond Préteceille, embourgeoisement in Paris has become a phenomenon of the banlieue. Several distinct processes of transformation are at play. Firstly, upper-class Parisian neighbourhoods have expanded south-west into adjacent, mixed working-class neighbourhoods in Hauts-de-Seine. Further from the centre, embourgeoisement processes are also occurring in Yvelines in the grande couronne, in a category we call the prosperous upper-middle class. Households participating in embourgeoisement in the west aspire for proximity to existing high-status areas and here, social networks may play a more important role in the choice of where to locate than proximity to Paris. A large proportion of corporate executives and private business professionals are found in these households. Less well represented in the west are social groups working in the creative and intellectual fields who tend to value centrality to Paris and neighbourhoods with diverse social classes and cultures.

Secondly, a more scattered pattern of upper-middle class neighbourhoods can be observed in the western part of the grande couronne, clustered around the ville nouvelle Cergy-Pontoise and along the Seine and Oise valleys. These neighbourhoods that constitute an important part of the configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation are somewhat remote and are not adjacent to existing upper-class areas. Upper-middle class households that are upgrading these areas have a slightly different

profile from those in the inner banlieue. Though employed in similar fields, they may be from a less elite second tier of engineers and supervisors rather than the executives. They are more likely to be upwardly mobile and from working-class backgrounds themselves, perhaps originating from areas near to their current location (Préteceille 2007).

Looking further out west into the periurban zone, Berger et al. (2014) have proposed that, while inner ring municipalities continue to be almost completely transformed by an executive class with ties to the centre, the outer ring may be reaching a certain equilibrium after several decades because existing residents have anchored their everyday lives around their place of residence. The construction of new settlements has slowed and households in these areas have become more diverse, while social networks and travel patterns have become more local.

This periurban zone is thus marked by a great diversity of urban forms. One prevalent trend is the revival of villages on the periurban fringe. In their studies of middle and upper-middle class housing choices on the Parisian periphery, Charmes (2019, 2011) and Vermeersch et al. (2018) look at a process of evolution of a typical picturesque village that has evolved since the 1980s from a community where middle-class urbanites began to settle to one with a significant presence of executive households attracted to 'rural life' and proximity to 'nature'. Charmes describes the process of 'clubbisation' that such villages undergo upon the arrival of newcomers, who often engage in local politics to limit growth and prevent new development.

# FROM POLYCENTRIC DEVELOPMENT TO GRAND PARIS

Like Hong Kong, Paris currently faces an urban strategy of forced metropolisation. Unlike the polycentric regional strategy of the 1960s, the new urban strategy attempts to concentrate urban development using urban intensification, spatial densification and embourgeoisement to blend large parts of the petite couronne with the central zone of the city of Paris. The recent extension of La Défense and current urban redevelopment projects in Saint-Denis reinforce these tendencies. The metropolisation of the Paris Region has been further accelerated as a result of the implementation of the 'Grand Paris' strategy launched in 2007 by the conservative Sarkozy administration. This initiated a broad planning effort to focus the region's future development on growth and international competitiveness. Planning evolved over the course of a decade, beginning with an urban design ideas consultation and exhibition referred to as 'Le Grand Paris' that was presented to the public in 2009. The effort was taken up by the subsequent socialist administration of President Hollande. There are two primary outcomes of this initiative: the construction of an ambitious regional metro network dubbed the 'Grand Paris Express', currently under construction, and the restructuring of metropolitan governance under a new integrated intercommunal administrative body called the 'Métropole du Grand Paris' (see Belkind 2013, 2021).

The new public transport strategy of the Grand Paris Express is the result of a long negotiation process that has involved different institutional actors and territorial bodies and can be understood as a form of territorial compromise among conflicting interests (Belkind 2021). It offers first and foremost much better connectivity to the petite couronne. At the core of the project is a circular line, the new Metro 15, which will surround the city of Paris and connect the main centres of the petite couronne with one another. Additional concessions have been made to improve connections to the disadvantaged municipalities in the northeast. This extension will further strengthen the current process of embourgeoisement in the zone of metropolitan heterogeneity and also in parts of the postproletarian areas currently under urban redevelopment. The Grand Paris Express also offers improved connections to the region's airports and high-speed rail network, and it contains an added line connecting the science and technology cluster developing with state support in Saclay with the thriving business clusters in neighbouring Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines.

The second element of the new regional strategy, the creation of the new administrative unit Métropole du Grand Paris in 2016, to a certain extent revives the coherence of the former Département de

la Seine, which had been dissolved in 1968. This strategy creates a renewed, strengthened relationship between the city of Paris and the petite couronne, while excluding the villes nouvelles and their centralities (Belkind 2021). It also reduces the authority of the Île-de-France region, which was instrumental in the planning of Paris in the 1960s and of the creation of the villes nouvelles. As a result, the entire zone of multilayered patchwork urbanisation is not taken into consideration in this new round of strategic planning. At the same time, this new territorial unit is fragile and last-minute changes have severely weakened its capacities. It has primarily added an additional layer to an already complex structure and the deep fragmentation of territorial powers that Subra (2012) calls the Balkanisation of Paris. The innumerable interactions and mutual interrelationships between départements, municipalities and various forms of inter-communal cooperation give the strongest weight to the two types of territorial entities with the most entrenched power structures — the central government and the region's 1,260 municipalities.

The Grand Paris strategy reinforces the tendencies of the new emergent urbanisation paradigm. While the city of Paris has become a privileged, exclusive place for the metropolitan elite, we see the development of three main urbanisation processes. Firstly, the process of multilayered patchwork urbanisation defines the everyday experiences of the relative majority of the people of Paris. The two other main processes, embourgeoisement and post-proletarian urbanisation, are diverging from each other and lead to the socioeconomic polarisation of the Paris Region. The most striking characteristic, however, is the blurring of the long-entrenched opposition between the centre and the periphery, which is produced by the process of embourgeoisement. While this process has been confined to the centre and the western parts of the city of Paris for decades, it is currently transforming the last working-class pockets at the northern and eastern edges of the city; it has crossed the périphérique and is extending rapidly towards the western parts of the banlieue.

In contrast, the core of the working-class areas in the northern and eastern banlieue is being profoundly transformed by the dissolution and relocation of industrial activities and by socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation. The state politics of the demolition of the grands ensembles, the construction of new tramways, and the urban redevelopment of the Plaine Saint-Denis, which once constituted the industrial core of Paris, has fundamentally changed these areas. But in this urban configuration, the boundary of Paris is also disappearing. The new zones have little connection with the working-class legacy of the area and in themselves constitute a form of embourgeoisement, further isolating the post-proletarian configuration of the city.

Yet, despite overarching tendencies of polarisation, Paris does not conform to a 'dual city' model of urban development. Between zones of concentrations of wealth and of poverty, a large part of the region remains heterogeneous and mixed, albeit with a middle-class dominance. Despite the overall dynamics of self-segregation of the wealthy and the increasing isolation of poor and immigrant communities, nearly a third of the region's households live in mixed-income areas, mainly within configurations of metropolitan heterogeneity and of multilayered patchwork urbanisation (Berger et al. 2014; Oberti and Préteceille 2016; IAU 2019). Lastly, the fine-grained patchwork of municipalities as well as continuous public investment in housing, infrastructure, and regional planning help to resist homogenising large-scale processes.

The centre–periphery relation that has constituted the main contradiction of the Paris Region since Haussmann's radical and brutal urban transformation has thus been sublated in a dialectical sense: On the one hand it has been superseded by the polycentric development that profoundly transformed the former urban peripheries. On the other hand, however, this contradiction is preserved in the enlargement of the area of embourgeoisement that is not exclusively situated 'intra muros' anymore, but consolidates and extends further towards the west. This results in a new duality between a densifying and affluent 'inner metropolis' and a heterogeneous and polycentric 'outer metropolis', which includes the urban configurations of multilayered patchwork urbanisation, post-proletarian and metropolitan heterogeneity. The new emerging paradigm of urbanisation thus remains conflict-ridden, fragmented and uneven.

Centralidad metropolitana

1 Centro: historic core; cultural, political and urban centrality
2 Paseo de la Reforma: economic and political centrality, losing importance since the development of Santa Fe; backbone of adjacent residential areas
3 Santa Fe: financial centrality and headquarter economy; attracting condominium development in adjacent neighbourhoods

Specialised urban centrality

Efecto Santa Fe (bypass urbanism)

Production of discontinuous territories induced by Santa Fe: privately managed residential areas, condominium developments, gated communities and large-scale infrastructure projects; often in ecological preservation zones

Efecto bando dos

Restructuring of centrally located post-proletarian neighbourhoods and de-industrialised areas; real estate boom; structural intensification and verticalisation

Urbanización popular

Self-construction of neighbourhoods by residents; deficient urban infrastructure and public services

Urbanización popular consolidada

Consolidated self-built neighbourhoods induced by the regularisation of land titles; incremental gains in infrastructure, facilities and tenure security

Pueblos industrializados

Industrialised villages with local manufacturing jobs in sweatshops or professionalised home-based businesses; large-scale infrastructural projects; sprawl of mass housing urbanisation (mega conjuntos habitacionales)

Pueblos urbanizados

Urbanisation of mainly self-administrated villages in ecological conservation zones; transitional zone between densely built-up urban areas and national parks; agricultural areas with village structures, forests, essential groundwater areas; relevant to local tourism

Eje industrial

Extended industrialisation following main traffic arteries connecting Mexico City with regional subcentres

Zona residencial

Speculative, fragmented and densifying urbanisation of residential areas with privatised public streets and CCTV

Restricted zone

Formally restricted urban development; mostly ecological conservation zones

International airport

I Mexico City International Airport
II Toluca International Airport

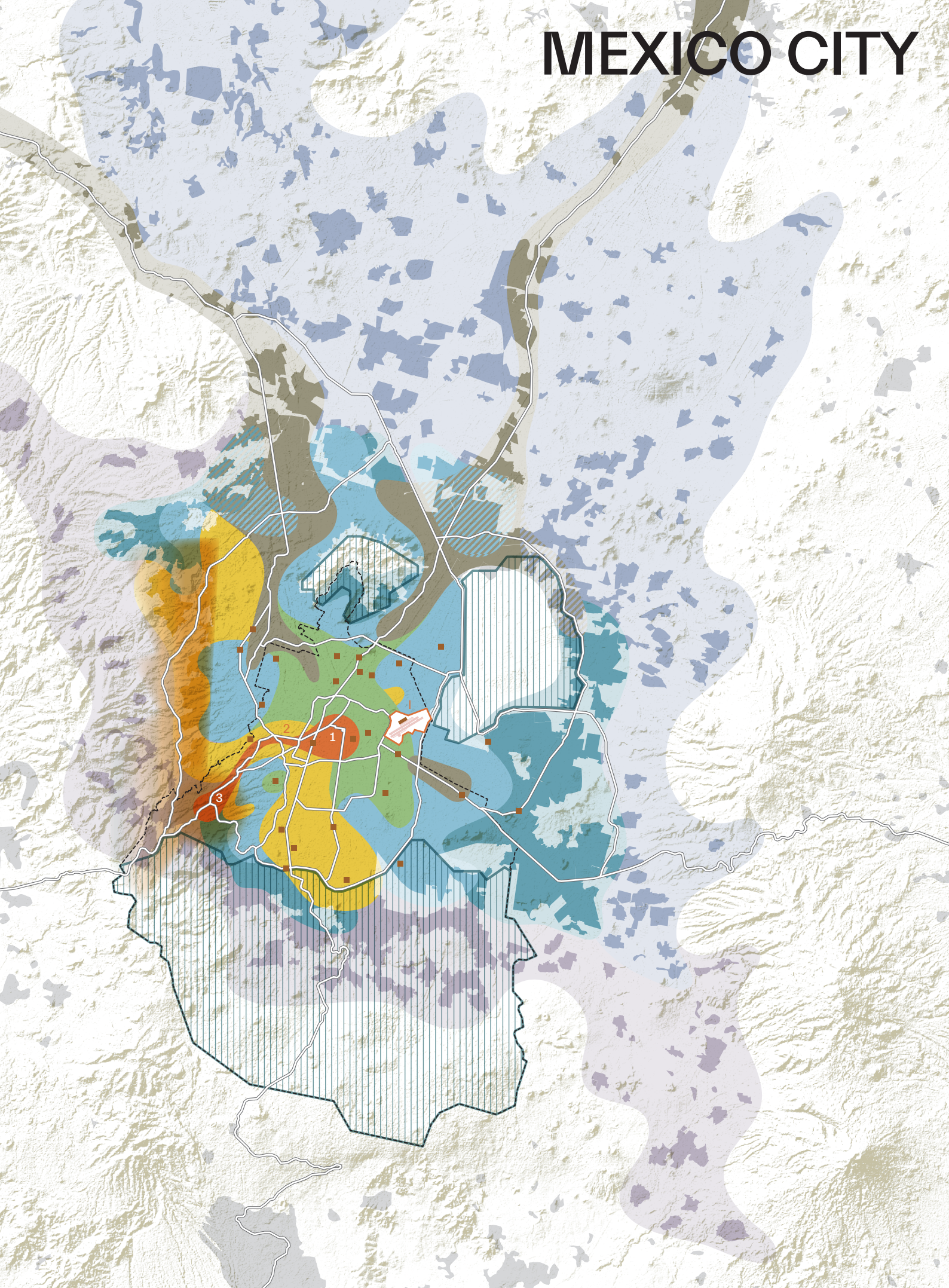
Urban footprint

Main highway

---- Administrative border of CDMX (Ciudad de México)

0 5 10 20 km

# MEXICO CITY



The urban experience of the past, without my present urban experience, becomes unintelligible. Past evidence ought to be dwelled in with the familiarity of that one who has walked and seen enough streets in the present.
Mauricio Tenorio Trillo, *I Speak the City,* 2012

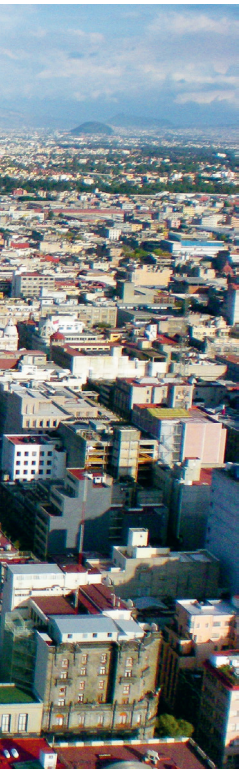
# CHANGING PARADIGMS OF URBANISATION

Mexico City has been transformed from a metropolis of three million around 1950 to the metropolitan region of over 21 million inhabitants that it is today. Together with surrounding regional metropolitan areas, Mexico City forms the core of Mexico's urbanised central region of an estimated 35 million inhabitants. This enormous urban growth is just one of the manifold socio-territorial changes that Mexico City has faced since the mid-19th century. I focus on these urban transformations by using a Lefebvrian regressive-progressive approach to develop a periodisation of the social production of urban territories. To do this, I start from a socio-spatial analysis of the present and then reconstruct the pathways of urbanisation and their deep inscription into today's urban territories, analysing

why urbanisation processes in Mexico City emerge or vanish. In doing so, I identify and describe significant moments of urban transformation and reveal the power relations underlying the production of urban territories.

To this end, we introduce the term 'urbanisation paradigm' to describe the social production of the territories under study when a specific set of socio-territorial power relations emerges and asserts itself (see Chapter 2). An urbanisation paradigm is formed when new power constellations are established, rules are institutionalised and subject positions are negotiated. This complex process fundamentally shapes the production of space. Each urbanisation paradigm produces a new and different territory, which can be seen concretely in particular types of construction and urban planning but also in the general material changes in urban space. Additionally, urbanisation paradigms are characterised by a particular urban imaginary and everyday practices specific to a certain time. Hence, I understand urbanisation paradigms to be the product of social processes, and it is society that produces, installs and discards them in a specific geographical and historical context. In the pathways of Mexico City's social production here presented I periodise this territorialisation, de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation of urbanisation paradigms. While the result is inevitably merely a partial reconstruction of a spatialised history, I seek to contribute to an understanding of Mexico City's history by placing the social production of a metropolitan territory at the centre of the analysis.

This chapter builds on extensive scholarship on urban questions in and from Mexico City and on my own long-standing ethnographic research (for detailed references, see Streule 2018). In the following, I first trace the main historical urban transformations of Mexico City, which I framed in six different urbanisation paradigms. With this, I reconstruct a historical narrative characterised by both continuities and shifts or ruptures in the social production of urban territories. In the second part I analyse the situation in Mexico City as it was during my fieldwork in 2013, outlining eight predominant urbanisation processes. Finally, I reflect upon the tendencies emerging of a possible new urbanisation paradigm of Mexico City in the present.



Centro Histórico with Zócalo. Centro, 2009
Building site in former industrial district; Nueva Granada; 2013

# PATHWAYS OF URBANISATION

A suitable starting point for this chapter is the map of Mexico City's urban configurations. The map, a synthesis of my empirical research based on walking and observing the streets in the present —as Mauricio Tenorio Trillo puts it in the epigraph— functions as the basis for developing the spatialised historical narrative offered in this section. Although the historical narrative constructed by this regressive-progressive approach is oriented towards dominant phases and thereby reproduces certain dominant structures, it underlines the multifaceted becoming of urban territories through a socio-territorial perspective. To grasp this complexity and refine the analysis, the idea of the palimpsest character of urban territories, as suggested by André Corboz (2001), was particularly useful. Accordingly, I do not aim to highlight only ruptures or crises but to describe paradigmatic shifts in the common understanding of what Mexico City was, is and could be; how the urban materialises and which subjects are recognised and acknowledged in this production process. Consequently, the analysis focuses on the social production of urban territory and the spatial dimension of power relations (Haesbaert 2011). To understand how the urban territories of Mexico City are produced and contested over time, the socio-territorial approach I apply attends to materiality, meaning and the everyday as key dimensions of urban territorialisations.

## TENOCHTITLAN: TRACES OF THE AZTEC EMPIRE

Mexico City is located in a high valley 2300 m above sea level at its lowest point. It is nearly surrounded by wooded hills and volcanoes, which limit the city's expansion mostly towards the planes of the north and north-east. This urban landscape is natural but it is also profoundly shaped by infrastructural engineering practices that reach back to colonial times. In the early 14th century, the Aztec founded Tenochtitlan, the urban centre of their dominion, on an island in what was then Lake Texcoco in the high valley with a total of five lakes. Initial plans for a canal and tunnel systems to drain these lakes were drawn up shortly after the Conquista (Legorreta 2006) and ultimately formed the foundation for the later construction of the modern urban infrastructure that regulates Mexico City's freshwater and sewage system. In the 1980s the long story of the lake district drainage came to an end with the virtual disappearance of the last lake, except for a reservoir that now floods only after heavy rains and is dry the rest of the year. The consequences of this century-long drainage project, resulting in the damages of underground aquifers, can still be seen and felt today: buildings in the historic centre lean due to the ground continually sinking, and many urban areas to the east often flood as a result (Schwarz and Streule 2023). Importantly, this has also brought about chronic water shortages in large areas of Mexico City. In fact, the inadequate water supply and sewage system are among its most serious problems today, particularly as they affect the northern and eastern urban areas that already suffer from regular flooding.

In the first place, the lakes that have since disappeared attracted ancient settlements. Traces of Aztec urban artefacts are clearly visible in Mexico City today. The warlike Aztec empire produced a pre-Hispanic urbanisation paradigm that contributed to the Aztecs' power over other Indigenous settlements in the region. These villages were mainly located on the shores of what was then Lake Texcoco and some are still recognisable today as *pueblos originarios*, Indigenous village structures in the midst of today's urban districts (Medina Hernández 2007; Alvarez Enríquez 2011). Tenochtitlan was connected by levee roads to other urban centres such as Tlatelolco, Texcoco, Tacuba and Azcapotzalco (present-day districts) to form an urban archipelago. Another important structure that is still a feature of the contemporary city goes back to the four main streets intersecting at right angles in the centre, dividing Tenochtitlan into four districts. With an estimated population of 150,000 to 200,000, the city was one of the largest urban centres in the world at the beginning of the 16th century (Espinosa López 2003). It has remained an important urban centre ever since.

## COLONIAL URBANISM: THE FORMATION OF AN IMPERIAL CITY

Colonial urbanism left innumerable traces in Mexico City, not only due to the centuries of colonialism but also to the essential role Mexico City played in the colonial project of the Spanish empire. After Hernán Cortés's troops invaded Tenochtitlan in 1521, the Aztec city was largely reduced to rubble and renamed Ciudad de México. The city was designated by the Spanish crown as the seat of the Spanish viceroy and the capital of New Spain—which included what are now Mexico, California, Central America, northern parts of South America and the Philippines. During the period of Spanish imperialism, an urbanisation paradigm of colonial urbanism emerged that was characterised by a geometric urban form and shaped by Spanish notions of urban planning. Despite the destruction of Aztec temples and palaces to create this new urban layout, and despite the fundamentally changed rules of ownership and land use, elements of the pre-Hispanic urban geometry remained (Meissner 1996: 31).

The correspondence of structural planning elements such as the four main streets leading away from the centrally located Plaza de Armas parade ground (today known as Zócalo), with the axial structure of Tenochtitlan's levee roads described above, shows the persistence of the form of the Aztec capital (Low 1995; Espinosa López 2003). The urban ideal propagated by the Spanish, however, invoked the character of Renaissance urbanism, by which the Spanish crown sought to establish an affinity with the Spanish metropolis in Europe and omit pre-Hispanic urban continuities, superimpositions and simultaneities. Decades later, the urban structure of Mexico City was defined as a model and codified in colonial planning law in the Leyes de las Indias (Laws of the Indies) to be applied throughout the entire Spanish empire in the Americas and Asia.

The colonial urbanisation paradigm was based on a strong alliance between an emerging Creole elite and the Catholic Church, and it was solidified by excluding the Indigenous populations: while soldiers and the clergy were able to access rights to civil protection and land as pay for their services, the Indigenous population was displaced and settled on its outskirts. Only the Spanish were allowed to live in the colonial city, now called the Centro Histórico, and formerly urban Aztecs were pejoratively called *'Indios'*. Although the pueblos originarios that were relatively distant from the colonial urban core were able to maintain some economic and legal autonomy, they were subjected to evangelisation by the colonial power as one of its most important instruments of control. The territorial expansion of this colonial urbanism can still be seen today in the names of the pueblos originarios, which were renamed after Christian saints by the Catholic Church but reclaimed by combining Christian and Indigenous names, as in San Bartolo Ameyalco or San Mateo Tlaltenango.

## MODERN METROPOLIS: ESTABLISHING AN URBAN REGION

Today, central western districts of Mexico City exhibit a metropolitan flair, with their Neoclassical, Beaux Arts and Art Nouveau architecture, cafés and large public parks. This ideal of European urban modernism was established in the early 19th century during the great political upheavals and the brief interlude between independence from Spain and the formation of the Mexican Republic, in which a Habsburgian emperor installed by Napoleon III planned to expand the main street, Paseo de la Reforma, into a boulevard modelled on Paris. The Paseo de la Reforma extended from the centre across fields to the new seat of government, Chapultepec Castle. This example is illustrative of a European urban modernism at first glance, but to truly understand Mexico's specific urbanisation paradigm during the long 19th century, it is necessary to delve deeper onto the effects of Mexico's independence on urban development and then to contextualise it in the relative political and economic stability of the following decades known as Porfiriato. Both these historic conjunctures were necessary for establishing the urbanisation paradigm of the modern metropolis.

On one hand, Mexico's independence and secularisation had a lasting effect on urban development because vast amounts of land were made available by the new government of the Republic for urbanisation. In 1810, Mexico's Creole elite, which had previously administered the government under the Spanish crown, declared the country's independence from Spain. They remained allied with the Catholic Church until secularisation 50 years later during the War of Reform (1858–1861), when the government of the new republic appropriated church property, including numerous monasteries and church hospitals. As a result, the cityscape of Mexico City in particular, which had been mainly shaped by the Catholic Church for over three centuries, underwent massive change (Monnet 1995: 233–234). Simultaneously, the communal lands of the pueblos originarios were nationalised and privatised. Together, the nationalisation of church landholdings and the progressive expropriation of Indigenous communities created the basis for large-scale private landholdings, the haciendas, which became central to the modern urbanism of Mexico City (Mas Hernández 1991: 65).

On the other hand, this urbanisation paradigm was consolidated during the Porfiriato, the long reign of Porfirio Díaz (1876–1911), which was characterised by an authoritarian style of government and a process of modernisation by private capitalists. An urban elite consisting of a few wealthy and influential families established itself in Mexico City. Infrastructure was developed by the government throughout Mexico and by the end of the 19th century the railroad network connected cities all over the country, with Mexico City as the central hub. As a result of the privately financed expansion of tram lines, urbanisation was extended outside the colonial Centro Histórico, launching the city's physical expansion into the surrounding countryside (Ward 1991: 61) and establishing Mexico City's urban region. The construction of the first urban expansion districts, the *colonias residenciales*, was driven by foreign, often European investors and planned for the use of the urban elite, especially to the west and south of the present-day Centro Histórico (Espinosa López 2003: 119). At the same time, private investment was directed to constructing new urban districts for factory workers north of the Centro Histórico. Called *fraccionamientos populares*, these were characterised by inadequate urban infrastructure such as electricity, pavement or sewage (Morales Martínez 2011). As the urban elite moved into the leafy western periphery of the city,

Mexico City became a modern metropolis and the Centro Histórico turned into a working-class neighbourhood. This is just one example of the increasing contradictions of deeply inscribed social inequality that exist in the metropolitan area today. The contrast between an affluent western and a precarious eastern zone that emerged during this period is one of the enduring socio-territorial patterns of Mexico City.

## MÉXICO, LA CAPITAL: PRODUCTION OF URBAN PRIMACY

Similar social inequalities were an important trigger for the Mexican Revolution of 1910 that overthrew Díaz's dictatorship. However, this revolution did not bring about immediate and extensive changes to urban power relations. Although a new post-revolutionary political elite emerged, supporting the newly founded state party—the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI)—the Porfirian oligarchy remained influential because it still owned vast tracts of land in the Mexico City region. These new and old urban elites were the driving force behind the continuous real estate deals that took place before and after the revolution (Eibenschutz 1977: 135; Garza 1985: 105). The monopoly of the large urban landowners was broken only when the national land reform intended to change agrarian policy was implemented in 1934. It brought into existence *ejidos*, land available for communal use, which constituted also an important condition for industrialisation. This was one of the most profound transformations ever to take place in Mexico and had very significant effects on the urbanisation of Mexico City. Communal farmers suddenly had immense pieces of land at their disposal either to cultivate or to use for urban development.

The land reform had a particularly strong influence on the urbanisation of peripheral areas, where eijdos were concentrated. Although the ejidos belonged to the communes and could not legally be sold, they formed the base for the exceptional urban growth of Mexico City by illegally accommodating most of the large number of migrants from rural areas (Iracheta 1984; Cymet 1992; Schteingart 1989).

To understand this key moment of Mexico City's urbanisation, we note that, just before the land reform was implemented, the sale of building land and the construction of urban expansion districts increased vigorously. By quickly selling off their land, the urban oligarchy tried to avoid the nationalisation of their large-scale landholdings. They also parcelled the land into smaller units and reassigned land titles to their family members or acquaintances to prevent their property from being classed as a large estate and therefore subject to nationalisation. Potential buyers included provincial landowners who wanted to invest in real estate in Mexico City because of the threatened expropriation of their factories, lands and mines. Investment in real estate was one of the few remaining safe investments for the oligarchy during and after the revolution.

One of the most important factors shaping the urbanisation of Mexico City during this period was the relationship between the two federal states in which the metropolitan region is mainly located—CDMX (Ciudad de México, until 2016 referred to as DF, Federal District) and the Estado de México (the surrounding federal state, where most of the population lives). As a result of land reform, legally available building land became scarce in Mexico City and the price of the remaining privately owned land after expropriation skyrocketed (Morales Martínez 2011). The government was indifferent to the quadrupling land prices, and the resulting shortage of housing for most of the urban population and its housing policy focused exclusively on housing for industrial and state employees. This exclusionary housing policy can be explained by the government's alliance with the new trade unions. It marks the beginning of a decade-long strategy to co-opt unionised workers and exclude most of the urban population (see also Streule 2017b).

From a general perspective, this emerging urbanisation paradigm took hold with the Industrialist Workers Pact in 1945, in which the government, entrepreneurs and unions jointly stipulated that the (then) DF should be considered the centre of an import-substitution mode of industrialisation. In this way, the entrepreneurs of Mexico City permanently outmanoeuvred competition from Monterrey (today the third largest city in Mexico) in the north-east and the DF became the social, political and economic centre of Mexico.

Internal migration from rural areas led to rapid population growth in Mexico City and the contiguous urbanised area beyond the DF also grew. The centralising strategy of import-substituting industrialisation resulted in a new scale of urbanisation that expanded from the capital to the metropolitan region. As a result, the pressing problem of the housing shortage in the centre of Mexico City was exacerbated by rapidly rising rents. City dwellers who did not benefit from the few government housing programmes could secure housing only via informal land occupations and by building homes themselves, thus establishing pockets of *colonias proletarias* (Gutmann 2000; Sánchez-Mejorada Fernández 2005). This process of popular urbanisation marks an important turning point in the production of space in Mexico City; namely, a change from the dominance of tenements for rent to legal or de facto home ownership in peripheral areas (Gilbert and Varley 1991). This is still one of the main urbanisation processes in Mexico City today. In 1954 the DF government prohibited the parcelling of land for colonias proletarias,

while the real estate and land market was simultaneously boosted in the neighbouring Estado de México. A paradigmatic example of the fast and massive proliferation of popular urbanisation in the urban periphery is the construction of the self-built district Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, which today is consolidated into a neighbourhood with more than one million inhabitants (see e.g. De la Rosa 1974; Ward 1991).

The urbanisation paradigm consolidated during the onset of the decades-long stable socio-political constellation and economic upswing known as the *milagro mexicano* (Mexican miracle), roughly between 1940 and 1970 (Garza 2003). The basis of this stability was a conservative political-ideological turn in the government of Mexico City. Urban development in the 1950s was orchestrated by the PRI and tailored to the emerging urban middle class (Davis 1994). Land squatters and street vendors were suppressed and a comprehensive modernist planning policy was put in place that focused on the urban renewal of the DF. As a result, an unprecedented building boom fundamentally restructured Mexico City. Big, state-driven urban projects in the south, such as the construction of the Ciudad Universitaria campus in 1952 were followed by the construction of an outer ring road, the Anillo Periférico. Its western part connects the west central part of the city to the new neighbourhoods in the south. The ring remains uncompleted to this day—its eastern part remains a regular road. In contrast, the western part has become so important that it has been recently complemented by a second, elevated highway, the Segundo Piso.

During this period, the dual character of this urbanisation paradigm emerged and it still has a great influence on the urban territories of Mexico City. It constitutes a contradiction between the rigid urban development policy in the DF and a laissez-faire policy in the Estado de México. This became particularly clear when the metro system was constructed in the DF, which ignited a confrontation between two irreconcilable political camps over urban policy: the pro-growth coalition and the stabilisation alliance. After Mexico was chosen as the site of the 1968 Olympics, the rigidly controlled urban growth and strong planning ambitions characterising this period was overthrown and a new urbanisation paradigm emerged. The pro-growth coalition prevailed and the construction of the first metro line began, although it opened only in 1969 after the Olympics.

However, criticism from urban society—especially students—intensified, and ambitious infrastructural projects, such as the metro and the Olympics, led Mexico City into a financial crisis, further exacerbated by the world economic crisis in the 1970s. The quality of life deteriorated dramatically for large parts of the population. Furthermore, the one-party rule of the PRI in Mexico City lost its clout and the government was able to stabilise the political system only through repression. A terrifying example of this was the Tlatelolco massacre in 1968, when the army fired into a huge group of peacefully protesting students. The urban dimension of this crisis became evident in the increasingly authoritarian and repressive administration of the city. Dissident politicians, journalists and activists were subjected to censorship, arbitrary arrest, torture and extrajudicial killings. Autocratic governments not only characterised Mexico but most of Latin America at that time.

## MEGALOPOLIS UNBOUND: EXPANSION AND COLLAPSE OF A METROPOLITAN REGION

The outlines of the current metropolitan region of Mexico City became visible in the 1970s. Amidst explosive urban growth fuelled by political corruption, clientelism and economic liberalisation, the emergent urbanisation paradigm of the unbound megalopolis radically and fundamentally restructured both the centre and the periphery. The urban pro-growth development strategy that had been pursued since the early 1970s thus differed markedly from the previous one and the new urbanisation paradigm was characterised by the existence of a speculative land market in cahoots with the urban elite. Mexico City's built area extended rapidly and the population increase in the DF alone is estimated to have been 4.53 per cent in 1970. Popular urbanisation profoundly shaped this urbanisation paradigm, producing urban territories primarily in the municipalities of the Estado de México. State land and ejidos formerly used for agriculture were settled illegally by immigrants from other regions of Mexico but also by people from central districts of the DF who moved to the periphery because of the cost of living and housing in the centre. However, living in peripheral self-built districts made a daily commute to work in DF inevitable.

When academics, planners and politicians brought the metropolitan scale into focus and renamed it the *Zona Metropolitana de la Ciudad de México* (Unikel 1976), including the DF and 60 adjacent municipalities of the states of México and Hidalgo, it was already part of the everyday lived reality of Mexico City's inhabitants. Overall, this urbanisation paradigm was characterised less by the publicly proclaimed decentralisation programmes than by wilful urban development deals between the political and economic elite. The PRI strategies to enrich its elite, together with nepotism and corruption shaped these urbanisation processes, especially in the Estado de México where the PRI has ruled ever since the party was founded in the 1920s (Messmacher 1987; Hiernaux et al. 2000), and when developers and construction companies emerged as main actors of urbanisation (Iracheta 1984; Schteingart 1989). Corrupt entrepreneurial

urban politics took hold, in which influential politicians deliberately promoted private business and highly speculative projects of their own and their acquaintances, epitomising the urbanisation paradigm of an unbound megalopolis.

Today's Mexico City's industrial corridors stretching out towards regional centralities took shape during this period. While industrial zones were still mainly located in the DF at the end of the 1970s, adjacent municipalities of the Estado de México now started to experience a veritable surge of industrialisation. At the same time, the DF changed policies away from import-substitution industrialisation towards a deregulated economic model. This model had already been put into practice in the late 1960s and eventually culminated in the liberalised economic policies of the early 1980s. This new economic model was based on the attraction of producer services, corporate headquarters and large-scale foreign direct investments. At the same time, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank encouraged Mexico to expand export-oriented production facilities, or *maquiladoras*, near the US–Mexico border. These national decentralisation and deregulation strategies significantly destabilised the previous urbanisation paradigm because it threatened the very pillar of the traditional PRI system; namely, the unionised labour sector.

Nevertheless, official urban development policy still focused on state-funded housing construction but opened it up to private-sector employees by providing them with newly available credit facilities. State housing construction thus reached a peak in the 1970s with the *unidades habitacionales* housing developments, which had a lasting impact on the urban peripheries with many new housing estates built. At the same time, the thoroughgoing restructuring of central areas was initiated. In the midst of the economic crisis at the end of the 1970s a major oil discovery in the Gulf of Mexico triggered a building boom that included, for example, the further construction of the metro and the profound restructuring of the city centre (Ziccardi 1991).

The Ejes Viales project, a new expressway grid through central city districts comprising a total of 19 expressways is an example of this large-scale restructuring. Deep roadside ditches were cut through existing neighbourhoods, and the residents of the countless demolished homes were largely left to fend for themselves. A few of the displaced people were resettled in unidades habitacionales but the majority moved to the peripheral eastern neighbourhoods of popular urbanisation (Messmacher 1987; Hiernaux et al. 2000).

This unbounded urban development, together with the massive increase in rents and prices for land and building materials, in addition to growing unemployment, accelerated existing impoverishment and renewed the urban crisis (Moctezuma 1984: 64). The urban social movements that emerged criticised the PRI's exclusive and often destructive mode of governance. Many of these movements were organised into the Movimiento Urbano Popular (MUP) and demanded the protection of tenants, the regulation of land titles and the provision of urban infrastructure (Moctezuma 2012).

The strategies employed by self-organised residents to press their demands were very diverse (Tamayo 1989: 87). The residents of Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, for example, refused to pay rent for their lots to the developers who had sold them land without land titles (Ocotitla Saucedo 2000). The government denied such protest movements representation in urban policy and attempted to defuse urban conflicts by initiating reform policies and co-optation of some protesters, but without officially addressing their specific demands. As a result, the urban crisis came to a sharp head in the mid-1970s. The MUP now provided a platform for questioning the hegemonic urbanisation paradigm. These movements not only form the foundation for today's more democratic urban policies, particularly in the DF, but also serve as an inspiration and reference for many social movements in Mexico City today.

In 1985 a severe earthquake devastated central parts of Mexico City. Thousands died or were seriously injured and hundreds of thousands lost their homes. Despite civilian assistance, the municipal and national governments failed to organise emergency relief and even banned the residents' attempts at self-help. The government's attempt to use the army to isolate the affected neighbourhoods and to blow up the ruined buildings as quickly as possible was met with resistance, as many people still hoped to find survivors under the rubble (Poniatowska 1988). The earthquake's destruction of the central parts of the city and the severe damage it caused, especially to government buildings such as hospitals and housing complexes, were attributed by the people to the poor maintenance of buildings since the 1940s and corruption in government construction projects (Gallo 2010).

The government's failures, especially in terms of the programme it launched to relocate the residents of destroyed or damaged houses to the new state housing—the unidades habitacionales on the urban periphery—were greeted by devastating criticism. People's struggles to remain in homes in the city centre and their demand to be given dignified living conditions were finally successful (Hiernaux 1987; Tamayo 1989). Beyond being a social and urban catastrophe, the earthquake also marked the dismantling of the existing urbanisation paradigm. Most urban dwellers questioned the already tarnished legitimacy of the ruling PRI. Middle and low-class income groups joined social movements calling for election boycotts or actively supporting opposition parties. Internal

conflicts within the PRI grew into a government crisis. The previously stable PRI urban elite in the DF was shaken to the core and they have never really recovered.

## POST-APOCALYPTIC MEGACITY: REINVENTION OF AN URBAN TERRITORY

Contrary to the pessimistic assessments after the earthquake, a confident image of a post-apocalyptic megacity took shape (Monsiváis, 2001). Despite the gloomy forecasts and nightmares of urban developers, Mexico City did not collapse but was shaped by new subjects such as activists, visionaries and leaders, who emerged from those greatly discontented with the urban elite and those who had engaged in various urban struggles. For the first time since its existence, the 1988 PRI national election campaign faced serious opposition from candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who was supported by the supra-regional federation of neighbourhood movements (Taibo II 1994). Yet massive electoral fraud brought the PRI to power again, leading to nationwide protests. In the aftermath of these elections the opposition institutionalised itself by founding a new party, the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD). Disappointed voters also helped to elevate the neoliberal-conservative Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) in the years that followed. Most disaffected urban residents organised into neighbourhood movements which openly criticised government clientelism and corruption.

Urbanisation in the DF changed substantially after the urban crisis following the 1985 earthquake, which also gave rise to the major political changes towards a more democratic system that made CDMX the place it is today. In contrast to this profound political transition in the DF, the Estado de México is characterised by the remarkable near-century regime of PRI governors. Urbanisation in the Estado de México of the 1980s and 1990s was, as a result, still characterised by unbridled land speculation and the unrestrained enrichment of individual politicians, entrepreneurs or local leaders. Corruption has long since been normalised and informality has become an integral part of territorial relations. This continuity is vital for understanding the production of urban territories of the Estado de México today. Despite the reinvention of Mexico City after the earthquake, the dual character of the previous urbanisation paradigms did not vanish. Instead, it became even more marked and the urban transformations of the DF and the Estado de México became increasingly distinct, yet often developed in complementary ways.

While this dual character persisted, a significant change in the approach to urban governance characterised this urbanisation paradigm. The examples of newly introduced special urban development zones, constitutional reforms and the effects of a national development programme serve to illustrate this change. Firstly, the process of economic liberalisation and deregulation that had been initiated in the early 1980s was deepened and accelerated in the wake of the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. In the following years, the planning instrument of special urban development zones to promote foreign direct investment was introduced, with far-reaching consequences for urban development. The most important of these zones turned the Santa Fe region into a new metropolitan centrality (Parnreiter 2002; Duhau and Giglia 2008).

Secondly, two constitutional reforms in 1992 had a strong impact on the production of urban territories in Mexico City. The first reform restructured land tenure by making it legal to sell communally owned ejido land, which previously could not be sold legally (Cymet 1992; Duhau 2009). The impact of this constitutional change on urbanisation processes was enormous. In the urban periphery of Mexico City the state explicitly declared three million hectares of ejidos as a reserve zone for potential urbanisation. The reform heralded a huge market in land speculation and opened up new channels for the marketisation and commodification of communally used territories. The reform also proposed the building of *mega conjuntos habitacionales (*mega housing complexes) as a state-controlled alternative to the conventional process of popular urbanisation. The second legislative reform, little noticed at the time but one that had severe consequences on central neighbourhoods, repealed the law on fixed rents that had been in force since the 1940s (Espinosa López 2003: 312; Streule 2006: 51). The reform of land rights and the rent law led to a dramatic change in territorial regulation that affected the production of territories both in the centre and the periphery of Mexico City.

Finally, the national development and poverty reduction programme Programa Nacional de Solidaridad was used to integrate a broad urban stratum of the population into the government's political project and thus served to provide political and social stabilisation in the time of structural adjustments and the urban crisis. The programme did not break with the patronage logic of PRI, but it was aimed at the urban poor—hitherto neglected by the government—rather than at unionised workers (Dresser 1994; Laurell 1994; Vite Pérez 2001). The strategy primarily involved entering into relationships with the urban social movements active in the Estado de México and pacifying them with selective but substantial investments in urban infrastructure and the legalisation of land titles. It thus targeted residents of Mexico City's eastern periphery in municipalities such as Chalco or Ecatepec concentrating on areas where most of the votes in the previous presidential elections had been cast for the opposition, thus ultimately serving

to control insurgent territories of popular urbanisation (Zibechi 2011: 109). The programme's massive, manipulative legalisation of land titles by the federal agency CORETT, the Commission for Land Tenure Regularisation, allied numerous urban residents once again with the PRI (Assies and Duhau 2009; Mathieu 2013). The legalisation of titles was not presented as a right but as a personal gift from the president, and mass public events were mounted to present these land titles. The large-scale propaganda surrounding the government programme, particularly in the municipality of Chalco, attracted many more residents to this area and resulted, not least, in an enormous growth of population in this municipality of 17 per cent annually in the early 1990s.

Additionally, this period is marked by a major demographic shift. Despite the demand to continue living in neighbourhoods affected by the earthquake, the central districts of the city recorded a massive decline in population for the first time in decades, regardless of overall population growth in Mexico City. The earthquake was not the only reason for the population decline; ongoing deindustrialisation and administrative decentralisation, which promoted the development of sub-centres in the Mexico City region, were also responsible. In the context of this urban growth and expansion into the peripheries, the metropolitan territories of Mexico City became tied to the regional metropolitan areas surrounding them, as previously agricultural land between different cities was urbanised and the extended central region, the *región centro, emerged* (Aguilar 1999, 2003; Delgado 1998; Negrete Salas 2008). In addition to the Mexico City core, the central region includes the cities of Querétaro, Toluca, Cuernavaca, Puebla, Tlaxcala and Pachuca.

The urbanisation paradigm eventually ceased to apply in the late 1990s, as major political transformations gave way to the formation of a new power constellation in the production of Mexico City. In 1997, after a massive economic crisis the PRD's Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who failed to win the 1988 presidential election, won the first scheduled direct election for mayor in the DF. Cárdenas's campaign promised an inclusive urban policy of 'one city for all'. An administrative reform put the DF on equal footing with other Mexican states in terms of self-government and created the separation of powers between the PRI-led national government and the capital administration—as became evident in the creation of a new post; that of head of the federal district government for Cárdenas, the recently elected mayor. At the same time, however, this electoral defeat allowed the PRI to leave urban problems to the PRD now in power, which was a welcome relief as it had become increasingly difficult for the PRI in previous years to govern Mexico City (Davis 1994). The PRD's transformation from an opposition to a governing party allowed for the partial incorporation and pacification of neighbourhood movements. Many of the those who had resisted the unequal urban development introduced by previous administrations decided to support the new municipal government and even to engage in parliamentary politics (see also Haber 2009).

Office tower of private company, Santa Fe, 2009

Refurbished street near La Merced market, Centro, 2013

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

The previous section has examined the pathways of Mexico City's urbanisation by clarifying the temporality of socio-spatial processes. It thus laid the foundation for understanding the emergence of urban configurations as outcomes of ever-changing urbanisation processes. The identification of urban configurations helps us to differentiate between the contemporary urban territories of Mexico City. What the map at the beginning of this chapter shows are thus not urbanisation processes but specific urban configurations that can be traced back to different historical periods, framed as urbanisation paradigms. In other words, we descended into the past of Mexico City from the present situation as a starting point and then reconstructed the pathways of urbanisation to conceptualise current urban situations. This procedure allows us to have a more differentiated and complex grasp of the patterns that shape the urban territory of Mexico City.

Thus, I understand urban configurations as concrete urban territories existing in a specific moment in time that have a certain coherence and are produced by distinct urbanisation processes. Urban configurations are not the product of a one-time event, but rather are produced by a recurrent process in which socio-territorial practices and lived experiences, as well as socio-territorial meanings and imaginaries, provide a strong framework of reference for the constant process of becoming urban territories. The urban configuration map of Mexico City, which represents the situation in 2015, is a tool for developing a comprehensive understanding of the expansion and interrelatedness of urbanisation processes.

While the situation today may be different, as a snapshot in time the map helps us to examine dynamic processes of urban transformation that are otherwise difficult to grasp. Assuming that the mapped patterns are provisional by nature, I now focus on these urban configurations of Mexico City. To this end, I identify and discuss different predominant urbanisation processes that constantly transform the territory and materialise in various urban configurations at a given time. In this description, I mention only briefly the processes that are further discussed in the comparative chapters of Part III and elaborate instead on the specific urbanisation processes of Mexico City that are not treated elsewhere in this book. This section is written like an extended legend of the configuration map. It builds on my ethnographic research and on local scholarship. Key references are Emilio Duhau and Angela Giglia (2008), Adrián Aguilar (2004), Gustavo Garza (2003), Emilio Pradilla (2009) and María Ana Portal (2017), among others, for their particular focus on urban transformation on a metropolitan scale. For reasons of length, I cannot refer in detail to the extensive studies and discussions each configuration and process analysed here is based on. An extended list of references can be found in Part III and in my book *Ethnography of Urban Territories* (2018).

## CENTRALIDADES METROPOLITANAS: PRODUCTION OF MAIN METROPOLITAN CENTRALITIES

The process of the production of main metropolitan centralities (centralidades metropolitanas) has shaped three different urban configurations of Mexico City: the Centro; Reforma, the linear centrality that has developed along the Paseo de la Reforma since the late 19th century; and Santa Fe, the eccentric metropolitan centrality that has emerged in the last three decades. While the Centro Histórico has primarily a symbolic, social and political significance (Leal Martínez 2007; Mantecón 2005; Coulomb 2004), Santa Fe is determined more by its logistic and economic centrality (Valenzuela 2013; Moreno-Carranco 2013).

Reforma, in contrast, is an economic and political centrality that has been losing importance since the establishment of Santa Fe but is still necessary for the formation of expensive residential districts such as Lomas de Chapultepec and Polanco (Ortiz Guitart and Mendoza 2008; Tamayo 2001).

Despite these differences, all three centralities have two features in common: the concentration and the productive encounter of urban differences on a metropolitan scale. They therefore constitute a fundamental condition for urbanity in general. This distinguishes them from the large numbers of *specialised* and *local* urban centralities in Mexico City. These three main metropolitan centralities are constantly transforming and are to be understood as a complex temporal phenomenon. Thus, to analyse Centro Histórico and Santa Fe a distinction between old and new centralities is pointless. Both urban configurations are shaped by the same underlying process. Considered together, Centro, Reforma and Santa Fe illustrate how this process inscribes itself into the terrain and, through its pronounced dynamics, strongly influences surrounding areas and further urbanisation processes. Centrality can be understood as a productive force that has the capacity to reorganise vast urban areas. In the overall process of the formation of metropolitan centralities, Centro, Reforma and Santa Fe generate an overarching system of centralities that forms the actual backbone of Mexico City's urban patterns. Furthermore, this example clearly shows that centrality is always contested and in its ongoing transformation it is often accompanied by processes of displacement that are particularly evident in the Centro Histórico, which symbolises the constant struggle of maintaining a popular centrality (Crossa 2009; Delgadillo 2018). In the context of the globalisation and metropolisation of the urban region a conflict has emerged between the extant low-income inhabitants and users of the Centro, and the ambitions of government and investors to create a commodified centrality for tourists and visitors. We conceptualise this transformation process as the incorporation of urban differences, focusing on the production, reproduction and incorporation of the intrinsic qualities of the urban (see Chapter 17).

## EFECTO SANTA FE (BYPASS URBANISM): RE-ORDERING CENTRE–PERIPHERY RELATIONS

What began around three decades ago as a planning process for the new financial centre of Santa Fe has long since developed its own urban dynamics. The urbanisation process, called *efecto Santa Fe* (the Sante Fe effect), which dominates the western urban peripheries of Mexico City, is driven by the powerful process of metropolitan centralities described above, attracting great interest from diverse actors such as private investors, transnational construction companies and local and national politicians.

The efecto Santa Fe results in the construction of mansions, gated communities, luxury condominiums and country clubs, reinforcing the social segregation that exists among Mexico City's western and eastern urban areas by bypassing existing urban centralities. However, far from resulting only in the creation of isolated enclaves, this urbanisation process, which we call 'bypass urbanism', is profoundly restructuring the entire metropolitan region, resulting in the fundamental socio-spatial reorientation of the city towards the western periphery (see Chapter 14). From the very beginning of the planning process the commercialisation of land and speculative transactions has run hand-in-hand with large state investments in transport infrastructure, such as the toll highway Autopista Chamapa–La Venta leading to the north, one of the most expensive highways in Mexico. Another example is the toll flyover Supervía Poniente, which bypasses the narrow roads in the western hills to facilitate rapid connections among the exclusive residential areas of Santa Fe and other urban service and financial centres, such as Interlomas, with the wealthy southern areas of Mexico City (Hiernaux Nicolas 1999; Duhau and Giglia 2008; Castañeda 2014).

Apartment buildings are densifying a post-proletarian area. Azcapotzalco, 2013

Museum Soumaya and mall by Grupo Carso in former industrial district. Granada, 2013

This expansion of north–south connections has reinforced the efecto Santa Fe, and the continuous construction of new connecting roads between isolated, previously disconnected territories is characteristic of this urbanisation process (see also Bayón and Saraví 2013). This new transport infrastructure is key to the gradual consolidation of this emerging urban configuration and it has an immense impact on the surrounding urban areas. Increasing social conflicts accompany this process of urban transformation. The expropriation of land for the construction of urban infrastructure projects and the nationalisation or privatisation of natural resources led to disputes between the government and the inhabitants of the surrounding popular neighbourhoods and pueblos originarios (see also González Reynoso 2014; Pérez Negrete 2017).

## EFECTO BANDO DOS: RESTRUCTURING CENTRAL POST-PROLETARIAN NEIGHBOURHOODS

For over two decades the *efecto bando dos* (the bando dos effect) regeneration process has been transforming residential and industrial districts close to the city centre. This process has restructured several urban configurations, most of which have historically been diverse residential neighbourhoods and were originally built to serve different segments of the population. Nowadays they are generally known as *barrios bravos* (rough and at times dangerous working-class neighbourhoods) (Marcadet 2007). They were created around the end of the 19th century, as described in the previous section. Some were laid out as fraccionamientos populares near industrial and commercial centres while others, especially in the west of the Centro, belonged to the colonias residenciales, upper-middle-class urban expansion districts.

Between 1980 and 1990, these central city districts lost 25 per cent of their inhabitants on average, partly due to the earthquake in 1985. At the same time, their reputation as barrios bravos became increasingly entrenched. Numerous cheap apartment buildings, former industrial sites, old and often derelict buildings and undeveloped plots characterised these neighbourhoods. Since the 1990s, ongoing deindustrialisation affected industrial sites close to the city centre. In 2001 the DF local government issued an agreement titled *Bando Informativo Número 2,* known as *bando dos*, that promoted the regeneration and re-densification of these areas after decades of disinvestment and the systematic failure by the state to construct new housing (Tamayo, 2007; Benlliure Bilbao, 2008; Salinas Arreortua, 2013).

However, rather than providing access to affordable housing, the bando dos spatial planning policy generated a real estate boom in central post-proletarian neighbourhoods and former industrial areas for middle and upper-end market segments, with the effect that many low-income residents could not afford the increased rent and had to leave these areas (Esquivel Hernández 2007; Paquette and Delaunay 2009). Eventually, strong public opposition contributed to the suspension of the bando dos policy in 2007. However, the urban transformation that this policy initiated continued to affect areas beyond those defined in the planning document because of the widespread construction of multistorey apartment buildings in the central districts of the city. This resulted in many local protests by residents against further restructuring plans. Although the real estate boom that characterises the process has led to increased investment in these central areas, the regeneration project has not lived up to its promise of preserving the existing building stock or improving the urban infrastructure (Schwarz 2017). In addition, bribing official bodies and corruption play a large part in this restructuring process: even when construction companies do not adhere to the prescribed number of floors or the approved apartment sizes, they nevertheless often receive valid building permits.

## ZONAS RESIDENCIALES: SPECULATIVE DENSIFICATION

Diverse urban configurations, which I call zonas residenciales and are located in the privileged urban zones in the western part of Mexico City, are currently being shaped by an urbanisation process characterised by speculation, fragmentation and densification. These areas were usually built as urban expansion districts in the late 19th and early 20th century. They consisted mainly of residential houses in the neocolonial style (Morales Martínez 2011). Driven by the current real estate boom, the former two or three-storey residential houses are being replaced by multistorey apartment buildings and the zonas residenciales are thus continually densifying. Another striking feature of this process is the conversion of existing buildings: private residences are becoming shops and long-established *cantinas* are turned into trendy restaurants and bars. This transformation process is spreading in waves to the north-west, west and south-west and is inscribing itself more and more deeply into the terrain.

In order to emerge this process needs several conditions to be in place: of which the two most important are a favourable location characterised by lush vegetation, abundant groundwater and solid ground for building, and secondly the specific conditions of landownership. In contrast to the process of popular urbanisation (see the following section), which mainly developed on the ejidos communal land, the zonas residenciales are being developed mainly on the haciendas, which permitted large-scale planned and legal urban development to be put in place. This was the context in which

this process emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, as I show in more detail in the Pathway section. It took place at the onset of speculative urbanisation during which real estate developers built urban expansion districts and sold the completed residential houses to a clientele with purchasing power (Sheinbaum 2008). As these urban zones were laid out as middle-class urban extension districts or neighbourhoods composed of luxury villas, from the beginning they had a well-developed urban infrastructure. In the 1950s and 1960s entire satellite towns and luxury enclaves were built according to a similar logic, but they were located even further in the north-western and south-western peripheries than the comparable, older districts consisting of detached villas.

As a result, a type of informal high-income urbanisation has been developing since the 1970s, in which the urban elite uses corruption and nepotism to override legal building regulations and to expand this type of neighbourhood, even into nature conservation zones (Lezama and Domínguez 2006). This transformation of the zonas residenciales housing the privileged solidifies the already pronounced social segregation in Mexico City by a self-reinforcing social dynamic, as they in fact exclude other city dwellers from the use of their costly urban amenities (Bayón and Saraví 2013). In these areas street vending is not permitted and numerous public streets are closed off by the residents themselves on their own authority. Furthermore, private video surveillance of public space is widespread (Giglia 2002; Lindón 2006). Private investments in infrastructure, health and education flowing into these areas lead to the further consolidation of their residents' privileged position. This is particularly true of the transport infrastructure, which was further expanded by the toll motorways such as the Supervía Poniente, which add to earlier major projects such as the Periférico ring road, the Ejes Viales main road grid and the Segundo Piso highway.

## URBANIZACIÓN POPULAR (POPULAR URBANISATION): AUTO-CONSTRUCTION AND CONSOLIDATION OF SELF-BUILT TERRITORIES

Large parts of Mexico City, particularly those in the eastern part of the metropolis, are built and maintained by the residents themselves and state agencies and commodification play a minor role. The residents here are busy producing urban territories, mostly without any obvious leaders, but with a shared interest in producing urban space for their community through their daily practices (Moctezuma 2001; Grajeda 2015). In their aspirations to produce and preserve their neighbourhoods, people generate this urban configuration via their spatial practices. We conceptualise this specific urbanisation process as popular urbanisation (see Chapter 12).

Specific land tenure relations play a central role in this urbanisation process, which primarily unfolds on ejido or communal land formerly used for agriculture, and also by occupying state-owned land (Cymet 1992; Azuela and Tomas 1996). These areas are often in exposed locations and zones where there is the constant danger of flooding or landslides. For decades these neighbourhoods have coped with either no infrastructure at all or poor urban infrastructure. Popular urbanisation is characterised by self-building, which is done by the gradual construction of homes on parcelled plots of land by the residents themselves (Bazant 2003; Andrade Narváez 2011). Despite some spectacular land occupations, especially in the 1970s, land parcelling for self-building has been the common source of housing for most of the inhabitants of Mexico City. Using the historical perspective discussed in the section on pathways in this chapter, we see that popular urbanisation was the dominant process of Mexico City's spatial production for decades and is still employed in large areas today (Navarro and Moctezuma 1989; Duhau 1998; Connolly 2013). The enormous growth of Mexico City in the second half of the 20th century would not have been possible without popular urbanisation, which has shaped around 60 per cent of Mexico City's metropolitan territories.

Focusing on the temporality of this process, I distinguish two distinct phases: (1) *urbanización popular*, which describes the initial, often precarious phase of self-initiated construction on subdivided plots; and (2) *urbanización popular consolidada*, which depicts the subsequent consolidation of self-built

Residential houses. Jardines del Pedregal de San Ángel, 2013

Public street closed off by residents. Pedregal de Carrasco, 2013

Popular urbanisation. Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, 2013

territories. While both original and consolidated forms of popular urbanisation are present in Mexico City today, the transition of the one form to the other does not always happen. The consolidation of formerly precarious, self-built neighbourhoods is commonly triggered by a transformation from municipal or state land to individual land ownership (Schteingart 1996; Vega 1996). This transformation is usually implemented by the regularisation of land tenure, often in exchange for electoral votes, and the consolidation of the neighbourhood by the residents themselves. This also fundamentally changes the common traditional tenure patterns in Mexico City, by changing housing tenure for most of the poor urban population from renting to owning their houses (Gilbert and Varley 1991). The urbanización popular consolidada is changing urban configurations, for example, through residents improving their urban infrastructure or creating jobs in areas previously known as *cinturón de miseria (*deprived informal settlements in the periphery) (Ortiz Flores and Zarate 2002).

Urban configurations dominated by this process commonly also include other forms of housing and are not exclusively characterised by self-building. There is a mix of village structures in the neighbourhoods of Iztapalapa, Ecatepec and Naucalpan: the pueblos originarios, consolidating self-built housing and pockets of state housing (unidades habitacionales). Well-known Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl is unique in this respect: it has neither former village structures nor unidades habitacionales, because it was built on the drained Lake Texcoco. Before construction started, the area was parcelled out completely like a draughtboard and each of the plots was sold and then urbanised through self-building.

Today, both processes, urbanización popular and urbanización popular consolidada, are still active in different urban configurations of Mexico City. The modalities and basic features of urbanización popular have changed little for decades, and even if it barely occurs near the centre any more, it still dominates large peripheral areas. What has changed, however, are the migration processes linked to this process. While the first settlements in the 1950s and 1960s evolved through rural–urban migration, most residents of more recent settlements no longer come from the provinces or from inner-city tenement houses, the *vecindades*; but are second or third-generation descendants of families with experience of self-building (Vega 2015). Many moved from already consolidated popular districts to build a house in the newly available peripheral areas, following the pattern their parents had established. Put differently, both the original and the consolidated processes of popular urbanisation result from the mobility of precarious urban residents in search of affordable land from central configurations to the urban periphery, yet both originated at different times. This common feature is the result of the

historical extension of Mexico City towards distant areas, especially in the east. In line with this historical shift, formerly peripheral areas are turning into central neighbourhoods in the wake of the massive extension of the entire territory of Mexico City. Nezahualcóyotl, Naucalpan and Ecatepec, each with several million inhabitants, are today fully equipped with urban services (Bassols and Espinosa 2011).

## EJES INDUSTRIALES: EXTENDED INDUSTRIALISATION

The three urban configurations of ejes industriales form industrial corridors stretching along the main transport axes that connect Mexico City with the regional sub-centres of Querétaro, Pachuca and Puebla. They are dominated by the process of 'extended industrialisation'. This urbanisation process contributes greatly to the consolidation of the región centro, Mexico's urbanised central region (Delgado 1998; Rózga Luter 2004). State planning policies provided the impetus for this process to unfold in the early 1950s, when the government of the DF defined various industrial zones during the period of import-substitution industrialisation (Garza 1992). It received a further stimulus in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when government-led production in the new industrial zones focused on municipalities in the Estado de México rather than in the capital district, DF.

The most important industrial complexes to emerge from this process include Industrial Vallejo, Tlalnepantla, Naucalpan, Lechería and Cuautitlán Izcalli in the north-east, the north-western industrial zone of Xalostoc, and several smaller industrial parks in the south-eastern municipality of Iztapalapa. They are all located near the border between the Estado de México and the DF. The concentration of industry and jobs in Mexico City led to a steady expansion of these industrial zones along the central transportation axes. It also caused a massive shortage of housing, which was addressed by a corporatist state housing policy that promoted the construction of unidades habitacionales, mainly for unionised factory workers. However, these housing estates were not able to cope with the great demand for housing. For this reason, the workers and their families, who have long since joined the middle class, still live in the popular urbanisation settlements near the industrial zones built by the workers themselves.

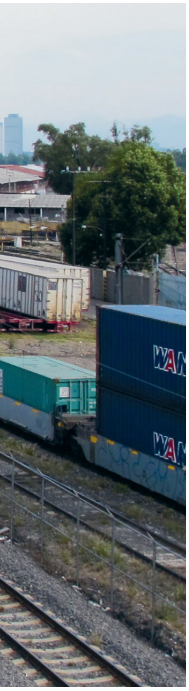
The expansion of the industrial zones underwent a renewed impetus in the launch of a decentralisation policy in the early 1970s (Aguilar Barajas 1993). To reduce the concentration of industrial production in the DF, industrial plants were moved from centrally located urban districts to municipalities in the Estado de México. This policy was motivated by the change from import-substitution industrialisation towards an export-oriented economic policy, which strengthened sub-centres of the capital region as production locations. However, these decentralisation policies were not able to fundamentally break up the deeply inscribed spatial hierarchies that existed in the different areas. Mexico City, and the DF in particular, remained the most important national centre of production until the early 1980s, when the dynamic process of extended industrialisation came to a halt during the economic crisis (Hiernaux and Villarreal 1995; Ferreira and Robledo 2000).

The deindustrialisation that started at this time affected the urban transformation of the DF and the municipalities of the Estado de México in different ways (Rodarte García 1999; Guadarrama and Olivera 2001; Rózga Luter and Ruiz Guiérrez

Urbanised village, Xochimilco, 2009

2005). In districts close to the city centre, the process that led to the formation of the ejes industriales is not only losing momentum but is being replaced by a new process, the efecto bando dos previously discussed. At the same time, the process of extended industrialisation is regaining momentum along the important transport axes by the relocation of centre-based businesses to peripheral industrial corridors. The México–Querétaro, México–Pachuca and México–Puebla industrial corridors are characterised by this extensive form of industrialisation.

## PUEBLOS INDUSTRIALIZADOS: MASS HOUSING URBANISATION AND LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE PRODUCTION



Industrial axis with freight rail station. Pantaco, Industrial Vallejo, 2013

The urban configuration of *pueblos industrializados* constitutes a transition zone between the concentrated urbanisation of Mexico City and the extended urbanisation of formerly predominant agricultural communities in the states of Estado de México, Hidalgo and Morelos. Today, a novel, remarkably rapid and comprehensive process of mass housing urbanisation is shaping this urban configuration, particularly in the Estado de México (see Chapter 16). It consists in the production of mega conjuntos habitacionales (Maya Pérez and Cervantes Borja 2005). Between November 1999 and June 2015 the municipalities of the Estado de México promoted mass housing urbanisation and approved more than 400 mega conjuntos habitacionales. Private real estate developers constructed these mega-settlements, consisting of over 724,000 units. This rapid expansion was fuelled by a change in the Mexican housing policy that focused on the model of providing affordable housing using mass production methods and was closely linked to the World Bank affordable housing programme (Puebla 2002; Boils 2004).

One effect of this ongoing transformation process is the massive population growth in certain municipalities. Most of them promote the market-based urbanisation of ejidos and communal agricultural land that has been made possible by the 1992 land reform (Álvarez Villalobos 1999). Many of the newcomers have jobs in the DF which leads to a daily commute of several hours. This type of mass housing urbanisation produces gigantic dormitory towns without sufficient local urban infrastructure such as schools or hospitals and adds significantly to the peripheralisation of these urban configurations (Salinas Arreortua 2016). In 2013, however, less than 15 years after the first mega conjunto was built, the Mexican housing programme fell into a deep crisis and several major private developers became bankrupt. When five million houses throughout Mexico were abandoned, it became clear that the financialisation of mass housing urbanisation had failed (see also Valenzuela Aguilera 2017).

Additionally, today the pueblos industrializados are adversely affected by large-scale infrastructure projects such as the gigantic new sewage system, toll highways and the new international airport. These projects are often implemented by the national government in an authoritarian manner without assessing their possible social or ecological consequences and they provoke increasing organised local resistance (Streule 2023). In addition, a strong movement to reindustrialise, which has been most effective in the ejes industriales located in the industrial corridors discussed in the previous section, is also shaping the pueblos industrializados. This process is radiating to the surrounding region and is also why local jobs continue to exist in the small factories, sweatshops or professionalised home-based businesses.

## PUEBLOS URBANIZADOS: URBANISATION OF SELF-ADMINISTRATED VILLAGES

The *pueblos urbanizados* are located in the peripheral western and southern hills of Mexico City in a ecological preservation zone. It forms a transition zone between the dense neighbourhoods in the valley basin and the large national parks in the mountain ranges of the central Mexican highlands. This transitional zone contains not only the vital groundwater storage for Mexico City and extensive forests where urban development is strictly prohibited, but also fields, pastures and villages (Romero Tovar 2009; Ortega Olivares 2010). It begins at an elevation of about 2,400 m above sea level and extends up

through partially forested hillsides and sweeping plateaus. It has a harsh climate, with large diurnal variations in temperature but air pollution there is low compared with the rest of Mexico City. Despite its peripheral location and the associated problems of infrastructure and supply (such as the lack of transport, schools and jobs), with its beautiful views and tranquillity it is among the more attractive residential areas of Mexico City. In addition to its importance as a nature reserve and agricultural zone, it is relevant to local tourism. Although the daily life of many inhabitants seems to be very rural—characterised by village festivals and agricultural work—urbanisation has been advancing in this area since the early 1980s, materialising in precarious settlements, infrastructure for tourism like restaurants and amusement parks, and (mostly illegal) holiday or country houses (Schteingart and Salazar 2005; Aguilar 2008).

A characteristic of the current urban transformation process is that various actors are continually renegotiating the boundary between the city and nature, and debating what constitutes a landscape worthy of protection and how the land should be used. The main actors, who often pursue conflicting interests, include villagers, newcomers, the authorities and state institutions, and the tourism industry. Conflicts of interest are often based on two overlapping and simultaneously valid systems of territorial regulation. On the one hand, because the collective land law of the self-governing village structures, which became institutionalised in the mid-1990s, is applied here (Sierra 1997), an increasing number of communities invoke their customary right of political and territorial autonomy by self-identifying as pueblos originarios (Medina Hernández 2007; González Ortiz 2009). On the other hand, with the establishment of nature reserves, the government has an effective instrument for expropriating land and for determining land use and the boundaries of urban development zones. In 1980, for example, a special category was created in the urban legislation for city territorial planning: that of 'preservation land' (*suelo de conservación*), which restricts the construction of settlements in the southern regions of the DF. As a result, the government has declared that no less than 59 per cent of the entire area of the DF is a preservation zone, given its ecological value in regulating the climate, replenishing water supplies and the cultivation of forests and agricultural land (Aguilar 2008). Some 75 per cent of this preservation zone consists of the collectively owned ejidos or *tierras comunales* of the pueblos originarios. Current disputes over collective land rights, Indigenous ways of life and what part of nature is worthy of protection are thus closely linked to territorial regulation (Sánchez and Díaz-Polanco 2011; see also Streule 2023).

Pueblos urbanizados on preservation land. Magdalena Petlacalco, Tlalpan, 2013

# CONTOURS OF AN EMERGING URBANISATION PARADIGM

This chapter was set out to depict Mexico City as an urban territory that is structured and continuously transformed by various urbanisation processes. It has shown that these processes not only crystallise into different urban configurations but also that each of them can be traced back to specific conjunctures of Mexico City's pathways of urbanisation. Taken together, they form a particular pattern of urbanisation that is specific of Mexico City. Overall, this chapter demonstrates the way that a society produces a specific urbanisation paradigm, solidifies it and then transforms it again. This reveals that Mexico City's urban territory is only as stable or unstable as the power-driven socio-territorial practices from which it stems.

In this concluding section, I take this analysis a step further. Synthesising the historical and contemporary analysis of Mexico City's urban transformation, I reflect on a possible emerging paradigm shift in the urbanisation of Mexico City. To this end, I first look at the newly established power constellations and recently institutionalised territorial regulations and analyse which new subject positions are being negotiated. In doing this, I relate the main urbanisation processes to one another against the backdrop of current prevailing power relations. Finally, based on the description of main new tendencies—that is, the privatisation and militarisation of public space, eventisation and financialisation—I outline two key dynamics of an emerging urbanisation paradigm.

## POWER CONSTELLATIONS

In 2015, after a 12-year hiatus the PRI once again took power of the national government. However, the one-party system of the PRI was over and no single party clearly dominated political power in Mexico. One exception, necessary for understanding the production of urban territories of Mexico City, is the remarkable near-century long phenomenon of PRI governors in the Estado de México. This continuity is reflected in long-lasting urban strategies such as popular urbanisation and land speculation, which had remained almost unchanged for decades and had decisively shaped the production of space. The corruption that has long been normalised and the rise of informal settlements has long since become an integral part of territorial relations. This can be seen in very different urbanisation processes like the rise of mass housing urbanisation or popular urbanisation. In contrast with the Estado de México, the DF did undergo a political transition when it was governed by the PRD from 1997 to 2018. Since winning the newly formed position of city mayor, the PRD—which used to have close ties to urban social movements—has started to move further away from its political base and is increasingly pursuing business-friendly urban development policies. It was the PRD's policies that led to the efecto bando dos and the densifying urbanisation process initiated by speculators, which have shaped the urban configurations of the zonas residenciales. From a broad perspective, the political situation in 2015 stabilised the long-standing differences in urban development between the DF and Estado de México characteristic of otherwise very distinct urbanisation paradigms since the 1940s.

## TERRITORIAL REGULATIONS

Communal ejido land has been a vital part of Mexico City's urbanisation ever since this specific territorial regulation was established in the 1930s. Land use of ejidos was originally restricted to agricultural purposes and land could not be legally sold or urbanised. The 1992 land reform, however, moved the assignment of ejido land from communal use to tradable urban land and thus opened it up to commodification. This change fundamentally altered the use of this land and initiated a comprehensive transformation of various urban territories within only a few years, giving rise to the mass housing urbanisation discussed above. However, the land reform had no significant effect on the process of popular urbanisation that was developing on ejido land in the urban periphery and which continued to play a key role in Mexico City. Furthermore, the existence of ejido and communal land also continues to allow self-governance by residents of urban territories, as is characteristic of the pueblos urbanizados and exemplified by the self-empowerment strategies of residents of the pueblos originarios, particularly those located in ecological preservation zones. The increasing networking and resistance of Indigenous urban movements against planned mega-infrastructure projects such as motorways or high-speed trains are a case in point.

## MEGA PROJECTS AND SOCIAL STRUGGLE

Private corporations stand out as key actors in shaping the current urbanisation paradigm. However, numerous urban social protests against urban mega infrastructure projects and the government's authoritarian responses make it clear that the balance of power in Mexico City is continually under renegotiation and contestation. Both private developers and transnational corporations are responsible for most of these contested projects in Mexico City. Within the framework of public–private

partnerships, these groups generally not only built state-owned mega-infrastructure projects such as toll highways but also secured the concession contracts to operate them. Not all of these projects have been a success story. The newly built Metro Line 12, for example, was out of service for almost two years due to technical defects; once the Metro Line 12 was running, a bridge collapsed in 2021 and a train crashed. The new Mexico City International Airport, another example, was planned as part of the supra-regional development Pueblo–Panamá Plan from 2001 to 2008. In 2001 communal landowners resisted the airport project; then a conflict ignited over land expropriation and the airport was finally cancelled in 2018.

## NEW URBAN TENDENCIES

When the Mexican government officially declared war against the drug cartels in 2007, public discourse focused on the violence in Mexico City. As a result, video surveillance was installed in streets all over the DF and public space in the Estado de México was monitored by the police together with military units. Residents also blocked off streets, particularly in the zonas residenciales and in the areas dominated by the efecto Santa Fe. Discourse about security, violence and assaults loomed large in the reports and comments about Mexico City in the public and social media, and also influenced how and who could move where and when. Criticism of corrupt police led to the organisation of neighbourhood watch groups that publicly threatened to impose vigilante norms on thieves or kidnappers. This new tendency towards the privatisation and militarisation of public space was followed by increased social segregation and the fragmentation of urban territory.

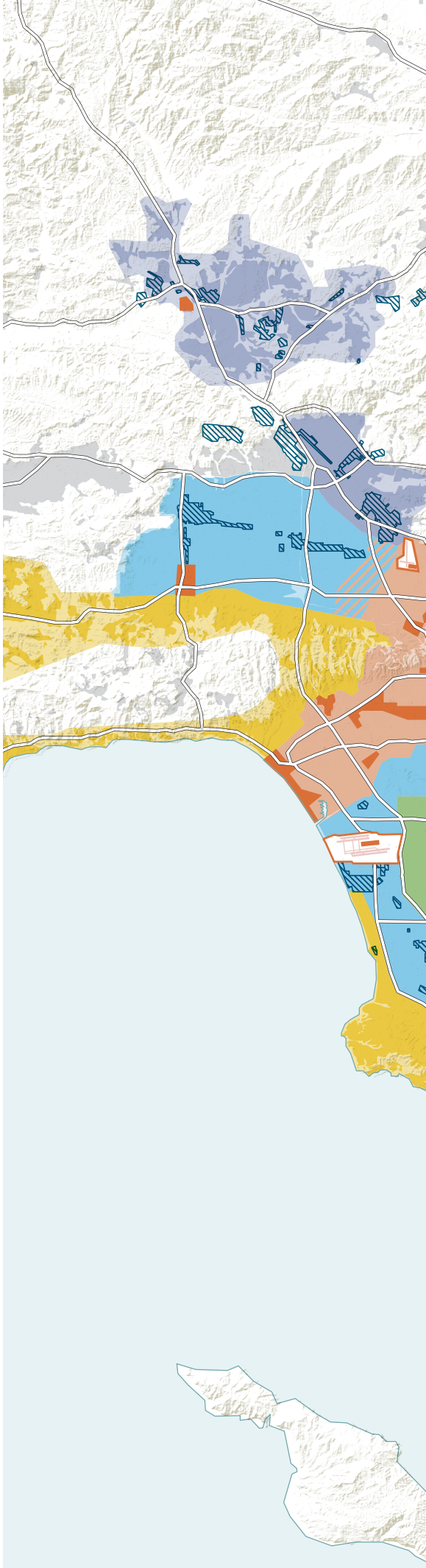
The eventisation of urban politics through publicly or privately organised large-scale events has become another new tendency in the production of urban territories. These events, which have been used for years in central urban areas as a strategy to institutionalise and normalise the process of incorporating urban differences, now became a metropolitan strategy. Ever since the bicentenary of Mexico's independence in 2010, a large-scale campaign of eventisation in Mexico City has been used to impose ideas of urbanity. For example, the government declared some pueblos originarios as *pueblos mágicos* to exploit their tourist potential and also to regulate their appearance, like using a standardised form of shop signs. Environmental conservation, which became a priority in urban development, was also mainly experienced as an event; for example, the main street axis Paseo de la Reforma is closed to cars every Sunday and open to bicycles—a practice unthinkable only two decades ago. This eventisation of urban politics points to the development of new urban strategies that change the prevailing representation of the urban in fundamental ways.

Financialisation, another recent tendency of current urbanisation in Mexico City, can be seen in the development of the mega conjuntos habitacionales in the urban peripheries of Mexico City. What appears on the surface as the rapid rise and fall of a specific model of mass housing urbanisation is in fact related to the efecto bando dos urbanisation process that was intensified by the re-densification of the inner-city districts implemented by the DF authorities in the early 2000s. This policy generated a real estate boom in central districts, which was accompanied by skyrocketing real estate prices and contributed to leapfrogging mass housing urbanisation to the surrounding Estado de México because many low-income residents could not afford the high rents and had to leave the central urban areas. By leaving the DF, people's commutes increased and they lost access to the social security benefits that had been available to them through local programmes that were mostly absent in other states. The Efecto bando dos and mass housing urbanisation were thus mutually reinforcing processes. Private developers took profit-oriented urbanisation to the extreme with the mega conjuntos habitacionales, whereas in the DF the urban fabric was renewed and the central parts of the city upgraded and densified. The existing infrastructure, however, was not adapted in the process, leading to traffic congestion and water shortages.

## REORDERING CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS

The recent tendencies depicted here indicate a possible emerging paradigm shift in the urbanisation of Mexico City. Overall, the predominant dynamic of current urban transformation is twofold. On one hand, Mexico City's central areas are undergoing processes of re-densification, restructuring and consolidation as a result of processes such as the production of centralities, the incorporation of urban differences, the efecto bando dos and the consolidation of popular urbanisation. Strongly related to this transformation of core urban areas is continuous urban expansion due to popular urbanisation and mass housing urbanisation as well as to the transformation of the ejes industriales and pueblos urbanizados urban configurations. Even if a new urbanisation process emerged with mass housing urbanisation, this did not fundamentally change the ongoing dynamic. Instead, it reinforced it by extending urban expansion and peripheralisation. This is exemplified in the stagnation and even shrinking of population in central areas of the DF, while the population of the urban peripheries in Estado de México is still growing. Although it has changed in intensity, this general centre–periphery

dynamic has been a constant of urbanisation over many decades. It is the result of three main characteristics of urbanisation in Mexico City. The first is the divided yet complementary relationship between the DF and the Estado de México. The second is the deeply inscribed difference between eastern and western parts of the metropolitan territories. The last is the regulation of ejido land. On the other hand, centre-periphery relations are being reordered through bypass urbanism, which is manifested in the efecto Santa Fe. This general dynamic exacerbates territorial fragmentation and social segregation particularly in areas in close proximity to emerging urban centralities, but it is also promoted by the increasing number of large-scale urban megaprojects in the pueblos industrial-izados and pueblos urbanizados. Reordering centre–periphery relations is the emerging and new dynamic in urbanisation and points towards a paradigm shift in the production of Mexico City's urban territories.



Regional centrality

Mostly specialised centralities scattered over large parts of the urban territory; the result of a decentralised and polycentric pathway of urbanisation

1 Downtown LA: Having formed a small CBD for decades it is currently marked by strong processes of expansion, urban intensification and the incorporation of differences

Gentrification

Crescent of gentrifying neighbourhoods, stimulated by the rise of Downtown LA

Concentration of wealth

Strongly dependent on topography, located mainly on foothills and along the coastline

Cosmopolitan urban

Relatively densely woven urban fabric; structured by the concentration of important centralities

Multilayered patchwork urbanisation

Developed in the once peripheral agricultural area of Orange County; marked by a complex urban pattern and the clustering of old and new centralities

Laminar urbanisation

Originally morphologically and socially homogeneous white middle-class suburbs; today marked by strong socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural differentiation due to immigration, economic restructuring and social polarisation

Post-proletarian

Single contiguous configuration; from the 1940s to the 1970s close to Los Angeles's major industrial hub with a large proportion of African American inhabitants; since the 1980s marked de-industrialisation and social polarisation; it was the site of the Watts riots of 1965 and the Rodney King uprising of 1992

Exurban

Heterogeneous, mostly middle and low-income areas in peripheral locations stretching far into desert zones

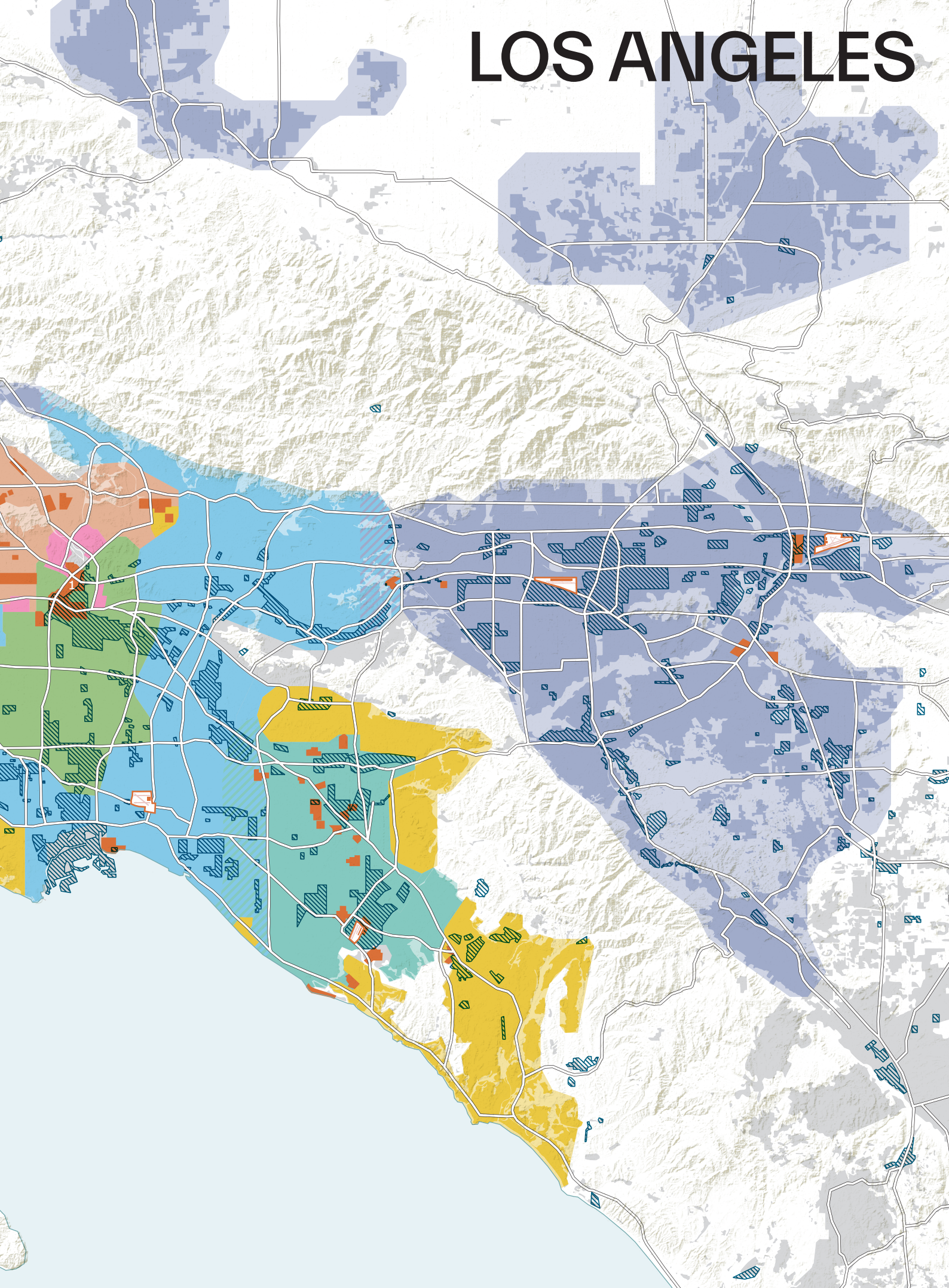
Urban footprint

Industrial site

Freeway and important road

0 5 10 20 km

# LOS ANGELES



Until recently, Los Angeles was commonly viewed as an exception to the general pattern of urban growth and development in the United States of America. It has typically been described as an emergent new Babylon, located on the westernmost edge of the continent, far from the main centers of economic activity and political power, and given over to peculiar (in its dual sense of idiosyncratic and bizarre) forms of social being.

Soja and Scott, *Los Angeles: Capital of the late twentieth century,* 1986

## AN ORDINARY METROPOLIS

For a long time, Los Angeles has been seen by many researchers in urban studies as a strange exception. It stood in an astonishing contrast to the well-structured Chicago model that was widely seen by Anglo-American scholars as the universal model of urbanisation. This model, which had been developed from the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s (Park et al. 1925), conceptualised the city as a succession of concentric rings, at the heart of which was one large central business district that was surrounded by a zone in transition (a kind of arrival zone for various immigrant groups), encircled by a 'zone of working-men's homes' with working-class and middle-class families and an affluent residential

zone with villas for the rich. At the edge was a 'commuter zone' that was expanding outwards. This model expressed a clear logic determined by a wealth gradient, with poor immigrant people living in the inner city, close to jobs and businesses, and the wealthy enjoying ample space and green, residing some distance from the busy and crowded inner city. This idealised model was originally used as a heuristic to contextualise the rich empirical studies of the Chicago School, and despite the fact that cities all over the world show very different patterns of urbanisation, it dominated the Anglo-American discussion in urban studies for many decades.

The dominance of this model was challenged only in the 1980s, when all sorts of new urban developments could be observed on a worldwide scale that clearly contradicted the Chicago model: new centralities were being developed in the urban peripheries, gentrification and upgrading processes made inner cities places for affluent urbanites and metropolises developed into huge polycentric urbanised zones, riven by socioeconomic polarisation and political fragmentation. These developments were conceptualised at the time as resulting from a fundamental worldwide change from a Fordist to a Post-Fordist accumulation regime and at the same time, as a cultural and architectural shift from modernism to postmodernism.

This was also the moment when urban research on Los Angeles reached its greatest heyday. This strange place that had hitherto been widely seen as an extraordinary and exceptional example of a metropolis suddenly seemed to epitomise all the features of a new model of urbanisation that was becoming the 'prototype of the city of the future' (Dear 2001: vii). Thus, in 1989 Edward Soja asked: 'What better place can there be to illustrate and synthesize the dynamics of capitalist spatialization?' In so many ways, Los Angeles is the place where "it all comes together", to borrow the immodest slogan of the Los Angeles Times' (Soja 1989: 191). Edward Soja and Allen Scott, together with Mike Davis, the most prolific and vocal scholars of the Los Angeles School, declared that Los Angeles was the 'capital of the late twentieth century' in an allusion to Walter Benjamin's famous text 'Paris: Capital of The Nineteenth Century*' (1969 [1938]*), and they edited a volume they called *The City* (1996), using the same title that Robert Park, Ernest Burgess and Roderick McKenzie had chosen for the Chicago School's foundational book in 1925. This was a clear provocation: the old Chicago model was dead, and a new, postmodern model of urbanism inspired by the Los Angeles experience was opening exciting perspectives in urban studies. Michael Dear in particular promoted the idea of a Los Angeles School of Urbanism; an ambition openly expressed in his anthology *From Chicago to L.A.* (2001); without, however, convincingly defining the epistemological core of this proposed new school (see also Dear and Flusty 1998).

In many of these accounts, the Los Angeles experience was presented in an almost mythical way, often oscillating between fascination and disapproval: an endless metropolis without a proper urban centre extending from the Pacific Ocean to the mountains and deserts; a place where highways are called 'freeways', but where the banal grandiosity of the freeway system, with its promise of universal access and instant mobility, ends in epic traffic jams; a place between surf culture and psychedelic experiences, between the Beach Boys and the Doors; a place where new industrial production systems and technopoles had developed (Scott 1988) and where independent municipalities and towns scattered over the territory precluded any coherent urban planning (Davis 1990); the traumatic experience of civic unrest, from the Watts riot of 1965 and the Rodney King uprising of 1992, both of which resulted in military intervention and heavy casualties; the wild extravaganza of the celebrity culture in the movie business and the music industry; the celebration of Hollywood and Disneyland and the dominance of mass consumerism and mass entertainment where simulacra of the theme park are deeply inserted into everyday life; the arrival of innumerable immigrants from Latin America and Asia which transformed Los Angeles into a multiethnic heteropolis and heterotopia (Jencks 1993; Soja 1996; Sandoval 2010); the city of gangsta rap and social polarisation, where palaces in Beverly Hills stand in close proximity to the streets housing the homeless in Downtown (Wolch 1996); a place

View from the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains towards the linear centrality of Wilshire Boulevard. Brentwood, 2013

inserted between the American Dream and the dystopia of looming earthquakes and the urban nightmare in *Blade Runner*.

However, what has been called the Los Angeles School of urbanism was in fact a loosely knit grouping of independent scholars and researchers, each of whom had their own projects and ambitions. This school never materialised as a common project and it faded away slowly at the beginning of the 21st century, together with discussions about postmodernity and postmodern urbanism. Nonetheless, these researchers created a very rich and imaginative body of academic literature, which is indispensable for understanding contemporary urbanisation.

It was clear that together with Paris, Los Angeles had to be part of our comparative project. Both of these huge urban regions constitute an example of a Western industrial metropolis whose historical origins were almost the complete opposite of each other, and which in many respects developed into quite similar territories. This chapter has to be seen in this context. Its role in this book is to revisit the rich knowledge on urbanisation and urbanism on Los Angeles that has been assembled in the past three decades, but with no ambition to add new research results. Obviously, I therefore treat Los Angeles not as a paradigmatic model but as an ordinary urban region (Robinson 2006); one among many others, each of which is marked by their own specific pattern and pathway of urbanisation.

# PATHWAY OF URBANISATION

The analysis of Los Angeles's pathway of urbanisation presented here is based on two important sources. The first is Janet Abu-Lughod's (1999) careful and detailed analysis in her seminal comparative study on the urban development of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, respectively. She chose a periodisation according to three overarching regimes of accumulation in the USA to structure her analysis (from the stock market crash in 1873 to the crash in 1929; the long cycle of US Fordism from 1930 to 1970; and the post-Fordist restructuring of the global economy in the long 1970s). The second important contribution to the periodisation of Los Angeles's urbanisation is made in the introduction to *The City* by Allen Scott and Edward Soja (1996), in which they give a short but precise overview on the historical development of Los Angeles. This analysis is mainly oriented towards economic development and consequently their periodisation follows the boom and bust phases of its history. This is a very helpful approach, as we are here seeking a periodisation of the production of space, and the phases of urban development usually have a direct relationship to economic growth cycles. Soja and Scott identify five surges of urban expansion that I partly adopt for this chapter.

The starting point of this urbanisation pathway is California's colonial history. The area that was later named Los Angeles was inhabited by the Tongva and other Indigenous peoples (Montoya 2021). The first Spanish Conquistadores arrived here as early as 1542. In the 1770s, Franciscan missionaries erected the first missions in the area, and in 1781 a group of settlers founded the Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles. The missions and pueblos were part of a brutal colonial system of incarcerating and dispossessing Indigenous peoples (Madley 2018; Brook 2013). After the Mexican war of independence, California became a Mexican province in 1822, but this did not substantially improve the situation of the Tongva people.

The gold rush in San Francisco in the 1840s triggered the first boom in agricultural production and cattle farming in the Los Angeles area to feed the gold seekers. Shortly thereafter, the US war against Mexico brought the area under US control, and in 1850 California was incorporated into the USA as its thirty-first state. At that time, Los Angeles was a Mexican agricultural village with about 1600 people (Fogelson 1967), surrounded by large *ranchos*, a legacy of Mexican rule. Soja (2000: 121) describes its development until 1870 as a story of 'two decades of ethnic cleansing', which 'erased much of the Latino heritage'. The invaders, predominantly North American White Protestants, tried to wrest control of Mexican land grants from the ranchero class (Erie 1992: 521). In 1871, the accidental killing of a white man resulted in the murder of about twenty Chinese (out of a total

Chinese population of about 200) by a mob of vigilantes and police officers. 'The massacre exposed an undercurrent of racism and xenophobia that would periodically burst to the surface, briefly interrupting and redirecting the urbanization process' (Soja and Scott 1996: 4). The subsequent urbanisation pathway can be seen as a succession of booms, interrupted by short periods of bust.

## THE CITY AS A GROWTH MACHINE

In 1870, at the beginning of the first boom period that lasted until the economic depression of the mid-1890s,the Los Angeles region consisted of some villages scattered over the wide plains set among the mountains, the desert and the Pacific Ocean. The region had little to recommend to prospective residents (McWilliams 1973: 6, 13). As John Logan and Harvey Molotch (1987: 55) stated, Los Angeles 'had none of the "natural" features that are thought to support urban growth: no centrality, no harbour, no transportation crossroads, not even a water supply. Indeed, the rise of Los Angeles as the pre-eminent city of the West, eclipsing its rivals San Diego and San Francisco, can only be explained as a remarkable victory of human cunning over the so-called limits of nature'. The landscape of Los Angeles had to be produced—it had to be forged out of crude materials (McWilliams 1973; Sullivan 2014).

Nevertheless, Los Angeles did have two major natural advantages: huge swathes of flat land and a Mediterranean climate, which provided excellent conditions for the agricultural production that soon made it the most affluent agricultural region of the USA. This climate was also a major advantage for urbanisation: 'The climate of Southern California is palpable: a commodity that can be labelled, priced, and marketed. ... The climate is the region' (McWilliams 1973: 6). In the following decades it was the production of the city itself that became the main driver of urban development. Molotch (1976) has analysed this process using the concept of the 'urban growth machine'. He conceives of the city as an areal expression of the interests of a sector of the land-based elites that competes with other land-based elites for the growth-inducing resources invested in its area. These place-based actors are trying to manipulate public opinion and are utilising governmental authority at the local, regional and national scale to reorder urban life and increase the market value of their assets. Molotch understands 'place' as a market commodity that can generate wealth and power for its owners. This idea is consistent with Lefebvre's concept that a place is always produced, and that urbanisation is the result of social actions, political power and social class relations. Los Angeles is a perfect illustration of this connection. Its production started in earnest when the first rail connection broke the isolation of the region. The completion of the Southern Pacific railway from San Francisco to Los Angeles in 1876 was supported by considerable subsidies by the City of Los Angeles (Wachs: 1996). The advertising was rolled out to sell the city as a paradise with warm winters and dry summers and with a climate that could cure many of the maladies afflicting people in other parts of the country (Molotch 1996: 240; Waldie 2004: 155).

A faux Mexican legacy was also used to sell the city. The popularity of Helen Hunt Jackson's 1884 novel *Ramona,* which describes the story of a Scottish-Tongva orphan girl from the San Gabriel area, who suffers racial discrimination and hardship, instigated a kind of nostalgic frenzy for Southern California's rancho past. This led to the restoration of the decaying missions and the use of a Mexican touch as a sales point for anything remotely connected with the area (Sullivan 2014: 25–26). As Soja (2000: 126–127) emphasises, the 'Ramona myth' reveals the subtle dimensions of institutionalised racism. The 'Spanish style' and the 'Mission style' derived from this myth are still utilised to this day on numerous items in Southern California, from furniture to residences to fast food stands (Molotch 1996: 248).

This strange paradise attracted mainly white pensioners from small towns in the Midwest responding to the appeal of a place that promised relief from freezing winters and harsh summers (Sullivan 2014: 18). During this phase, Los Angeles grew from 19,000 inhabitants in 1870 to 250,000 in 1900 (Soja and Scott 1996: 3). In addition to the three already established towns of the region —Los Angeles, San Buenaventura (in today's Ventura County in the north) and San Bernardino in the east—20 new municipalities were created, including Anaheim, Riverside, Santa Monica, Santa Ana, Compton, Pomona, Pasadena and Long Beach, covering almost the entire area of contemporary Greater Los Angeles (Soja 2000: 124).

## INDUSTRIAL TAKE OFF

An additional driver of urbanisation was generated by extractivism. Within a few decades after oil had been discovered in Los Angeles in 1892, derricks were pumping out 'black gold' from Santa Monica and Long Beach to Fullerton in Orange County. In the following years, oil, logistics, real estate and agriculture generated the next economic boom.

This boom was strongly supported by the *Los Angeles Times* and its conservative publisher, Harrison Gray Otis, who shaped the image of the city for decades by promoting the anti-union, pro-business stance that dominated the entire region. Otis was also at the forefront of the movement to sell the city to outsiders, frequently deploying writers on assignments that were at best a mixed marriage of reporting and promotion.

The *Los Angeles Times* was also instrumental in the formation of the Merchants and Manufacturers Association, a business group that did much to shape the pro-business atmosphere of the city (Sullivan 2014: 34).

With the help of massive subsidies from the federal government, Los Angeles constructed the port of San Pedro, outplaying the key advantage that San Diego, with its natural harbour, had hitherto held. This 'close collusion between private enterprise and governmental powers in city building' gave Los Angeles's political economy its specific character (Abu-Lughod 1999: 135). To overcome its water problem, the City of Los Angeles constructed, again with federal subsidies, a huge water-collecting system with reservoirs and aqueducts tapping the waters of the Owens River at the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada, north of the Mojave Desert, which subsequently led to the drying up of the Owens Lake (Nadeau 1960). The resulting abundance of water not only enabled further settlements to be constructed but also pushed the rise of agricultural production. Los Angeles became the premier agricultural county of the nation, and the emblematic oranges produced in the region were used in advertisements to lure prospective homeowners (Sullivan 2014). In the following decades, the real estate business became the motor of the regional economy. Further cycles of immigration from Europe, Japan and Mexico increased the number of people living in the Los Angeles region to 1,150,000 in 1920. Los Angeles was poised to take off as a major metropolis.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRIAL METROPOLIS

The next round of urban growth in Los Angeles started in the 1920s (Soja and Scott 1996: 7) with the establishment of three leading industries: oil, aeroplanes and motion pictures. Signal Hill, a part of the Long Beach oil field, with its hundreds of derricks littering the skyline, became a famous site for producing oil during the 1920s. Southern California's clear skies supplied ideal conditions for testing aeroplanes and attracted aeroplane enthusiasts such as Glenn Martin, Donald Douglas and John Northrop, who were later to become titans of the industry (Molotch 1996: 241). Hollywood also became the world's premier capital for making motion pictures. Meanwhile, boosterism and real estate speculation drove the growth machine. In 1930 the city of Los Angeles was home to 6 per cent of 240,000 real estate agents and developers in the USA, and about 14 per cent of its labour force worked directly in construction and real estate (Erie 1992: 520). All these industries drew new, mainly white residents to Los Angeles, so that by the end of the decade Los Angeles had surpassed San Francisco as California's most populous city.

In the early 1930s, as the Depression set in and economic hardship brought out latent strains of racism, tens of thousands of Mexicans were deported to Mexico (Acuna 1998: 7). At the same time, immigration continued, particularly from the crisis-ridden 'dust bowl' in the Midwest, but also from western urban areas in the second half of the 1930s when industrial employment rose sharply (Abu-Lughod 1999: 245). On the eve of the Second World War, Los Angeles County not only remained the first-ranking county in the USA in terms of agricultural wealth and income, but also ranked first in the production of aeroplanes and motion pictures, second in auto assembling and rubber tires and tubes, third in furniture production and the retail trade, fourth in making women's apparel, and fifth in the overall value of industrial production (Abu-Lughod 1999: 245). By 1940 the region counted about 3.3 million people, and the city of Los Angeles was the fifth most populous city in the USA with a population of about 1.5 million.

## FORDIST METROPOLIS

The beginning of the Second World War ignited the next boom phase for Los Angeles. The entry of the USA into the Second World War after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour made Los Angeles a key location for producing armaments and logistics. It became the most significant industrial centre on the West Coast, and shipyards, steel mills, car factories and rubber plants were being established, mainly in the south-east section of Los Angeles County in towns such as Southgate and Vernon. The aeroplane industry was transformed into an aerospace industry and Los Angeles became one of its main hubs (along with Seattle). This military-scientific-industrial complex was further fuelled by the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The core of the industry was soon complemented by a large network of subcontractors and producer services, and later the electronics industry; and when land reserves in Los Angeles County had been consumed, branch plants started to be founded in Orange County, which was still a quiet backwater at the time, establishing one of the world's first decentralised technopoles (see Chapter 15). In parallel, the motion picture industry was thriving, with major studios all over Los Angeles, including the Warner Brothers and Disney Studios in Burbank, Universal in Universal City, Fox in West Los Angeles, MGM in Culver City and Paramount in Hollywood. Following the opening of Disneyland in Anaheim in 1955, Los Angeles also became a major tourist destination for white North Americans.

A key driver of urbanisation became the freeway system, which connected the growing suburbs to each other and to Downtown. In 1939 the second freeway in the nation—the Pasadena Freeway—opened. Post-war Los Angeles was much more than a bizarre exception: it now constituted the most consequential example of a fully car-oriented urban

region, which was not really compatible with the dominant contemporary paradigms of urbanisation, because the urban fabric of the inner city areas dating from the late 19th and early 20th century were much too dense for the construction of huge motorway systems and thus still strongly relied on public transport, as the examples of New York and Chicago demonstrate. In Los Angeles, however, the rapid extension of the freeway system opened out huge swathes of open land for urbanisation, allowing an almost limitless extension of settlements, unhindered by pre-existing urban patterns, even extending into desert zones. The construction of freeways thus fuelled another major housing boom, with developers mass-producing single-family homes on an assembly line basis (Waldie 1997: 11). In this way, Los Angeles became a prototypical Fordist metropolis, an 'endless city' based on mass production of houses and the mass consumption of land and resources.

However, most of these new settlement areas were inhabited by white residents, while minority populations were confined to relatively small zones, with Latinos living in East and Southeast Los Angeles and African Americans in South Central Los Angeles and some neighbouring municipalities, such as Compton. By the beginning of the 1940s, black working-class families had started to migrate to this area in large numbers, especially from Texas and Louisiana, in response to the recruitment efforts of the defence industry. The black population in the city of Los Angeles increased from about 63,000 in 1940 to roughly half a million in 1970, rising from about 4 per cent to 18 per cent of the total population. In 1965 a major uprising shook Watts, a neighbourhood of South Central, resulting in 34 deaths.

This uprising had repercussions in the entire USA and beyond, and was followed by riots in many inner cities with a large African American population against the repressive power of white America. It also highlighted the looming crisis of the Fordist arrangement of Los Angeles: 'The black working class had been integrated into the Keynesian social contract only incompletely; the black population remained segregated at the margins of the American society' (Keil 1998: 217). These riots arrived in a wider context of discontent in the late 1960s, with protests against the US war in Vietnam, but also against the debilitating effects of the consumer society and the hermetic worlds of the suburbs; protests that would soon contribute to the end of the Fordist dream.

In 1970, with a population that had grown to 10 million, Greater Los Angeles was the second largest conurbation in the USA, having long overtaken Chicago in size. In many respects it was the incarnation of a Fordist metropolis: having a strong industrial base, generating jobs and income, in an atomised consumer society with everyday life dominated by the private automobile and mass entertainment, and white middle-class nuclear families living in single-family homes in an endless suburban space. This world was soon to face radical urban change.

## WORLD CITY FORMATION

As in all Western countries, the 1970s brought a deep economic crisis and the end of the Fordist-Keynesian regime of accumulation. The following decades were dominated by deindustrialisation, globalisation and neoliberalism. Under the presidency of Ronald Reagan, the US government was at the forefront of this neoliberal change, which brought forward flexibilisation and deregulation, neoliberal policies on the national, regional and local scale and industrial and urban restructuring. The economic, social and political aspects of this change from a Fordist to a neoliberal paradigm of urbanisation is accurately analysed by Roger Keil in his book *Los Angeles* (1998).

During this process the Fordist manufacturing sectors (automobile, steel and consumer durables) almost disappeared, and by the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War and the ensuing drastic cuts in national defence budgets, the aerospace and defence industries also came under pressure and laid off tens of thousands of engineers (Storper et al. 2015: 92). But despite the economic crisis, and in sharp contrast to metropolitan areas in the north-eastern part of the USA, Greater Los Angeles was still booming, creating new jobs and attracting immigrants from all over the world. This resulted in a further population growth from 10 to 16.4 million people between 1970 and 2000.

The loss of Fordist industries was more than compensated by growth in the labour-intense sectors of craft production, the motion picture industry and the high-tech sectors. Major technopoles developed in the airport area, the eastern San Fernando Valley and Orange County, based on strong traded and untraded transactional interrelations reducing uncertainty and market instabilities, and advancing innovation processes; more remote minor technopoles developed in the Ventura corridor, the San Gabriel Valley and even in Palmdale (Soja and Scott 1996: 12–13).

At the same time, Los Angeles's role in the international division of labour changed fundamentally, when it became a main global centre in the quickly changing Pacific Rim; a change that was particularly fostered by the rise of China as a major export-manufacturing producer. The rise of global production networks allowed corporations to decentralise their activities to low-cost locations all over the world while remaining anchored in specific transnational clusters. This change was conceptualised at the time in a path-breaking article by John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff, 'World city formation: an agenda for research and action' (1982), in which they developed the idea of the formation of world cities as major sites for the concentration and accumulation of international capital, as well as nodes of globalised networks and control centres of the world economy that were key destinations for both domestic and international migrants (see also Friedmann 1986).

This analysis was greatly inspired by Los Angeles's economic and urban transformation. Thus Los Angeles, previously the incarnation of a white North American metropolis became a destination for low-skilled and high-skilled immigrants from Latin America, particularly Mexico, as well as from many Asian countries, particularly China, Korea, Vietnam, the Philippines and Cambodia.

These developments led to a bifurcation of labour markets, with a growing number of high-waged, high-skilled jobs of the headquarter economy in management, banking and finance, producer services, research and development, higher education and also the entertainment industry on the one hand. On the other hand, an equally fast-growing number of precarious jobs were created to serve this headquarter economy, in hotels, hospitals, restaurants, retail stores and cleaning, which were done mainly by women and immigrants from Latin America and Asia (Soja and Scott 1996: 12). This led to socio-economic polarisation and increasing class contradictions that were reinforced by racism, a process that Friedmann and Wolff encapsulated in the metaphor 'citadel and ghetto': On one side stood the citadel with its skyscrapers on Bunker Hill in Downtown Los Angeles, and on the other the deteriorating neighbourhoods of the black working-class population in South Central, suffering unemployment, socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation, and whose residents were being left behind in an increasingly desperate situation. In 1992 the Rodney King riots erupted, sending shock waves throughout the entire metropolitan region and beyond. They gave rise to dystopian images, captured in the noir science fiction movie *Blade Runner*, of the possible future of Los Angeles (Davis 1993, 1998).

## URBAN INTENSIFICATION

The last two decades mark the end of the extraordinary boom of Los Angeles. Between 2000 and 2020 its regional population continued to increase from 16.4 to 18.6 million—but this was by far the slowest growth rate it had experienced since its first boom in the 1870s. Its ethnic composition further diversified, and Los Angles became a real world city. Its Hispanic and Latino population is today by far the largest ethnic group, constituting more than 46 per cent of its total population, while non-Hispanic whites count for fewer than 30 per cent (United States Census Bureau 2020).

During this process, the urban landscape has been profoundly transformed once more. While the metropolis has extended further into the geographical peripheries, it has also densified. Orange County's population, and the exurban counties of San Bernardino and Riverside had even higher growth rates. As a result, they developed into much denser urban configurations. At the same time Los Angeles County had a quite slow population growth, despite experiencing an intensification and urban upgrading, leading to gentrification and incorporation of differences (see Chapter 17). This can be seen as the result of what we could call a rediscovery of the urban; the well-known phenomenon that urban qualities and values are becoming more important to the more affluent sectors of the population. This development, which had started in London and New York in the 1960s, finally arrived in Los Angeles in the 2010s after the mortgage crisis and the economic depression; most notably with the revival of Downtown LA and—very surprisingly for Los Angeles—the beginning of gentrification processes in a range of urban core areas adjacent to Downtown LA, in Santa Monica and also in Santa Ana in Orange County.

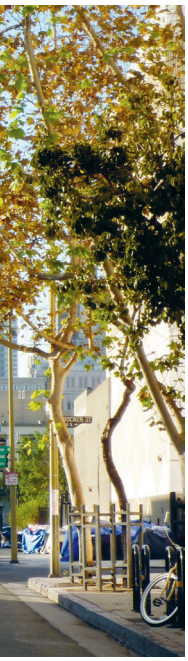
Urban intensification and gentrification. Boyle Heights, 2014

# PATTERNS OF URBANISATION

When Ozan Karaman and I started to conduct expert interviews and mapping sessions to explore the urban configurations of Los Angeles in the spring of 2013, our interlocutors explained to us that the Los Angeles region is so huge and complex, and consists of such a great variety of immigrant communities and specialised neighbourhoods, towns and cities, each of which with its own specific socioeconomic and ethnic composition, that it is impossible to draw an overall picture of Los Angeles's urban configurations.

This position is consistent with the view of cultural theorist, landscape designer and architectural historian Charles Jencks, who in his book *Heteropolis* had introduced the concept of post-modernity into the world of architecture two decades previously (Jencks 1977). In his book on Los Angeles, published in 1993, one year after the Rodney King riots, he argued that this metropolis had developed into a new form of a city which was marked by diversity and heterogeneity, and where more than eighty languages were spoken in schools. He pleaded for a love of difference, curiosity and a desire to seek out new experiences, and underscored his statement with impressive maps illustrating the mosaic of more than a hundred ethnic groups, forty different lifestyle clusters and twenty identity areas that can be detected in Los Angeles.

However, Los Angeles's urban configurations can also be represented with a much simpler urban typology, as architectural and urban historian Rayner Banham demonstrated in his seminal book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* in 1971. He developed a simple but thoughtful typology based on the morphology formed by natural and human forces: the beaches (surfurbia), the foothills (the privileged enclaves), the freeways (autopia) and the 'Plains of Id', where 'the crudest urban lusts and most fundamental aspirations are created' (1971: 143).



Citadel and ghetto: Skid Row and Bunker Hill in the background. Downtown LA, 2014

The urban typology that we developed, following our specific method of mapping, resulted in seven urban configurations that partly coincide with Banham's typology. The Plains of Id in our analysis are the ordinary zones of laminar urbanisation, and the privileged enclaves of the foothills are part of the zone of the elite rich in our analysis. As we also considered socioeconomic processes, territorial regulation and lived experiences, and looked at centralities and peripheries, we additionally identified a cosmopolitan urban zone, an area of multilayered patchwork urbanisation, a post-proletarian zone and exurbia.

## ON CENTRALITIES, RAILWAYS AND FREEWAYS

By the beginning of urban development in the late 19th century a specific urban pattern had evolved on the plains of Los Angeles; one which defines the urban region to this day: a series of small independent towns scattered over the entire area. These towns gradually developed into a collection of urban centres. They were soon connected by privately built electric streetcars and inter-urban railways, which fostered the development of an extended urban fabric. Starting in the late 1880s, streetcar networks were constructed in several cities of the Los Angeles area and inter-urban railway lines were built to connect the city of Los Angeles to nearby municipalities (Bottles 1987: 29). This specific historical situation gave rise to a specific model of the production of space: as these streetcar and railway lines were a precondition for further urban development, they had to be built in advance of the construction of the houses. Because this necessitated a massive initial investment, these railways were profitable only if they were directly linked to land development.

At the beginning of the century, Henry Huntington, the nephew and heir of Collis P. Huntington, former president of the Southern Pacific railway that linked Los Angeles to the rest of the country (see above), started building a streetcar empire by developing a unique business model (Friedricks 1992). In 1898 he bought the Los Angeles Railway, which ran the streetcars in the city of Los Angeles (named 'yellow cars'), and in 1901 he founded the Pacific Electric Railway to create an inter-urban network on standard-gauge tracks and was soon on his way to sending his 'big red cars' out across the entire region. Before constructing new lines, his own 'Land and Improvement Company' bought

up the land adjacent to those lines and sold it once they were constructed. In this way, he made a fortune out of the land that had been newly made accessible (Nadeau 1960: 111). This strategy laid the ground for the specific model of Los Angeles's urban development. In 1923 Huntington's inter-urban rail network had reached its greatest extent, covering more than 1,100 miles (1770 km), serving an area that covers today's Greater Los Angeles almost entirely and connecting Santa Monica, Long Beach and Balboa on the coast, Pasadena, Burbank and San Fernando in the north-west, Santa Ana in Orange County, as well as San Bernardino and Riverside in the east (Banham 1971: 61–64; Wachs 1996: 108). In this way, Huntington became the de facto regional planner of the whole area and, as a large-scale subdivider, determined the spatial layout and socioeconomic mix of large parts of the new settlements (Friedricks 1992).

We may observe that the rail network laid down Los Angeles's basic pattern of urbanisation, just as the trainlines structured the urbanisation of Tokyo. But, in contrast to Tokyo with its dense urban pattern, Los Angeles developed an extended pattern of urbanisation. The various small towns soon developed into a loosely knit constellation of various centralities connected by trainlines, and the open land in between was filled with standard-ised, quickly constructed detached houses, placing roads in a basic orthogonal grid, which resulted in the homogenous layer that we call laminar urbanisation. Subsequently, the urban fabric began to unfurl in all directions instead of concentrating on one node. This set the mould for the development of a horizontal metropolis that was very different from that of Chicago. City officials and regional planners approved of this decentralised urbanisation paradigm because it allowed the region 'to avoid the crowded and unhealthy aspects of eastern urban life' (Bottles 1987: 180, see also Fogelson 1967: 250).

However, the electric railways had a short life. By 1920, when automobiles began to flood and jam central areas, the first discussions were conducted about the construction of a network of freeways, and in 1937 the Automobile Club of Southern California presented the first regional freeway plan (Bottles 1987: 217). After the Second World War the street cars were soon replaced by bus routes, and the freeway system that was developed linked up the Southern California region. This spectacular transformation, which happened in many cities across the USA, is often presented as the result of a conspiracy. Between 1938 and 1950, the private bus company National City Lines (NCL) and its subsidiaries, supported by invest-ments from General Motors, Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, Standard Oil of California, Federal Engineering, Phillips Petroleum and Mack Trucks, gained control of a range of streetcar and railway systems, among them being that of Los Angeles, and NCL then converted streetcar routes to bus operations. Most of the companies involved in this development were convicted in 1949 of conspiracy to monopolise interstate commerce by selling buses, fuel and supplies to NCL subsidiaries, but they were acquitted of conspiring to monopolise the transit industry and were given only minimal fines (Wachs 1996).

The story was, of course, more complicated than a simple conspiracy. In the Los Angeles region, the streetcar networks were heavily regulated by municipal governments, which imposed the fare structure and timetables and thus limited the investors' profits and investments. Furthermore, the growing motor traffic was increasingly blocking

Freeway junction near Pomona, 2013

the trainlines, leading to delays and lengthy train journeys, further encouraging people to use their own cars. Given this situation, buses appeared to be a much more flexible and economic transport solution in this area. However, these arguments were often just used as an excuse to demolish the streetcar and regional railway networks, and buses are still today presented as the only possible —or at least the only reasonable—solution to the transportation problem (see e.g. Bottles 1987; Wachs 1996). This argument conceals the fact that there are other options, such as delegating to public authorities the operation of public transport and using regional planning to steer urbanisation into a more concentrated and compact direction. It also neglects the class character of the freeway program: In Los Angeles, the bus system would never be able to cope with the huge dimensions of the region, and people on low incomes who could not afford to buy into the new freedom of mobility became trapped in their neighbourhoods and often lost their jobs (Goddard 1994).

Finally, the triumph of the freeway is often explained as being the inevitable result of the Zeitgeist: people wanted to drive cars, which became more available and affordable with Fordism, and from the very beginning individual mobility was ideologically linked to freedom, as the term 'freeway' used in California clearly indicates. To this day, Los Angeles's freeway system has a highly symbolic value. But the utopian promise of 'free' and limitless mobility has long since turned into a dystopian reality with its endless traffic jams, air pollution and climate crisis.

The construction of the freeway system had immediate concrete effects: it worked as a gigantic logistical connector and permitted a systematic low-density extension of the metropolis in all directions. This decentralised model was not only promoted by powerful landowners and developers but was also the result of a Fordist-Keynesian compromise in which the predominantly white trade unions supported suburban housing and metropolitan freeways (Parson 1982: 406). As a result, the freeway system became the main structuring element of the plains, cutting across vast spaces and dividing them into discrete fragments. It also worked as a barrier, locking certain communities in places such as East Los Angeles and Watts, while shielding others from the urban bustle such as Brentwood and Santa Monica. Thus, the configuration of 'elite rich' and 'post-proletarian', though they may be only about ten miles apart, are located in completely different worlds.

In the years that followed, the freeway system structured the path of urbanisation. It linked the major centralities and business districts and determined the locations of shopping malls. This decentred logistical space also influenced the industrialisation of the Los Angeles region. In the 1920s industrial plants were mainly concentrated in and around Downtown LA, and only slowly began to expand south towards Vernon and South Central Los Angeles. In the 1960s the region presented a very different picture: industrial plants were still concentrated around the centre, but also formed several industrial clusters scattered over Los Angeles County and beyond, typically around important freeway intersections, and thus reinforced the decentralised or even excentric urban pattern of Los Angeles (Bottles 1987: 200–202).

However, as we explain in the next two sessions, these centralities are not evenly distributed across the region: they are concentrated in two main areas that we call 'cosmopolitan urban' in the central area and 'multilayered patchwork urbanisation' in Orange County.

## COSMOPOLITAN URBAN

Despite its decentralised structure and endless freeways, the Los Angeles region has a large central area in which most of the major and minor centralities are concentrated and which has undergone a strong urban revival in the last two decades. The most spectacular example of this development is the transformation of Downtown LA, which for a long time did not constitute a strong central business district, and was in Banham's (1971: 186) view 'neither very attractive nor historically rewarding'. Kevyn Lynch (1960: 33) even claimed that 'great numbers of citizens never enter the downtown area from one year to the next'. And many decades later Soja (1996: 184–236) just called it 'Citadel LA', following Friedmann and Wolff's world city analysis.

In the first decades of the 20th century this area used to be an attractive downtown, but it subsequently suffered a steady decline, when new downtowns were developed in the region. In the 1920s A.W. Ross developed a shopping strip designed specifically for motorised access, with parking lots at the rear of the buildings along the Miracle Mile of Wilshire Boulevard, which soon became the first linear downtown. At the same time, Hollywood Boulevard became the new movie district and tourist attraction, and additional new downtowns were developed in Santa Monica, Westwood, Beverly Hills, Pasadena and Santa Ana (Fogelson 1967: 147; Garvin 2019: 28). In the following decades, Downtown LA developed into a centrality for mainly Latino low-income groups as well as being a place where homeless people collected together (see Chapter 17). During the Fordist period the city government and business organisations undertook a series of attempts to develop a 'proper downtown', which only resulted in the redevelopment of Bunker Hill into quite a bleak business district decorated with some skyscrapers, and which clearly lacked the key components of a vibrant and animated urban centre. Downtown LA remained an isolated island, delineated and bracketed

by a parallelogram of freeways, with the 10 to the south, the 5 to the east, the 101 to the north and the 110 to the west.

The situation of Downtown LA changed gradually in the 1990s and 2000s as coordinated planning efforts finally led to the long sought-for 'urban renaissance'. A series of flagship projects were realised. 'Business improvement districts' were created, such as the Arts District and the Fashion District to the east and the south, using industrial areas and warehouse spaces, and poor and homeless people were evicted and displaced from the central parts of Downtown. In the 2010s, Downtown LA became a magnet for real estate developers, art galleries and the urban middle classes, as new apartment buildings, luxury condos and trendy venues sprang up across its entire surface. As we argue in Chapter 17, this recentralisation of Los Angeles can be understood as the production of an entirely new urban configuration that serves as a new strategic centre restructuring the entire region, with far-reaching effects.

Additionally, partly as a result of the transformation of Downtown, an arc of gentrifying neighbourhoods has developed in its vicinity in recent years, stretching from a western outpost in Silver Lake to Echo Park, Cypress Park and Lincoln Heights to an eastern outpost in Boyle Heights. At the same time, other centralities have also undergone various forms of urban upgrading. Miracle Mile at Wilshire Boulevard, which was historically one of the initial elements of Los Angeles's polycentrism, became the home of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art—which also offers free concerts and affordable films attracting a wide mixed audience—and the Page Museum, with its famous Tar Pits. Both museums serve as specific cultural destinations and also as public spaces where people congregate, gaze at exhibits, observe one another, reconnoitre and rendezvous. Further south is Century City, with its characteristic skyline built on the former Twentieth Century Fox site on the backlot of the former film studio. Further south, business towers housing small and large corporations, retail shops and restaurants line Wilshire Boulevard all the way down to the Pacific shore.

A second important linear centrality is the coastline of the greater Los Angeles region, from Point Mugu in Ventura County to Laguna Beach in Orange County. Attracting millions of people, it forms the most important series of public spaces in Greater Los Angeles. The main centralities and touristic magnets along the coastline are Venice and Santa Monica, which operate in both symbolic and material ways as sources of cultural and financial revenue for the City of Los Angeles. Venice has marketed itself as a gathering place for the idiosyncratic, the bizarre and the outlandish, with its street people and its petty con artists, which have long been a significant aspect of the general culture of Los Angeles (McWilliams 1973). On its part, Santa Monica has attempted to present its beach as more reputable than Venice's, and it has spent considerable energy trying to displace homeless people from its beaches and parks. In the last decade, Internet firms have moved into these two beach cities and created there an IT and high-tech cluster, called 'Silicon Beach'. This 'marriage of Internet and entertainment' (Storper et al. 2015: 110) assembles branch plants of most of the tech giants, start-ups, accelerators, incubators and venture capital funds; showing the tendency of such firms to look for attractive urban environments for their offices.

Other noteworthy centralities in the cosmopolitan urban configuration are Pasadena, an important and affluent centrality comprising a hub of museums, including the Norton Simon Museum and the Huntington Library, art collections and botanical gardens. In the early 1990s Culver City launched an urban revitalisation program by renovating its downtown area, and the Culver City Art District generated an influx of art galleries and restaurants. West Los Angeles, West Hollywood

Downtown LA. Financial district, 2020

Multilayered patchwork urbanisation. Segerstrom Concert Hall, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Costa Mesa, 2014

Cosmopolitan urban. Venice, 2014

and Hollywood are other more-or-less affluent neighbourhoods that constitute specific and specialised centralities with strong urban qualities, together contributing to the cosmopolitan urban character of this large central part of Los Angeles. Today, the configuration of cosmopolitan urban is no longer very different from core areas in other large metropolitan territories.

## MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION

The large central area of Los Angeles is not the only cluster of regional centralities in the region. Over a long period of time, a second cluster of centralities emerged, unnoticed, in the former urban periphery of Orange County, south of Los Angeles. This astonishing development was overlooked in urban studies, until it rose to fame in the 1980s when it was declared the new paradigmatic example of post-Fordist urbanisation and postmodern urbanism by researchers of the Los Angeles School. However, we found that this area forms an urban configuration that developed gradually over many decades, and is today a dense, polynucleated and fairly cosmopolitan urban space.

Orange County is located between the ocean and the Santa Ana mountains half way between Los Angeles and San Diego, primarily connected through the Santa Ana Freeway and the northern segment of the San Diego Freeway. It is composed of a great variety of urban fragments and determined by numerous logics, none of which holds overall sway, yet all of which together give the area a heterogeneous character. This is the result of a long-lasting, complex and differentiated pathway of urbanisation that continues to this day. The individual patches sometimes developed over decades, filled up the landscape, effacing all traces of agricultural production and finally leading to a dense agglomeration. The way this area developed into a configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation is discussed in detail in Chapter 15.

Over its historical development different urban layers have been produced in Orange County. The first layer was formed by the mixed agricultural production, which ranged from dairy products to beans and the orange groves that gave this county its name. Over the decades this layer has slowly faded and has finally been almost erased by urbanisation. A second layer developed after the Second World War as a result of the massive influx of relatively affluent, white middle-class families spilling over from southern Los Angeles County. These families were attracted by the good transport networks, the beaches and the climate. A third layer was initiated by the oil economy, which laid the foundation for further industrialisation. During the 1960s and 1970s an industrial complex of the aircraft and military industry developed, which in turn generated

more new business and technology centres, mainly in two clusters around Irvine and Fullerton. The last two decades have been marked by yet more densification and intensification. Gradually, over time the density and diversity of the urban pattern reached a certain degree of saturation. Sometime during the 1990s, the full dimensions of multilayered patchwork urbanisation finally became visible.

During this process, a wide variety of urban centralities were created step by step, based on local and often private initiatives. Because they were developed independently, today they form a patchwork in which the pieces bear little relationship to each other. Anaheim became an entertainment and tourist centre when Disneyland opened in 1955. Today it also hosts sports centres, a stadium, and various other attractions. Santa Ana, the seat of government of Orange County, became a boom town driven by the rapid growth of the defence industry. During the 1960s and 1970s more working-class families from Mexico arrived in Santa Ana and found low-skilled and low-paid jobs. By the 1970s Santa Ana had become a Latino city with a vibrant downtown, mainly attracting working-class Mexican immigrants. Recently it has undergone strategies of urban upgrading and gentrification (González 2017).

In the southern part of Orange County where the large ranches, a legacy of the Mexican period, had for a long time resisted urbanisation, an entire range of centralities were created. An axis of centralities runs from Santa Ana to the John Wayne Airport with a huge business cluster, all the way down to the Fashion Island shopping mall and the beach resort in Newport. The neighbouring private new town of Irvine is the site of several university campuses and a business centre for the technology and semiconductor sectors. In Costa Mesa a kind of a downtown has been created with South Coast Plaza, a huge shopping mall complex, and the neighbouring Segerstrom Center for the Arts, a performing arts complex with theatres, a concert hall, an arts museum and other venues.

Today Orange County, with its collection of urban centralities, forms a metropolis in its own right with more than 3 million residents. Having for a long time been dominated by a white population, it has today a much more mixed ethnic composition, with about one-third being of Latino and one-fifth of Asian ethnicity.

## LAMINAR URBANISATION

In clear contrast to multilayered patchwork urbanisation, another configuration is marked by a much more homogeneous urbanisation pattern that lacks any major centrality and consists mainly of one single layer that covers the territory, like laminar flooring. Individual towns and municipalities in this area rarely have distinct features. The entire configuration is structured by an endless repetition of the hierarchical orthogonal road pattern composed of large boulevards separating smaller roads. The smallest units of this grid are filled with detached houses that are arranged along inner streets. The intersections of the bigger roads are usually equipped with a service corner containing a gas station, fast food restaurants, shops and often also mini malls, to provision the local people with the necessities of everyday life. The repetitive occurrence of the same retail and fast food chains creates an experience of uniformity and monotony that gives the impression of an endless, ubiquitous, almost indistinguishable pattern, which is perfectly expressed by Banham

Laminar urbanisation. Lancaster, 2020

(1971: 143): 'An endless plain endlessly gridded with endless streets, peppered endlessly with ticky-tacky houses clustered in indistinguishable neighbourhoods, slashed across by endless freeways that have destroyed any community spirit that may have once existed, and so on … endlessly'.

This form of urbanisation is not the kind of haphazard assemblage of urban fragments that is often associated with urban sprawl, but a well-structured extension of the settlement area. It spreads out over much of the Los Angeles region, from Granada Hills and the City of San Fernando in the north-west portion of the San Fernando Valley to Montebello and Monterey Park in the San Gabriel Valley, and to Lakewood and Cerritos in south-eastern Los Angeles County. These areas, which have long been seen and celebrated as typical west-coast suburbs, and which are familiar to many people in other parts of the world from Hollywood films and soap operas, have experienced astonishing changes to everyday life. They no longer form remote catchment areas oriented towards one urban centre, as its inhabitants may work in sites all across the Los Angeles region. As a result of the ceaseless expansion of the region, large parts of this configuration are no longer positioned at the edge of the settlement area but find themselves in the geographical centre of the metropolis. Many of these areas have also developed their own commercial, educational and industrial bases to such an extent that they can hardly be called 'bedroom communities' any longer. The term 'suburbia' has thus become a misnomer for these areas, except for some parts in the western San Fernando Valley such as Calabasas and Woodland Hills, which still retain the lineaments of traditional North American suburbanism.

Most importantly, the social and ethnic composition of these areas has changed considerably in recent decades. During the 1950s and 1960s this was a typical white middle-class area. Today, the neighbourhoods that are assembled in the configuration of laminar urbanisation form a mosaic with qualities that are quite different from each other, in terms of ethnic and social composition, class structure, political position and economic and geographical orientation. To give some examples: Encino is predominantly white and upper-middle class, with a high concentration of Jewish residents, and is situated within the San Fernando Valley. Monterey Park is famous as an Asian-American neighbourhood and lies within the San Gabriel Valley, while Lakewood is situated in the Los Angeles Basin and has a lower middle-class, primarily white and Latino population (see Waldie 1997).

## EXURBIA

Often directly adjacent to the areas of laminar urbanisation is a configuration that we call exurban. In North America, the term exurbanisation is used to describe a process of peripheral urbanisation that is characterised by large swathes of open land and areas of agricultural production (Nelson et al. 2007). In Los Angeles, densification has changed the characteristics of these rapidly growing areas in the last two decades. They are no longer sparsely settled areas where agricultural production is dominant, but share many characteristics of laminar urbanisation. Major centralities are largely absent, with the exception of the two county seats Riverside and San Bernardino. Moreover, the regular pattern of urbanisation is often interrupted by huge zones where logistics and industrial production take place. The population is generally less affluent, mainly consisting of lower-middle class and working-class residents, some of whom also live under precarious conditions. Here almost half the residents are Latinos and there is also a relatively high percentage of African American residents who have moved into the area to escape the difficult conditions in South Central Los Angeles.

This zone has undergone some of the highest foreclosure rates in the nation during the fallout from the subprime crisis of 2008 and 2009 (Molina 2016). As a result, these areas are strongly affected by logistic, socioeconomical and everyday peripheralisation, aggravated by their great distance away from major regional centralities. Many people are thus long-distance commuters who spend hours a day driving on the freeways. The affordability of housing is a main reason for moving to these areas, which for some people seems to justify their long-distance commutes.

By far the largest part of the exurban configuration is located in the eastern part the region, in the two counties of San Bernardino and Riverside, both situated directly adjacent to the core area of laminar urbanisation. Driving east from the San Gabriel valley, you see that the endless laminar landscape gradually changes after Pomona. The area becomes visibly less affluent, the urban fabric is less dense and more porous, the size and the condition of the houses decreases, the lawns in the front yards are less green and the public spaces and amenities are worse. Many work in the huge warehouses and the big-box stores that cluster in this area in places such as Banning and Beaumont. Yet it is still quite common for workers to commute from exurban areas to jobs in Los Angeles or Orange County. Freeways and the Metrolink commuter rail system connect these remote areas to other areas in the region.

Even more remote are the places north of the San Bernardino Mountains in the arid Victor Valley, which has the Southern California Logistics Airport as its largest employer. The most western part of the exurban configuration is the somewhat isolated urban island of Palmdale and Lancaster close to the Mojave Desert. There, people routinely commute to low-paying service jobs in the San Fernando Valley and even to the Los Angeles Basin itself.

## POST-PROLETARIAN

This large, nearly contiguous configuration originated as a variant of laminar urbanisation but followed a very different pathway from that of the other parts of this configuration. Starting in 1940, it became a working-class African American neighbourhood close to the main Fordist industrial hub in South Central Los Angeles. It has since been transformed into a post-proletarian configuration when the factories in this area closed down in the depression of the 1980s and early 1990s.

The heart of this area is Watts, which is incorporated into the City of Los Angeles, and the City of Compton, one of the poorest towns in the whole of Southern California. Both communities are known for their intensive struggles with poverty and gang activity as well as for their dynamic culture. Compton has a reputation for toughness and is also well known as the place from which arose N.W.A. (Niggaz Wit Attitude), one of the first and most influential West Coast gangsta rap groups, whose song 'Straight Outta Compton' celebrates the hard edge of the metropolis while castigating the police and condemning police brutality. Watts is famous as the site of the sculptural towers created by artist Simon Rodia as well as its arts centre. Watts was also the location of the riots of 1965.

Many of the residents of this area used to depend for their livelihood upon the factories of southeast Los Angeles, such as steel and car manufacturing plants and tire companies. But in the 1970s and 1980s most of those plants closed down, leaving residents in a precarious situation. Union jobs, which had previously lifted families out of the working class and into the middle class, disappeared and have still not been replaced by new employment opportunities (Laslett 2012). This has set in motion a process of socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation and marginalisation. Trapped in a territory with no jobs, without perspectives, without adequate public transportation to travel to workplaces and centralities, and as their incomes plummeted or disappeared altogether, many families left the area. Much of the instability that fostered the growth of the gangs in South Central can be traced to this dramatic shift in economic stability and its effects on the community (Peralta 2008). A major wave of crack cocaine use set off a turf war between the two primary gangs of the area, the Crips and the Bloods, sparking off a conflict which led to the murder of thousands of young men. The police were the third party in this war, and police routinely beat and killed young black youth (Kelley 1996: 184). In 1991 Los Angeles police officers were videotaped beating a black detainee, Rodney King. One year later, the four officers were acquitted of the crime. This triggered the biggest civil upheaval in the history of the USA, during which 53 people were killed and 2,000 injured. The zone of conflict reached far beyond the confines of South Central, even into relatively affluent areas (see e.g. Davis 1998).

The aftermath of the Rodney King upheaval left the entire metropolis in a shambles. In the years that followed many African American families left South Central and moved to peripheral exurban areas in San Fernando and Riverside. Though there were many official efforts to ameliorate the situation, the most profound positive change seemed to have been brought about by the truce between the Crips and the Bloods. As a result, there was an abatement of the crack cocaine epidemic and by 2000 neighbourhoods that had once been engulfed in gang warfare were relatively peaceful once again. When migrants from Latin America moved into this area, many observers predicted a rise in racial tension between African Americans and Latin Americans. However, even though recent migrants have put pressure on wages and compete with African Americans for jobs, none of these dire predictions have been fulfilled. In recent years gentrification processes have started to affect the north of the configuration as a result of the urban transformation of Downtown Los Angeles, and also rin relation to the expansion of the University of Southern California's campus.

Though this configuration could be said to be at an extreme social distance from the configuration of the elite rich, there is actually quite a close connection, as many people from South Central—especially Latinas—find employment in such places as Pacific Palisades and Beverly Hills as cleaners, nannies and gardeners, so that many lines of connectivity from elite rich areas to the post-proletariat area do exist, in spite of enormous differences in income level, living space and educational opportunities between them.

Post-proletarian urbanisation. Watts, 2013

## ELITE RICH

The last configuration I describe here is what Banham called the privileged enclaves of the foothills—the zone of the elite rich. This zone seams the two relatively dense urban core areas that structure the region—the cosmopolitan urban area in Los Angeles County and the multilayered patchwork urbanisation in Orange County. At the core of the region, the elite rich areas are most closely associated with the west side of Los Angeles County, stretching from Malibu to the northern sections of Santa Monica and arching through Brentwood and Westwood before reaching over the hills to Encino and turning north to Woodland Hills and Calabasas. Malibu and Santa Monica are preferred locations for show business people, but many other professionals reside there as well. Many of the wealthy who live in these areas rarely venture into other zones of the region.

Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach, along with the quite politically conservative areas of Palos Verde, Rolling Hills and Rolling Hills Estates where many banking and business professionals live, form another wealthy enclave in the southern part of Los Angeles County. Many of these neighbourhoods were created during the 1950s and 1960s when the aerospace industry was flourishing in the region. Though the aerospace industry has suffered a serious decline, the residential pattern remains intact. The large, gated community called Rolling Hills Estate is notable for its strict privacy rules, and to a certain degree it has provided a template for these types of enclaves in Southern California and across the USA.

The wealthy zones of Orange County form the last component of the elite rich configuration. Of these, Newport Beach is arguably the most privileged site, being located close to the wide variety of centralities in the neighbouring municipalities of Costa Mesa and Irvine, and it has even become a centrality in its own right. The entirety of southern Orange County can largely be classified as being in the elite rich configuration, given its proximity to the hills and the beaches. Laguna Beach, San Clemente, Mission Viejo and San Juan Capistrano are all quite far away from the urban hustle and bustle, and yet all these areas are connected to one another as well as with various other configurations by the central connector of Los Angeles; the freeway system.

Exurbanisation. San Bernardino, 2023

## CONCLUSION: FROM URBAN EXTENSION TO URBAN INTENSIFICATION

This urban portrait shows that the Greater Los Angeles region can be represented by six main urban configurations. The configurations of cosmopolitan urban and multi-layered patchwork urbanisation can be seen as the two major urban core areas, both characterised by a rich collection of centralities that are distributed over the territory. Adjacent to these two core areas, we identified the zone of rich elites in the foothills and close to the beaches, which comprises quite different social milieus and urban forms. In between these configurations, laminar urbanisation extends over the planes and the valleys, forming a kind of post-suburbia, very different from the image of the classic white middle-class North American suburb. It is still embedded in the material orthogonal grid of roads that determines laminar urbanisation, and it is still mainly inhabited by middle class people, but it is a mosaic of very diverse ethnic and cultural groups. Between Downtown LA and the former industrial areas at the Pacific Coast, a large

post-proletarian zone has consolidated which was historically the main territory of Los Angeles's African-American working class. An extensive exurban zone at the geographical peripheries is inhabited mainly by lower middle-class people with a relatively large proportion of Latinos and African Americans. This zone has become much denser in recent decades, resembling less the relatively sparsely settled agricultural landscapes usually associated with the term 'exurban' in North America, then areas of laminar urbanisation.

These characteristics make Los Angeles a very different territory than it was thirty years ago. It is still a vast, polycentric urban territory, and is still characterised by relatively low-density areas connected by freeways. But it has experienced an astonishing economic and sociospatial transformation. On the one hand, globalisation made Los Angeles one of the world's most ethnically diverse metropolises with a great variety of immigrant communities. On the other, the massive expansion of world city functions, producer services and technopoles induced a radical transformation of some urban areas into spaces for the reproduction of the metropolitan elites.

This has contributed to a 'rediscovery of the urban' that had begun some decades later than in many other Western metropolitan areas. New forms of social exclusion and various processes of gentrification and upgrading have resulted in the displacement of increasing numbers of lower-income people from centrally located neighbourhoods (see e.g. Lin 2019; Huante 2019; Roy 2019). Most spectacular is the development of Downtown LA into a fully commodified centre of the headquarter economy with shopping, leisure and cultural facilities and an adjacent arc of rapidly gentrifying low-income neighbourhoods. It may thus serve as a textbook example of the incorporation of urban differences. Processes of urban upgrading and intensification are visible in Venice and Santa Monica, and in the development of the various centralities in Orange County; more recently gentrification is being reported from many locations across Los Angeles, particularly in the vicinity of Pasadena and Glendale, and also in Orange County. Greater Los Angeles is still an extended polycentric metropolis, but urban intensification and socioeconomic polarisation have profoundly transformed this territory during the first decades of the 21st century.

The title of this chapter refers deliberatly to Jennifer Robinson's book title *Ordinary Cities*.

I would like to thank Rob Sullivan who contributed to an earlier version of this chapter, and Ozan Karaman who participated at the mapping interviews and the elaboration of the urban configurations of Los Angeles.

# PART III

# TOWARDS A NEW VOCABULARY OF URBANISATION PROCESSES

Istanbul; vestiges of gecekondus in the urban fabric. Alibeyköy, 2012

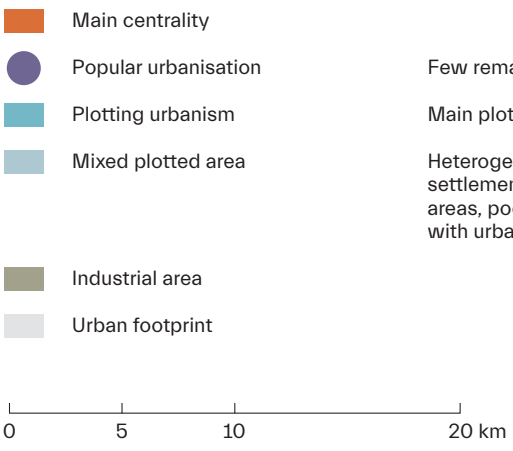
Lagos; public square. Makoko, 2013

# POPULAR URBANISATION

# CONCEPTUALISING URBANISATION PROCESSES BEYOND INFORMALITY

Mexico City; Santa Catarina, 2013

# POPULAR URBANISATION



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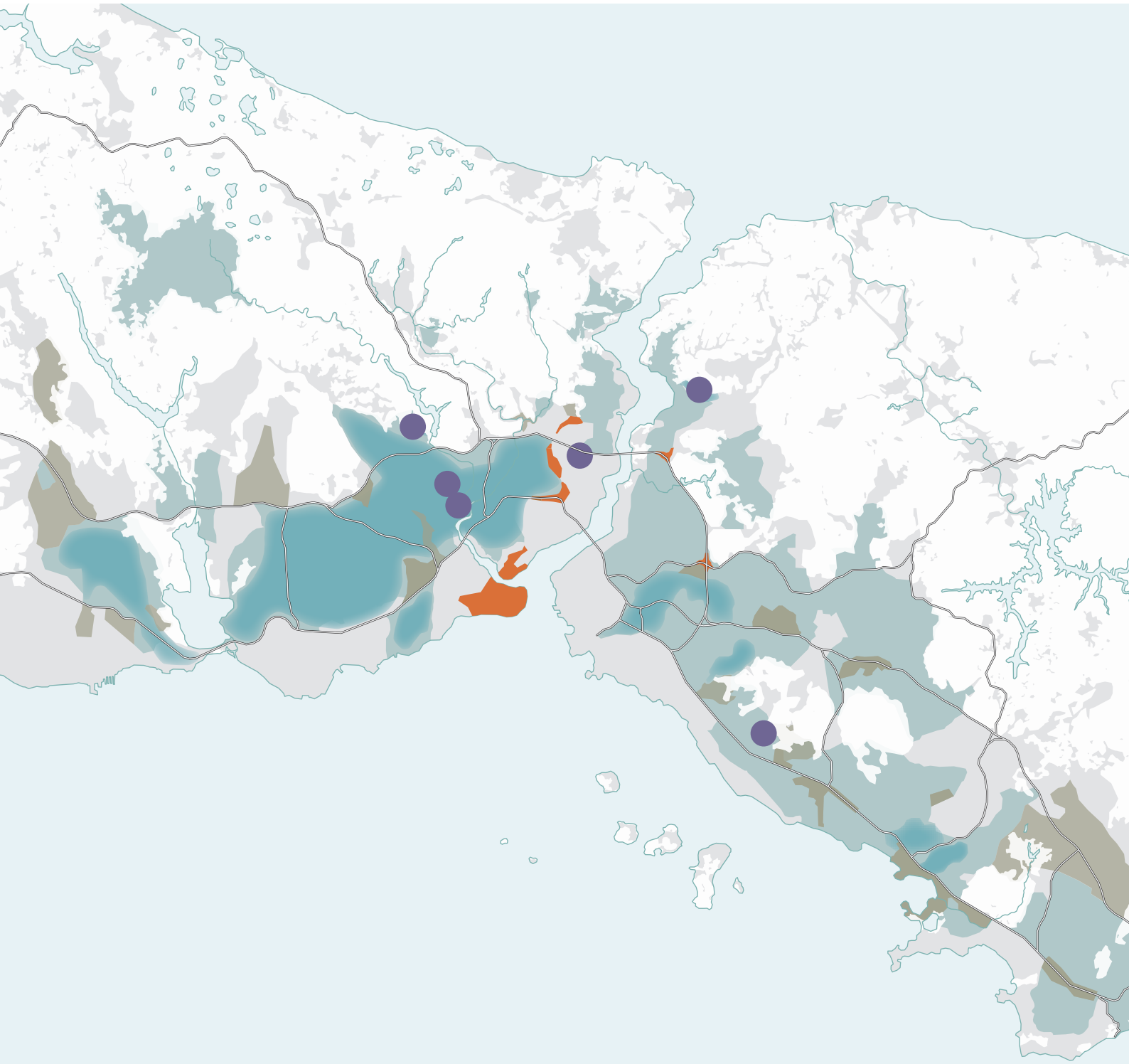

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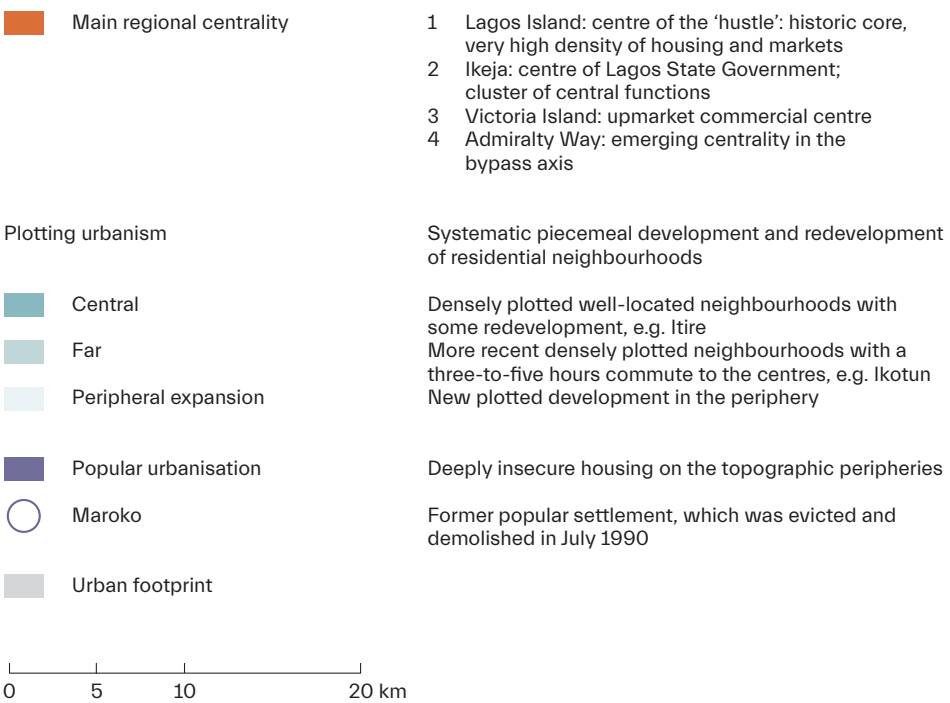

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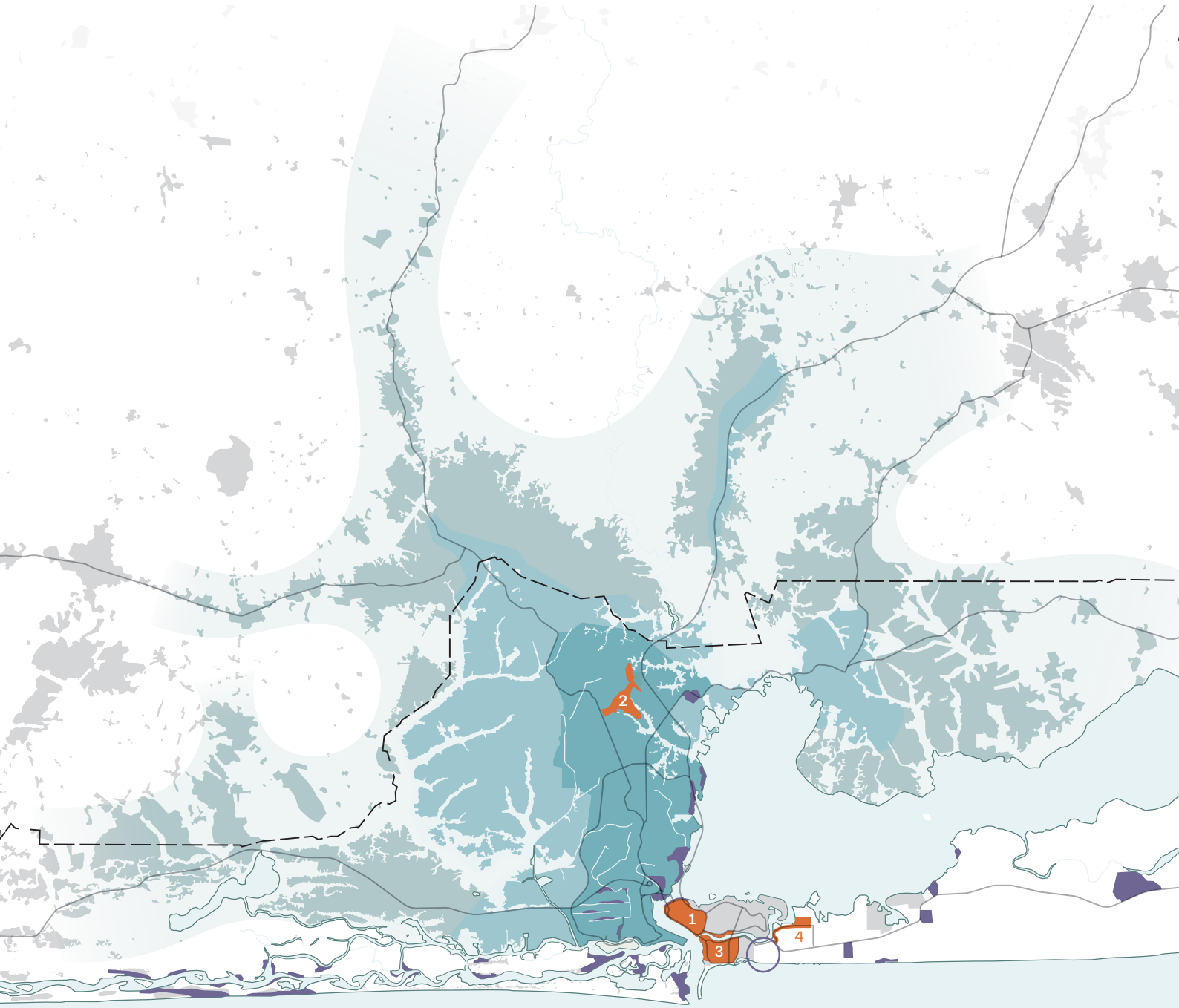

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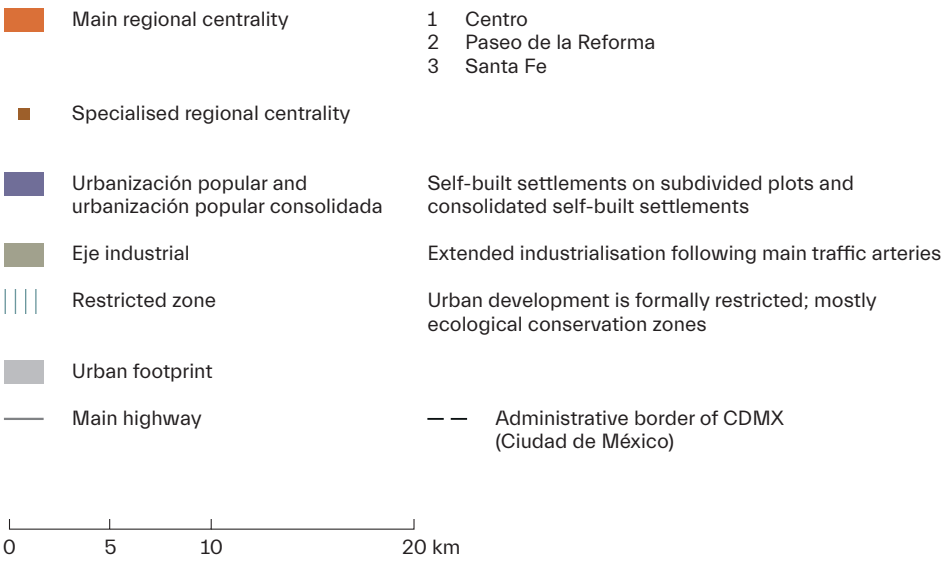
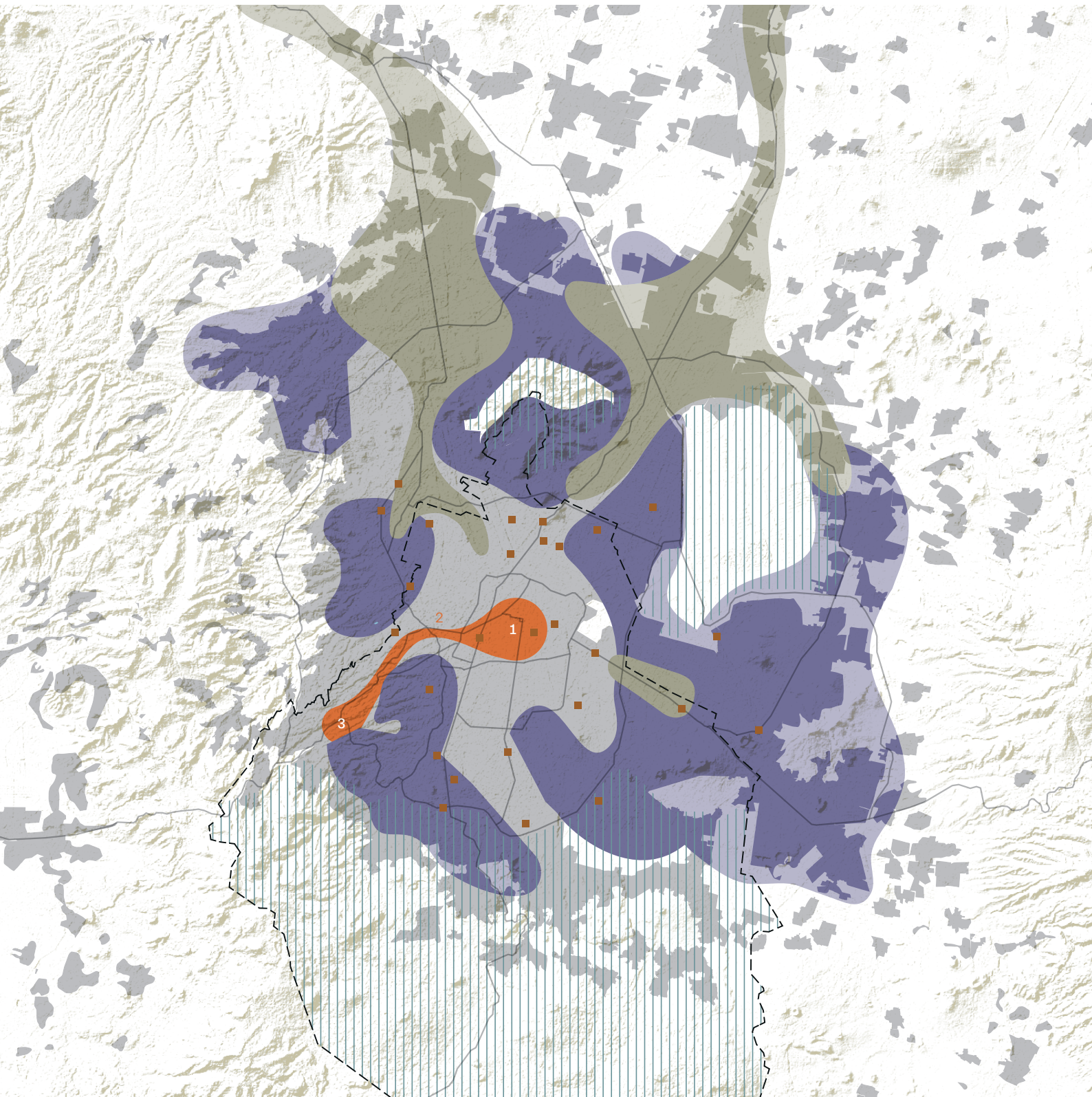


# MEXICO CITY



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# URBANISATION WITH AND BY THE PEOPLE

This chapter introduces the concept of popular urbanisation and uses it to define a specific urbanisation process based on collective initiatives, various forms of self-organisation and the engagement and labour of mostly poor or low-income people, which has become an important part of the everyday reality of many cities around the globe. We understand popular urbanisation as the strategy by which an urban territory is produced, transformed and appropriated by people. While this process is often subsumed under broad concepts such as 'urban informality', 'incremental urbanism' or 'peripheral urbanisation', we suggest that it may be helpful to distinguish popular urbanisation from similar urbanisation processes as primarily led by the people themselves, and one in which commodification and state agencies play minor roles. As popular urbanisation unfolds in diverse ways depending on the wider urban context, specific political constellations and actions, it results in a variety of spatial outcomes and temporal trajectories.

The concept of popular urbanisation focuses on the actions of people involved in the construction and maintenance of their own houses and their neighbourhoods. Its popular aspect refers to a wide range of actors producing urban space, mostly without obvious leadership or overarching ideology, but with a shared interest in producing urban space for themselves as well as their community. These social groups often fall into categories such as kinship, friendship, place of origin, religion or political affiliation. They appropriate and produce urban space through a wide range of collective action, starting from the interaction of individuals to neighbourhood coordination up to high-level collective mobilisations. In meeting popular aspirations to produce and preserve urban neighbourhoods, the spatial practices of people generate both material outcomes and deep local knowledge. These daily practices and experiences result in other spaces, which have the potential to offer an alternative to hegemonic visions and strategies of the production of urban space.

Popular urbanisation is thus a strategy through which urban territories are produced, transformed and appropriated by the people. In proposing this concept, we do not intend to idealise collective efforts and projects, as they, too, are saturated with self-interest and realised in power hierarchies (Simone, 2014). But we suggest moving the analytical perspective towards a dynamic understanding of the social production of urban space to shed light on how these spaces emerge, how they are transformed over time and how they differ from spaces produced through other related but distinct urbanisation processes.

We developed the concept of popular urbanisation through a collective comparative analysis of Lagos, Mexico City, Istanbul and Kolkata, which is not treated in this chapter (see Chapter 4). This text relies on an abundant set of theoretical resources and empirical data, particularly on fieldwork in Ecatepec, Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, Valle de Chalco Solidaridad, Santo Domingo and Chimalhuacán in Mexico City (Streule 2018, 2020); Badia and Ajegunle in Lagos (Sawyer 2016) and Başıbüyük (Karaman 2013a, 2014), Zeytinburnu and Eyüp in Istanbul.

We begin with a critical review of some important existing concepts that could be used to analyse popular urbanisation and focus on the debate on urban informality, evaluating its limits as well as its critical and innovative reappropriations. We then discuss the alternative concept of *urbanización popular*, as defined by Latin American scholars, which has proved to be particularly fruitful for our analysis and conceptualisation. In a conceptual move, we decontextualise this concept to construct our own definition of popular urbanisation, based on our own comparative study. Finally, we recontextualise the concept, applying it to the three case studies of Mexico City, Lagos and Istanbul. In the main part of the chapter we examine how people organise themselves in these three contexts to build, occupy and secure their housing, their neighbourhoods and their everyday space through intricate webs of negotiation with each other, as well as with landowners and state actors, to win incremental gains in infrastructural provision, facilities and security of tenure. In the last section we outline the main characteristics of popular urbanisation to put these analytical insights of our comparative study into a wider discussion. In offering the concept of popular urbanisation for further examination, we seek to contribute to the collective development of a decentred vocabulary of urbanisation. This is therefore a revisable and open concept.

## POVERTY OF TERMS

When we started our comparative project we soon found some striking similarities between urbanisation processes in low-income neighbourhoods of Mexico City, Istanbul, Lagos and Kolkata. We discerned a process that is based on self-organisation and collective action, which includes aspects of informality, illegality and social struggle, and proceeds incrementally by constant improvement of houses and neighbourhoods. As we applied a range of existing concepts to this process we were confronted with many ambiguities and shortcomings. 'Slum', one of the most common terms used to delineate areas with poor living conditions, describes only a material form and does not encompass the dynamic aspect of urbanisation. Furthermore, it has become synonymous with poverty and precarity, and its use has been roundly criticised for contributing to the marginalisation of such spaces and obscuring the diversity of urban experiences within them (Rao 2006; Gilbert 2007; Huchzermeyer 2011a; Varley 2013). We followed Roy's critique of the term, based on the position of subaltern urbanism, and sought to account for heterogeneous urbanisms that 'cannot be contained within the familiar metonymic categories of megacity or slum' (2011: 231). Similarly, the terms *gecekondu* or *favela,* which are regional terms for Turkish and Brazilian experiences respectively, share many of these pejorative characteristics. Gecekondu literally means 'built overnight' and thus gives at least some indication of the starting point of the process. The Portuguese term favela can be traced back to the late 19th century and basically means self-built (Valladares 2006). However, terms and concepts like 'auto-construction' and 'self-help housing' that refer to building one's own house with little or no professional help, are highly context specific. While they are relevant in Mexico City and are also observed in Istanbul, auto-construction is not a defining characteristic in Lagos.

A range of other concepts, which do not express the specificity of the process we identified through our comparative research yet highlight certain important aspects of it, also informed our conceptualisation. For instance, as we discuss in the following sections in more detail, we drew substantially on the idea of 'incremental urbanism' (e.g. Turner 1976; McFarlane 2011; Dovey 2014) to grasp the characteristic step-by-step building process of popular urbanisation and thus to rethink the specific challenges that this emergent dynamics holds for practitioners like planners or architects. In a similar way, 'occupancy urbanism', a term introduced by Benjamin (2008), helps us to understand the complex relationship between inhabitants of popular settlements on the one hand, and state actors and large land developers on the other. Benjamin says that in India this relationship results in highly politicised forms of urbanisms. Likewise, the concept of 'insurgent citizenship' proposed by Holston (2009) helps to address questions of illegality and land occupation using the lens of citizenship. He shows how new forms of democratic citizenship are emerging from urban peripheries of São Paulo, and brings to the fore two important

aspects we are discussing in detail in the following sections: that is, territorial regulation and experiences of solidarity in everyday life. Caldeira (2017) recently proposed the concept of 'peripheral urbanisation' to characterise southern urbanisms. It provides a multidimensional definition of urbanisation, grasping the production of space in different urban areas and bringing together a wide range of experiences. This overarching concept, which characterises 'a set of interrelated processes' (Caldeira 2017: 4), addresses questions similar to those we address in our own project. Therefore, we discuss this concept in the final part of our chapter.

Finally, we also engaged with the widely applied concept of 'urban informality'. Introduced in the 1970s and originally applied to designate the labour conditions of poor immigrants working in street markets and undertaking all sorts of precarious jobs, this concept contrasts the informal aspect of urbanisation with the highly regulated 'formal economy' that generates a regular and secure income. The term informal was soon extended beyond the field of labour to designate the production of housing and finally even a certain way of life. However, as a scientific concept, and even more so as a tool for policy-makers, planners and state agencies, the concept of informality has long faced widespread critique for its binary conception of formal versus informal, its lack of differentiation of the various ways in which informality emerges and develops and its focus on one aspect of the regulation of urbanisation to the exclusion of others. Thus, these initial approaches were, as Kudva puts it, 'splintered in discursive realms' (2009: 1615), hampering the understanding of the different aspects of informality and their interrelationships. While some scholars have questioned the formal/informal dichotomy and highlighted linkages and continuities between the two (e.g. Papola 1980), others have noted that urban informality should not be reduced to marginality, but rather be seen as a process that is fully, albeit unevenly, integrated into society (e.g. Perlman 2010).

In recent years postcolonial scholars have reclaimed the concept of urban informality from its dualistic origins in an attempt to disrupt hegemonic ways of thinking, knowing and doing by emphasising diversity, plurality, complexity and fluidity, and they have called for scholars to differentiate features existing *within* informality (e.g. AlSayyad 2004; Soliman 2004; Roy 2005). Informality has thus been interpreted as a 'complex and shifting phenomenon' (Huchzermeyer 2011a: 75) with many different facets that change over time (Gilbert 2007). It has been seen as a 'complex continuum of legality and illegality' and even understood as an 'idiom of urbanisation' (Roy 2005, 2009). Some scholars have analysed the broad spectrum of actors involved in urban informality, including state actors, wealthy people and the middle classes (e.g. McFarlane and Waibel 2012), while others have shown that informality is not only widespread but is also capable of being organised and effective (e.g. Simone 2004b; Denning, 2010). Another important move was to give a political interpretation of certain instances of informality, recognising them as acts of everyday resistance that are quite distinct from the large-scale mobilisations that have received the most attention in these discussions so far (e.g. Castells 1983; Benjamin 2008; Fawaz 2009; Kudva 2009; Bayat 2010).

These critical explorations, appropriations and revisions show that the concept of urban informality embraces a wide and complex set of aspects and processes. While postcolonial critiques help to understand internal differentiation, and while it remains a useful term that speaks across disciplines, the very reach and breadth of the concept of informality does not allow for a precise definition of an urbanisation process. In our own research we identified a number of clearly distinct urbanisation processes in which informality plays an important role (see e.g. the concept of 'plotting urbanism' discussed below). Furthermore, the concept of urban informality still remains one-dimensional and highlights a certain form of regulation of the urban process. It is unclear how other important aspects of the production of space, such as social composition (e.g. social class or income level), the dominance of individualised or collective forms of social organisation or the degree to which the production of space is commodified or self-organised intersect with informality. Therefore, very different urban constellations can be subsumed under the term informality, such as collective squatting in Delhi (Datta 2012) or the (partly illegal) individual construction of expensive mansions in Belgrade (Diener *et al.* 2012). For all these reasons, we propose to go beyond the concept of informality to develop a more differentiated and nuanced understanding of urbanisation and to conceptualise more specific urbanisation processes.

# URBANIZACIÓN POPULAR: A NEW VANTAGE POINT

A starting point for our new comparative conceptualisation was the term urbanización popular, which is used in Mexico and in other parts of Latin America. This term seemed to be particularly useful for several reasons. First, it is directly linked to urbanisation. The Spanish term *urbanización* has an active connotation: initially coined and defined by Catalan urban planner Ildefonso Cerdà in 1867, the term designates the production and extension of settlement areas and can thus be used to indicate the active production of new neighbourhoods (see Sevilla-Buitrago 2014). Secondly, the term popular refers not only to the urban poor in general; it has a strong social class connotation and is used here to designate those who are involved in the process of urbanisation. A literal translation of the term 'urbanización popular' thus would be 'urbanisation by the people'. This term comes very close to the idea we wanted to express and we found it a valuable and inspiring basis for our comparative conceptualisation. To make it useful for our analysis we first had to explore its definition in the Latin American context and then to revise and rebuild it by confronting it with our own comparative results. In the following section we look at the Latin American understanding of urbanisation processes in general, and specifically what it means to Mexican scholars, with the aim of developing a broad understanding of the terms with which we may comprehend urbanización popular as a 'contradictory form of self-organisation of a society' and thus also as a 'disposition of the subjects in search of survival and modes of articulation outside the hegemonic formal system' (García Canclini 2013: 35).[1]

The concept 'urbanización popular' has been widely used in Latin America since the late 1980s to analyse the social dynamics in marginalised urban areas (e.g. Navarro and Moctezuma 1989; Schteingart 1989; 1996; Duhau 1992, 1998; Azuela 1993; Vite and Rico 2001; Duhau and Giglia 2008; Moctezuma 2012). Along with other concepts like *'informalisación'* or *'favelisação'*, it is one of the most frequently used terms to designate the process of the self-production of neighbourhoods by their inhabitants that plays such a paradigmatic role in Latin America (e.g. Connolly 2009, 2013; Perlman 2010; Salazar 2012; Hernández and Becerra 2017). In early conceptualisations the prevailing understanding of urbanización popular was very similar to a widespread definition of informality, as the following quote exemplifies: 'A very large number of families solve their housing problem by acquiring land under irregular conditions and self-producing their habitat. This is what we call urbanización popular. This urbanisation process takes place in the form of subdivisions and irregular land operations on the margins of the officially recognised urban area; in this way, the population has access to land at a lower price than on the regular market, but it also means lower material conditions' (Duhau 1992: 48). Conventional definitions of the term 'urbanización popular' echo to a certain extent the well-known debate between structuralist and functionalist approaches towards urban informality. From a historical structuralist perspective, dependency theory scholars conceptualise urbanización popular under the aspect of the reproduction of cheap labour and uneven capitalist development. From a legal functionalist perspective, developmentalist scholars emphasise the entrepreneurial activities of people through auto-construction and the creation of informal jobs, and identify the state as the essential regulatory actor (for a wider discussion of these different perspectives, see Rakowski 1994; González 2012). In contrast to those classic understandings, neo-Marxist urban scholars Navarro and Moctezuma (1989) developed a more dynamic conceptualisation of urbanización popular, which was inspired by Castells' (1977, 1983) concepts of 'collective consumption' and 'urban social movements'. Based on their empirical research in Mexico City, they outlined two specific characteristics of urbanización popular: the institution of a collective working day *(faena)* and the emerging urban social movements and their struggles for basic services and land titles *(movimiento urbano popular)*. In both aspects, they argue, territorial relations are constitutive 'since in the specific urban context … [the poor] are the ones who are able to organise themselves collectively in pursuit of their common interests' (Navarro and Moctezuma 1989: 84). Despite these analytical efforts to elaborate this concept, the established understanding of urbanización popular has faced continuing critiques for failing to address subjectivities, particularly from the perspective of cultural studies. Thus, Hiernaux and Lindón (2000: 21) argue: 'Until recently, urban studies have made few distinctions between the residents of peripheral areas. The concept of *'urbanización popular'*, which has been used to characterise the process of advancing towards peripheral urbanisation by disadvantaged groups, does not offer enough clues to analyse the difference between groups, according to the ways of seeing the world, the culture and lifestyles in the periphery. It is from the rise of so-called 'urban cultural studies' that a further distinction is made as to who are residents of the city in terms of their subjectivity.' As this short discussion shows, the term 'urbanización popular' is widely used in the Latin American context and it meets many criteria that we want to meet; it offers therefore a very useful starting point for our analysis. We were especially interested in the term 'popular' as it has a range of connotations in

Spanish, especially in referring to 'the people' and to social class. However, its wide and sometimes contradictory definitions, which often make it almost synonymous with urban informality, blur the concept of urbanización popular. Furthermore, to make it applicable to a wider range of examples, it has also to be decontextualised from the specific Latin American situation to which it is tied. To give this term a more precise meaning we opted for a transposition and adopted the English translation 'popular urbanisation' to indicate the distance we place between the inherited understandings and definitions of the term and our new comparative conceptualisation, while at the same time explicitly acknowledging the roots of the term and the concept.

Departing from this critical understanding of urbanización popular, we adapted and enriched the concept in the course of our comparison. In our definition, we maintain both the focus on urban social movements and the emphasis on collective work, but recognise the need to address subjectivities, as suggested in recent Latin American debates. Moreover, we strive to move beyond postcolonial critiques of the urban informality debate by stressing the multidimensional and dynamic understanding of urbanisation processes. Thus, we focus on the central role of everyday experiences and on the agency of subjects in their production of space. This theoretical perspective also directs our attention to the residents' aspirations to claim urbanity and centrality and thus the right to the city. 'Popular' designates for us the spatial practices of people that generate different urban experiences and challenge the vision of hegemonic urban space by producing territories of resistance (see Zibechi 2012; Schwarz and Streule 2016; Streule and Schwarz 2019).

# MEXICO CITY, LAGOS, ISTANBUL: DIFFERENT URBAN EXPERIENCES IN CONVERSATION

The process of popular urbanisation unfolds in different ways in the specific urban contexts of Mexico City, Lagos and Istanbul. Consequently, we framed it as the result of the complex entangled histories of diverse actors. As will become evident in the following sections, it is a highly varied process that has also changed significantly within each urban area over the past decades. How could we bring such a variety of experiences in different urban contexts into conversation with each other? How is it possible to compare seemingly incommensurable experiences from different places without omitting their specific qualities and intrinsic characteristics? We found inspiration from a variety of comparative theoretical and empirical engagements with urban processes across space and time (see Chapter 2). In such comparisons 'elements of the past gain new meanings for the present, produce new futures for the past and open up a space of action towards possible futures from the present' (Robinson 2013: 664). To respect the multidimensionality of urbanisation processes, we built on Lefebvre's three-dimensional theory of the production of space (Lefebvre 1991 [1975]) and developed an understanding of urbanisation that highlights how social space is produced through material interactions, territorial regulation and everyday experience. We cannot go into the details of our theoretical considerations here, but the most important aspect of our approach is to conceive of these three dimensions as being linked to each other through dialectical relationships (see Chapter 1; see also Schmid 2008, 2022).

The specificity of the concept of popular urbanisation can be fully understood only on the basis of a relational conception of urbanisation that analyses an urban territory as the result of the interplay of several distinct urbanisation processes. Thus, in the course of our comparative project we identified and defined two other urbanisation processes that are related to but clearly distinct from popular urbanisation: 'plotting urbanism' and 'mass housing urbanisation'. Plotting urbanism is a process in which an urban area is developed in a piecemeal way, plot by plot, wherein commodification and market mechanisms play a key role (see Chapter 13). Plotting urbanism shares many of the features of popular urbanisation, such as informality, illegality and an incremental building process; however, it is dominated by commodification, and the mobilisation and collective efforts of inhabitants are significantly

weaker than in popular urbanisation. Mass housing urbanisation, another related concept, entails heavy intervention by the state, often in combination with the powerful business interests promoted by private developers and financial institutions and it can be understood as an alternative and in many ways opposite model to that of popular urbanisation (see Chapter 16). Popular urbanisation, then, stands out as a process that is not dominated by the state, like mass housing urbanisation, and it is also not strongly determined by market mechanisms and commodification (even if these factors may play some role in it).

## MATERIAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE URBAN TERRITORY

Popular urbanisation was the predominant process of urbanisation in Mexico City as well as in Istanbul in the second half of the 20th century (see Chapters 7 and 10). At the turn of the century, areas of popular urbanisation constituted about 60 per cent of the urban area of Mexico City (Connolly, 2009) and large parts of Istanbul. More recently, however, urbanisation changed dramatically in both places. Whereas in Istanbul hardly any new gecekondus are built anymore, popular urbanisation still takes place in Mexico City, particularly in some peripheral areas (e.g. Hastings 2008; Gilbert and de Jong 2015; Vega 2015; Streule 2018). In contrast, popular urbanisation never reached the same importance and scale in Lagos; it was always marginal and largely overshadowed by 'plotting urbanism' as the dominant process of space production (Sawyer 2014, 2016; see also Chapter 8).

How can we explain these different pathways of popular urbanisation? All three case studies are made up of large urban regions and major political, cultural, financial and commercial centres which exert great influence beyond their regional hinterlands. They have all experienced heavy migration for many decades, leading to massive population growth rates, which have increased dramatically the demand for housing. Whereas Turkey and Mexico, starting from the 1940s, followed a developmentalist model of industrialisation that initially drew people to the main urban centres for manufacturing and services, Lagos attracted people mainly because of its role as the political, cultural and commercial centre of Nigeria and because it housed one of the busiest ports in West Africa. Despite this massive urban growth, there have been few state-led housing programmes in Lagos, while in Mexico City and Istanbul the state mainly targeted groups that were already relatively affluent or were in formal employment (Buğra 1998: 308; Özdemir 2011; Çoban 2012: 86; Streule 2017a). Thus, popular urbanisation developed as an alternative pathway and enabled millions of people to get access to housing. Our analysis suggests that this should not be seen as an isolated urban phenomenon: it has to be situated in the context of the transformation of the entire urban territory and its complex interrelations of social, economic and political processes.

In all three cases a broad variety of actors is involved in the process of popular urbanisation. In Mexico City the first popular settlements were constructed by the migrants themselves, as the broad body of literature on this topic shows (for an overview, see Connolly 2013). In the initial stage,

Istanbul; gecekondus. Kartal, 2014

groups of people invaded and settled on *ejido* land with the previous agreement of the collective owners of the land, the *ejidatarios*. Middlemen (coyotes) often played a vital role in getting the consent of these landowners and informally selling the former farmland plot by plot for a commission (Cymet 1992; Jones and Ward 1998; Gutmann 2000). In the following few years, residents had to deal with many hardships and they organised to install and gradually improve services like electricity, water and drainage. They also cooperated with each other to raise money to construct schools and churches and to get the streets paved (Schteingart 1989; Azuela and Tomas 1996; Hiernaux and Lindón 2000). The self-built shelters were initially very basic as well, often being not more than a single room built with flimsy materials such as wooden planks, metal sheets or adobe bricks. Over the years, people improved their housing and living conditions by investing in more durable materials, incrementally expanding their homes and adding more rooms and floors, as in the classic and well-researched example of Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl (Ribbeck et al. 2002; see also Bazant 2003; Andrade Narváez 2011).

As we observed, these self-help housing strategies basically remain the same today. Confronted with the notorious absence of a pro-active housing policy to provide sufficient affordable housing, the second and third generations of people living in popular settlements are currently building on newly subdivided plots in remote areas of Mexico City, such as the municipalities of Chimalhuacán, Chicoloapan and Nicolás Romero. During the past decades, however, the close relationship between popular urbanisation and rural–urban migration changed; today, relocation from older settlements, together with circular migration to and from the USA, play a much more prominent role in this process (Streule 2018). As most of Mexico City's inhabitants cannot afford or are not eligible to participate in the national mortgage finance system, they often rely on remittances from family members who have migrated to the USA as a major source of the funding for construction materials and to pay the deposit for the plot *(enganche)* (Mendoza and Bartolo 2012; Streule 2018).

Additionally, government-related clientelist organisations, such as the well-known mass organisations Antorcha Popular or the Frente Popular Francisco Villa, have also intervened aggressively in these popular urbanisation processes, orchestrating land occupation and land distribution on a large scale (Vega 2015: 285). These organisations play a key role in improving today's popular neighbourhoods. Their main function, however, is to mediate between different residents, landowners and state institutions. They are hierarchically structured and have good contacts with local governments, negotiating complex clientelistic deals to acquire urban equipment and public services or to regularise land titles for their members.

We can observe a similar diversification of actors and modes of popular urbanisation in Istanbul. Each neighbourhood—and even different sections within a neighbourhood—had its own unique experience of urbanisation depending on a variety of factors; most notably, the timing of establishing the settlement, its landownership status and its specific position within the wider urban region as well as the organisation of its relationships with

Mexico City; Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, 2010

state officials. Nonetheless, some broad general contours can be identified. At the very initial stages of popular urbanisation, the dominant model was that rural migrants constructed their makeshift shacks on land that was primarily public (Şenyapılı 1998; Keyder 2005). As informal land markets developed, popular urbanisation acquired a more commercial character (Tekeli 1992; Torlak 2003: 66). By the 1980s mafia-like groups and religious and communitarian organisations were heavily involved in the parcelisation and allocation of land (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 167–168; Pérouse 2011: 62–63).

The construction strategies adopted also show a high variation, even within a given urban area, such as self-building, using hired workers or by mutual assistance within the community. These strategies also changed dramatically over time. The first generation of popular settlements in Istanbul, for example, was often built overnight by the prospective residents themselves; an experience that is reflected in the term 'gecekondu'. As commercialisation increased, small-scale construction teams led by foremen oversaw the whole process (Torlak 2003: 66). Over time, commercial private interests became more dominant at the expense of mobilisations by residents for housing and infrastructure provision. In our understanding, when commodification becomes dominant, the process of popular urbanisation turns into plotting urbanism.

Popular urbanisation has not always been successful. What is vital for the persistence of the newly established neighbourhoods is the extent to which they are able to take hold and are developed into less precarious settlements. In Istanbul and Mexico City most popular settlements have acquired a robust character over time and have decent infrastructure and sanitation. In contrast, Lagos' popular settlements have struggled to survive under very low security of tenure and they have maintained their makeshift appearance. For instance, large portions of the notorious Makoko settlement, currently the largest area of popular urbanisation in Lagos (population estimates range from 40,000 to hundreds of thousands) have been demolished and rebuilt several times in recent decades. This settlement occupies a prominent central location on water in the Lagos lagoon and its name is often used as a symbol for the 'slums of Lagos'. Maroko, which is an even larger settlement of 300,000 people, was demolished in 1990 to make land available for the private residential development of Lekki (see Agbola and Jinadu 1997). Today, this area is one of the most expensive real estate assets in Lagos. As these examples show, there are very different pathways to and many possible outcomes of popular urbanisation, ranging from demolition to consolidation. To understand them as results of the same basic process, it is necessary to analyse the specific territorial regulations that underlie, enable and guide popular urbanisation.

## STRUGGLING WITH TERRITORIAL REGULATION

The crucial precondition for popular urbanisation is to get access to land. Popular urbanisation embraces many different routes to settling—such as squatting land, constructing on legally protected land and buying illegally subdivided plots. In Mexico City, popular urbanisation mainly developed on collectively owned ejido and communal land. Ejido

Lagos; housing on stilts. Makoko, 2013

is collectively owned agricultural land established 1934 after the Mexican Revolution of 1910, which until a constitutional reform in 1992 could not be sold legally and thus constituted the largest source of land for popular urbanisation. Communal land is the collectively managed land of urban villages and belongs to Indigenous communities. Both communal and ejido land are subject to the same laws (see Cymet 1992; Azuela 1993; Siembieda 1996). Landowners and real-estate promoters often sell illegally subdivided land to newcomers (Schteingart 1989; Azuela and Tomas 1996; Jones and Ward 1998). In contrast, people in Istanbul installed themselves on public land, as the state was generally more tolerant of emerging settlements (Buğra 1998: 309; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 115). At later stages, unofficially subdivided agricultural land was used to provide popular housing (Yonder 1987; Tekeli 1992: 64).

Another way to access land is to make exposed and hostile locations, such as flood-prone areas, steep slopes or canyons habitable by improving it; examples are landfilling with residual materials in the swampy land of Lagos's Ajegunle or removing large amounts of lava rock in Mexico City's Santo Domingo. According to the different land regimes in place, the territorial regulation of the three case studies differs profoundly. Land regulation policies in Istanbul and Mexico City have undergone longstanding and well-studied trajectories (for Mexico City, see e.g. Eckstein 1977; Azuela 1993; Schteingart 1996; Salazar 2012; and for Istanbul see Tekeli 1992; Buğra, 1998; Şenyapılı 1998; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Demirtas-Milz 2013). In Lagos, in contrast, there has been less research on land regulation (e.g. Akinleye 2009; Sawyer 2016).

Land property rights were relatively clearly defined in Istanbul (ownership by local and central state, charitable foundations or private individuals) and in Mexico City (primarily ejido and communal land, and to a lesser extent, private and state-owned land). In Lagos territorial regulation is far more complex because it is constituted by the dual land systems that apply simultaneously, leading to widespread confusion and insecurity over land and title (for a detailed analysis, see Sawyer 2016). The formal procedure for obtaining an official land title in Lagos is extremely bureaucratic, time-consuming and expensive. Additionally, people who seek to build a house in Lagos have to engage with the traditional landowners. However, these transactions do not confer any security, but are necessary to settle who has the customary claim to the land. This means that a piece of land can easily have more than one claim of ownership, all with some validity, leading to frequent lengthy disputes (Aluko 2012).

One major outcome of this specific territorial regulation in Lagos is the individualisation and commodification of urbanisation leading to 'plotting urbanism'. People in areas of popular urbanisation engage in similar agreements with traditional landowners to secure access to land, but the vital difference between these and agreements in plotted neighbourhoods is that they usually have a time limit or the landowners may renege upon them, sometimes by prohibiting permanent structures from being built while they wait for the value of the land to increase (Aina 1989). The familiar tradition of portraying neighbourhoods of popular urbanisation in Lagos as slums, with the full pejorative connotations of the term, is used to justify the forced eviction of residents and the demolition of their homes (Agbola and Jinadu 1997). In brief, the Nigerian state—whether colonial, military or civilian—has acted with seeming impunity time and again against popular urbanisation, usually in collusion with traditional landowners. Therefore, there has never been a chance for these neighbourhoods to consolidate.

In contrast, Istanbul has a form of territorial regulation that has accommodated and retroactively regularised popular urbanisation for decades. Numerous laws, known as gecekondu amnesties *(gecekondu afları)*, have been passed to formalise concessions to gecekondu dwellers (see Torlak 2003; Tercan 2018). In the very early stages gecekondus were widely regarded as a 'social disaster' that was encroaching upon the city proper (Şenyapılı 1998: 308) and the immediate state response usually was to demolish them. From the early 1950s onwards, however, at a time of rapid industrialisation, gecekondu neighbourhoods became increasingly tolerated and accommodated (Torlak 2003; Şenyapılı 2004). This stage is characterised by a tight and symbiotic relationship between factories and gecekondus, manifested in their geographical proximity to each other (Tekeli 1992: 38; Esen 2011: 469). Having become tacitly accepted and formally recognised, gecekondus became increasingly commodified (Torlak 2003). In the aftermath of the military coup of 1980, policies and laws on tenure were put in place, authorising the redevelopment of plots on which gecekondus had been built with multistorey buildings (Ekinci 1998).

This resulted in the densification and commercialisation of erstwhile gecekondu neighbourhoods. As their commercial and monetary character became more dominant at this stage we have subsumed this transformation under the term 'plotting urbanism'. Today, some areas still retain their gecekondu character due to legal complications or the lack of a political initiative to implement regularisation policies. There are also some more recently constructed areas in the 1990s that have never attained legal status. Since the mid-2000s these remnants of popular urbanisation have been targeted for demolition by various redevelopment schemes, most notably with the involvement of state agencies that construct mass housing such as TOKI and KIPTAS (Lovering and Türkmen 2011; Karaman 2013a; Türkün 2014; see also Chapter 7). The history of popular urbanisation in Istanbul thus shows there has been a visible shift in its basic urban policy. For decades

the state failed to develop proactive policies to address the housing needs of low-income citizens in the public or private sector. Instead it used ad hoc measures to legalise and regulate them via successive gecekondu amnesties. This situation facilitated the rapid growth of informal land markets, favouring those who were able to participate in the earlier rounds of land occupation (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001) and the subsequent emergence of plotting urbanism as a dominant process in Istanbul. With the urban policy shift in the 2000s towards urban renewal, gecekondus ceased to be an effective option for the urban poor as a means of upward social mobility (Esen 2011: 486).

In a similar way, but with a different outcome, the pathway of popular urbanisation in Mexico City illustrates the conflicting but also entangled relation between government and a large majority of urban society (e.g. Azuela and Tomas 1996). In an effort to adapt urban policies to the ongoing urbanisation processes, the state tolerated popular urbanisation but also sought to control and regulate it. When the Federal District (the state that governs the central area of Mexico City, recently renamed CDMX) implemented restrictions on illegal subdivisions and the trade of ejido land in 1954, this redirected the process of popular urbanisation out towards adjacent federal states (Azuela 1993; Duhau 1998). In this way, new popular settlements for millions of inhabitants spread out to what were then remote, but are today relatively central locations, such as Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl or Ecatepec (Bassols and Espinosa 2011).

However, this policy did little to stop popular urbanisation in central areas, but instead gave rise to a new strategy of land invasion called *paracaidismo* (parachuting urbanisation), in which people occupied land overnight (e.g. Vega 1996; Gutmann, 2000). Similar to the case of Istanbul, the regularisation of popular urbanisation seemed to be the most promising governmental approach to these neighbourhoods, at the same time providing a strong foothold for the then ruling party, Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). However, federal and local policy on popular urbanisation is still embedded in a complex patron–client system and embraces a selective strategy of regularisation and eviction (e.g. Varley 2002; Guarneros-Meza 2009; Wigle 2014; Vega 2015). Up to 1970 approximately 10–15 million inhabitants of Mexico City had purchased a plot on ejido land to build their homes. These transactions usually proceeded without overwriting regular land titles and accordingly were situated beyond state control, albeit with the implicit involvement of local authorities (Cymet 1992; Jones and Ward 1998; Hiernaux and Lindón 2000; Lombard 2016; Connolly and Wigle 2017).

A far-reaching shift of territorial regulation in Mexico City accompanied the neoliberal land reform in 1992, when the collective use rights of ejido land were changed into individual rights and the sale of ejido land was eventually legalised. With this reform, over three million hectares of land in the urban periphery of Mexico City became potentially available for market speculation (Sambieda 1996; Jones and Ward 1998; Salazar 2014). The state explicitly declared agricultural ejido land to be a reserve zone for potential urbanisation, leading to the massive increase of commercial mass housing urbanisation in the peripheries of Mexico City, the *mega conjuntos habitacionales.* However, popular urbanisation did not decline as much as it did in Istanbul and it remains one of the important processes for producing urban territories in Mexico City (e.g. Hastings 2008; Connolly 2009; Vega 2015: 275; Gilbert and de Jong 2015; Streule 2018). These examples of territorial regulation clearly show the important role of state strategies, embedded as they are in wider political constellations and power relations and influenced by contradictory goals and interests in facilitating, shaping and bringing to an end popular urbanisation.

## EXPERIENCES OF SOLIDARITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

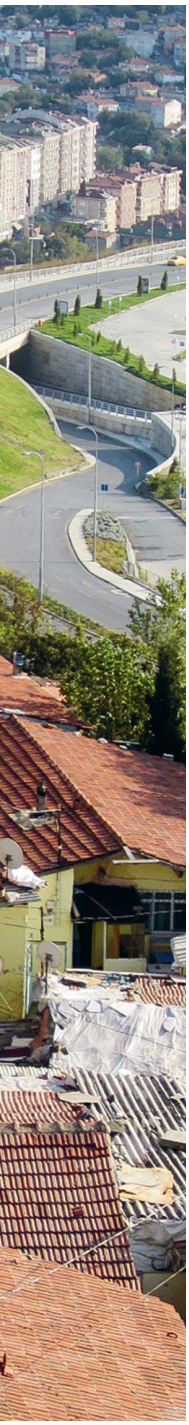
Popular urbanisation cannot be fully understood without illuminating the essential role of social mobilisations, collective experiences and learning processes in shaping it, and thus without taking into consideration the question of residents' lived experiences in the production of space. The very beginnings of popular urbanisation in Istanbul were very dependent on social networks, based on kinship or a shared place of origin in the countryside *(hemşehrilik)*, not only for finding and creating a livelihood and a place and materials to construct a gecekondu, but also in providing the main platforms for everyday socialisation (Gunes-Ayata 1991). As migrants faced many challenges in their new neighbourhoods, they also had to develop local networks based on their shared experiences and daily struggles. These were largely based on patronage relationships and relied on charismatic and commercially driven leaders able to negotiate with state actors (Erder 1996; White 2002: 104–107; Keyder 2005). Additionally, in the second half of the 1970s, gecekondu mobilisations in many neighbourhoods took a radical turn in reaction to the exploitative practices of emerging, mafia-like groups cashing in on the commercialisation of land (Tekeli 1992: 91–92; Aslan 2004). The squatters' struggles to claim space outside the formal system aligned with the objective of socialist groups of 'creating cores outside the control of formal institutions in practically all realms of social life' (Aslan 2004: 81). However, these radical inclinations were undermined first by the 1980s military coup and then by the laws on tenure that followed (Erman 2001: 987). Nevertheless, today regional associations

remain major centres of solidarity and socialisation, particularly in late-stage gecekondu areas, which are now targets for urban renewal schemes (Pérouse 2011: 84; Karaman 2014).

In Mexico City, relatively hierarchical neighbourhood organisations guided by charismatic leaders perform most of the routine functions required to solve their daily problems and needs. In these organisations, a specific participatory and collective practice has developed, characterised by general meetings and consensual decision-making. Framed as 'urban self-management', as many scholars have argued, such strategies in Mexico City do not mean simply 'managing the misery', but can be understood as an alternative urban strategy of self-organised administration and the collective control of urban space (see e.g. Schteingart 1991; Coulomb 1992; Moctezuma 2001; 2012; Ortiz Flores and Zarate 2002; Streule 2017b; Díaz-Parra 2019). Whereas these organisations fight mainly for land tenure and the provision of basic urban infrastructure such as electricity and a water supply, as well as access to health care and education, the residents themselves also take a long-term perspective: a house is most commonly seen as a *patrimonio* (legacy), a space of belonging that is constantly being improved and adapted to new needs, such as accommodating new family members or starting a small business (see Gilbert 1999; Calderón 2012; Ward 2012; Grajeda 2015).

In Lagos, social organisation in popular settlements emerges mostly from various member-based religious, ethnic, home town and trade associations or patronage networks that are not necessarily organised locally, however. These associations can perform vital functions in problem-solving and conflict resolution or as a basis for savings groups (called *esusu*). There are also neighbourhood vigilante groups that provide security. Since the 1990s community development associations have been formed to provide an interface between traditional power structures, the local and state governmental actors and the people (Abegunde 2009). However, the elected representatives of these associations are sometimes co-opted by landowning families and governmental actors, and can even end up working against the communities. There is a huge variation in how well a community is organised and this can depend largely on how well the residents of a street or building get on with one another and whether private connections to influential people can be activated (Sawyer 2016). In our study, the Lagos case provides an important reference point for expanding our understanding of the 'popular' that does not rely on notions of mass mobilisation or a well-organised collective structure.

There is therefore a broad spectrum of ways that residents are organised to promote, implement and sustain popular urbanisation, from individualism to collective organisation. In Istanbul, many gecekondu settlements emerged as the cumulative outcome of individual decisions, without any overarching plan. In cases where the parcelisation and selling of land were greatly commercialised there is some semblance of coordination at the scale of the overall settlement. This is clear in the overall layouts of these areas. Classic gecekondu neighbourhoods on state-owned land are marked by an organic street pattern that is aligned more or less with the topography, whereas gecekondus on illegal subdivisions of agricultural land are parcelised with a standardised street width so as to maximise developable lots (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 162). Another form of land



Istanbul; gecekondus amidst new developments. Karadolap, 2014

occupation is based on formally organised grassroots initiatives. In her study of a gecekondu neighbourhood in Ankara, Duyar-Kienast (2005: 124–130) gives an example of an informal housing cooperative, which carried out the land occupation, parcelisation and gecekondu construction in a well organised (yet, from the point of the state, illegal) fashion under the leadership of a community leader. In improving their living conditions, gecekondu residents often rely on the tradition of *imece*, where they collectively provide the necessary labour and resources for infrastructural improvements on a voluntary basis (Duyar-Kienast 2005: 42, based on the case of Ankara; Esen 2011: 468). *Imece* is reminiscent of the collective faena workday in Mexico City, which is used to meet daily needs of the inhabitants—a basic element of popular urbanisation relying on collective work engaging in practices of commoning (Leitner and Sheppard 2018; Petropoulou 2018).

In Lagos, by contrast, people are more likely to procure their power supply and water individually (by buying small diesel generators and buying water in sachets or jerry cans), although this relies on well-organised and competitive private suppliers. As residents are not able to improve their houses and environment over time, their living conditions are often extremely poor and unhealthy, and present huge daily challenges. Forms of collectivities that are not necessarily based in the neighbourhood, such as youth, home town, religious and trading groups (Osaghae 1999; Akinola 2007) provide many sources of support; for instance, savings and loans to low-income earners in a country where access to banking services is not inclusive. As discussed previously, there is a long tradition of unaddressed brutality and injustice meted out by the national state on its poorest residents in terms of forced evictions, slum clearances, market clearances and the confiscation or destruction of property. A few organisations are able to fight forced eviction; however, in the absence of an effective formal justice system and very little political accountability, residents seem to have given up on applying for relief to formal channels of justice (Amnesty International 2018). Nevertheless, recent protests against evictions in Badia in 2014 and Otodo Gbame in 2017 have achieved small but significant and unprecedented gains, such as modest monetary compensation for those evicted, pressure from international organisations and an acknowledgment from the State of its actions.

Popular urbanisation is shaped by collective social processes. In the struggle to claim land, win access to basic services and produce their own neighbourhoods, inhabitants generate shared experiences and specific knowledge. In this contradictory process, popular urbanisation may also result in other spaces with specific urban qualities (Streule and Schmid 2014; Streule 2017b). Thus, various venues, shops and street markets have emerged in neighbourhoods like Valle de Chalco Solidaridad or Chimalhuacán in Mexico City that not only offer a livelihood for many of their residents, but also contribute to the improvement of everyday life and the creation of centralities in these seemingly peripheral places. The production of urban qualities is particularly visible in more established and consolidated popular neighbourhoods such as Nezahualcóyotl, with its wide range of facilities (such as universities, schools, health centres, hotels, markets and sport facilities). In Istanbul, the remaining low-density gecekondus near the centre provide unique qualities beyond infrastructure, public transportation and basic amenities. A neighbourhood like Başıbüyük, located on top of a breezy hill, commanding magnificent views of the sea and largely retaining its village-like character, is a very liveable place. In presenting alternative forms of social and spatial organisation, the inhabitants and users of such neighbourhoods also articulate claims to difference and non-commodified forms of urbanity. In this way, popular urbanisation is able to challenge the hegemonic practices of the production of space, which are mainly based on market mechanisms or state strategies (see e.g. Fawaz 2009; Kudva 2009; Huchzermeyer 2011a; Zibechi 2012; Keenan 2015; Díaz-Parra 2019).

# OUTLINING POPULAR URBANISATION

In her recent article on peripheral urbanisation, Caldeira (2017) identifies some central characteristics of urbanisation in the Global South. In comparing dissimilar cases in Istanbul, Santiago de Chile and São Paulo, she describes very diverse modalities of urbanisation, including self-built settlements as well as state-controlled housing programmes, which she brings together under the term 'peripheral urbanisation'. She focuses on the everyday efforts of residents to improve their neighbourhoods, the 'transversal logics' which the various actors use to engage with formal institutions and the distinctive modes of political engagement they generate. Certainly, these aspects were present in our case studies of Mexico City, Istanbul and Lagos.

However, our comparative project proceeded in a complementary direction: instead of searching for overall similarities across different kinds of settlements, we sought to identify specific urbanisation processes and to reveal their distinct inner logics. Instead of widening, we therefore narrowed down the scope of our concepts. In doing so, we identified systematic differences between various urbanisation processes that we consider fundamental; namely, marketisation and commodification; the role of state agencies and collective activities and experiences. Accordingly, we propose three different types of urbanisation processes that are dominated by clearly different aspects but might all fit under the conceptual umbrella of peripheral urbanisation. While 'plotting urbanism' has a clear orientation towards market mechanisms, and 'mass housing urbanisation' is initiated and determined by state actors, popular urbanisation is mainly based on self-organisation, political mobilisation and collective action. To the extent that this set of three concepts is the result of our comparative study, it is greatly influenced by our selection of case studies. It is therefore an open list and the concepts should be seen as revisable.

How, then, can we define popular urbanisation? As we have shown, this process unfolds in various ways according to concrete urban contexts and thus it exhibits a great variety of spatial outcomes and temporal trajectories, even in the same city. Nevertheless, it is possible and useful to identify some of the main characteristics of popular urbanisation as a specific urbanisation process, and thus to distinguish it from other closely related processes. The definition of popular urbanisation starts with the primary feature of people creating their own neighbourhoods. This can be understood as a strength and not seen as a lack or a deficiency. Popular urbanisation is thus a form of production of urban space that is based primarily on the collective initiative of the people. This distinguishes it from mass housing urbanisation, which is defined by the initiatives of state agencies, and from plotting urbanism, which is dominated by commodification and market mechanisms.

In our comparison, we first focused on the material aspect of the production of space; namely, the physical transformation of the urban territory and the interactions that are necessary to produce new settlements. This includes the analysis of migration processes and the different agents involved: migrants and settlers embedded in various social, cultural, political and religious networks and creating their own urban spaces, as well as organisations that support and enable the construction and improvement of buildings and neighbourhoods. While popular urbanisation is thus a process in and through which an urban territory is continuously produced, transformed and appropriated by its inhabitants and users as the main protagonists of the urbanisation process, state actors and state strategies always play an important role, and market mechanisms are involved to a lesser or greater degree. But the specificity of popular urbanisation consists in the collective process of the production of space through the initiative, engagement and labour of the people, often accompanied by strong social and political mobilisation.

These basic characteristics are shaped to a considerable degree by the concrete urban conditions and social relations that underlie urbanisation at particular places and times. In Mexico City, Lagos and Istanbul the starting point of popular urbanisation was the massive migration of low-income people from rural areas and the resulting need for affordable housing in the urban area. As there were no state strategies for constructing large-scale public housing, popular urbanisation

Mexico City; Santa Catarina; 2013

offered an alternative for bringing about new neighbourhoods. However, popular urbanisation has played very different roles in these three urban territories. In Mexico City and Istanbul, for decades it remained the dominant form of urbanisation, during which time large urban areas were constructed, improved and consolidated. The speed and massive scale of urban growth in these two metropolises was to a large extent based on popular urbanisation. In contrast, popular urbanisation never played a major role in Lagos because the dominant urbanisation model there was a reliance on individualised and market-oriented forms of urban development that we conceptualise as plotting urbanism. The analysis of the pathways of popular urbanisation also sheds light on the longevity and the different trajectories such processes can take: from the eradication of popular settlements through slum clearance policies, such as in Lagos, to a certain consolidation as in Mexico City, or formalisation and marketisation as in Istanbul. However, as discussed above, the importance of this urbanisation process in Mexico City has declined in recent years, while in Istanbul the gecekondu is a rarity.

Lagos; creeks reclaimed with waste. Ajegunle, 2012

To understand these different trajectories, it is necessary to look at the different ways in which state agencies intervene in the process. While the state is not a key actor in the process of popular urbanisation, popular urbanisation can nevertheless only fully unfold if there is a tacit agreement between parts of the population and powerful state actors. In all three cases, the state intervened in various ways in the process of popular urbanisation, whether through mediations, negotiations, active support, silent tolerance, the development and implementation of competing strategies or open repression and demolition. Struggles between the inhabitants and state actors are therefore constitutive of popular urbanisation. These struggles are sometimes open and explosive, but mostly occur within the prevailing system of power, for example in the form of co-optation and corruption. Thus, informality and illegality should be understood as constitutive aspects of popular urbanisation (see also Roy 2005; Schmid 2015: 301).

In all three examples everyday struggles for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods and the collective fights for access to the land, achieving land tenure and for the provision of basic infrastructure generate experiences and processes of learning that shape popular urbanisation in specific ways. While in Lagos collective struggles against precarity predominate, popular urbanisation in Mexico City is based on home ownership and the importance of the house as a legacy for the extended family. The self-built house that is constantly adapted to the needs of family members thus also has a strong symbolic value. It is interesting that market mechanisms did not evolve within popular urbanisation in Mexico City: rooms usually are not let out to tenants and houses are rarely offered for sale. In Istanbul, however, market mechanisms were present relatively early on. With the consolidation of those neighbourhoods, processes of commodification intensified. This explains to a certain degree the different pathways of popular urbanisation. While popular urbanisation in Istanbul mostly turned into plotting urbanism, it still subsists as a distinctive process in Mexico City. In Lagos, popular urbanisation has faced violent repression and demolition for a long time, leading to precarity and inhibiting any form of settled status.

These different pathways of popular urbanisation can be fully understood only if they are contextualised in the ensemble of urbanisation

processes that shape a metropolitan territory. Because of the lack of social housing in Mexico City and in Istanbul, there was almost no other option to accommodate the massive influx of migrants. However, as our analysis reveals, there were also certain decisive conditions that enabled popular urbanisation to come about, starting with the availability of land (mainly public or collectively owned land) that allowed the construction of the first illegal settlements. Another important condition was the state strategy to tolerate and even negotiate the construction and consolidation of these settlements. The presence of collective networks, a certain degree of political organisation and specific collective traditions were other necessary conditions for the success of popular urbanisation. In Lagos, however, none of these conditions were present and thus plotting urbanism, as a strongly individualised and market-oriented strategy, became the dominant model of urban development, while popular urbanisation was an option only in very specific and often precarious conditions in relatively small areas. In contrast, in Mexico City neighbourhoods consolidated and developed urban qualities that were greatly appreciated. In Istanbul, however, this consolidation process gradually turned into plotting urbanism. Finally, in both Mexico City and Istanbul the state intervened and implemented a new urban strategy at the beginning of the 21st century; namely, state-led mass housing urbanisation, which involved the neoliberalisation, financialisation and commodification of urban development using developers and financial institutions (see e.g. Hastings 2008; Karaman 2013a; Gilbert and de Jong 2015; Erman 2016). Popular urbanisation has therefore to be seen as a specific historical and geographical phenomenon: it is an urbanisation process that under certain conditions might emerge and flourish, but under other conditions it might be fundamentally transformed or even disappear. Thus, it is important to understand the historical moments that generate, enable or hinder popular urbanisation as the result of the entanglements of numerous actors and urban constellations.

What are the specific advantages of popular urbanisation? While it is born out of the specific and often precarious circumstances that people find themselves in, it can also bring about utopian moments of collective action, engagement and mutual self-help. Moreover, it provides some very practical advantages: it offers residents a high degree of flexibility and adaptability, permitting an incremental evolution of the settlement that responds to the needs and requirements of the inhabitants, together with the ability to adapt to changing socioeconomic situations and offer opportunities for social inclusion. These positive qualities of popular urbanisation are further highlighted by contrasting them with current state-led programmes of mass housing urbanisation that have ended in various failures and massive urban sprawl in Mexico City, as well as in dense and inflexible housing estates in Istanbul.

The concept of popular urbanisation might be able to inform policy-making and develop credible and plausible alternatives to current state housing policies. However, while this urbanisation process remains desirable in many places around the globe it is currently being devalued by discourses about 'slum-free cities', by large-scale urban renewal programmes and by various forms of state-led and developer-led housing (see e.g. Huchzermeyer 2011a; Leitner and Sheppard 2018). Against these tendencies, renewed models of popular urbanisation could offer an inclusive, collective and radical perspective for the production of urban neighbourhoods. In this way, the term 'popular urbanisation' expresses the positive and progressive potential of this particular urbanisation process: urbanisation with and by the people.

1 All translations are by the authors. We thank Fabio Duarte and Nicole Weiss for revising the translations from Spanish and French into English.

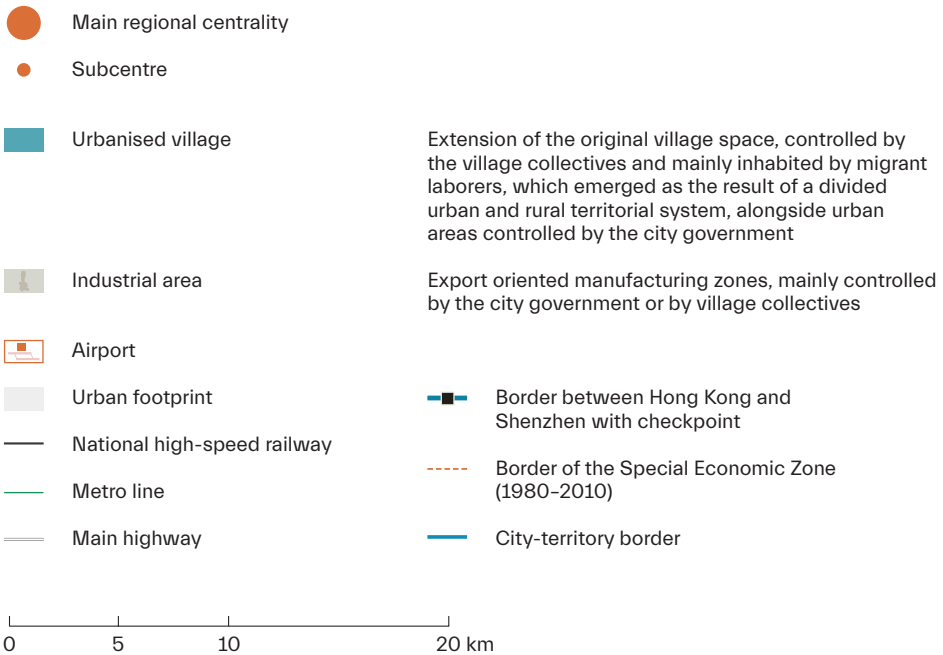
Shenzhen; bustling street life in an urbanised village. Baishizhou, 2015

Istanbul; plotted neighbourhood. Eyüpsultan, 2014

# PLOTTING URBANISM AS AN ORDINARY PROCESS OF URBANISATION

Lagos; far plotting. Ikotun, 2012

# PLOTTING URBANISM



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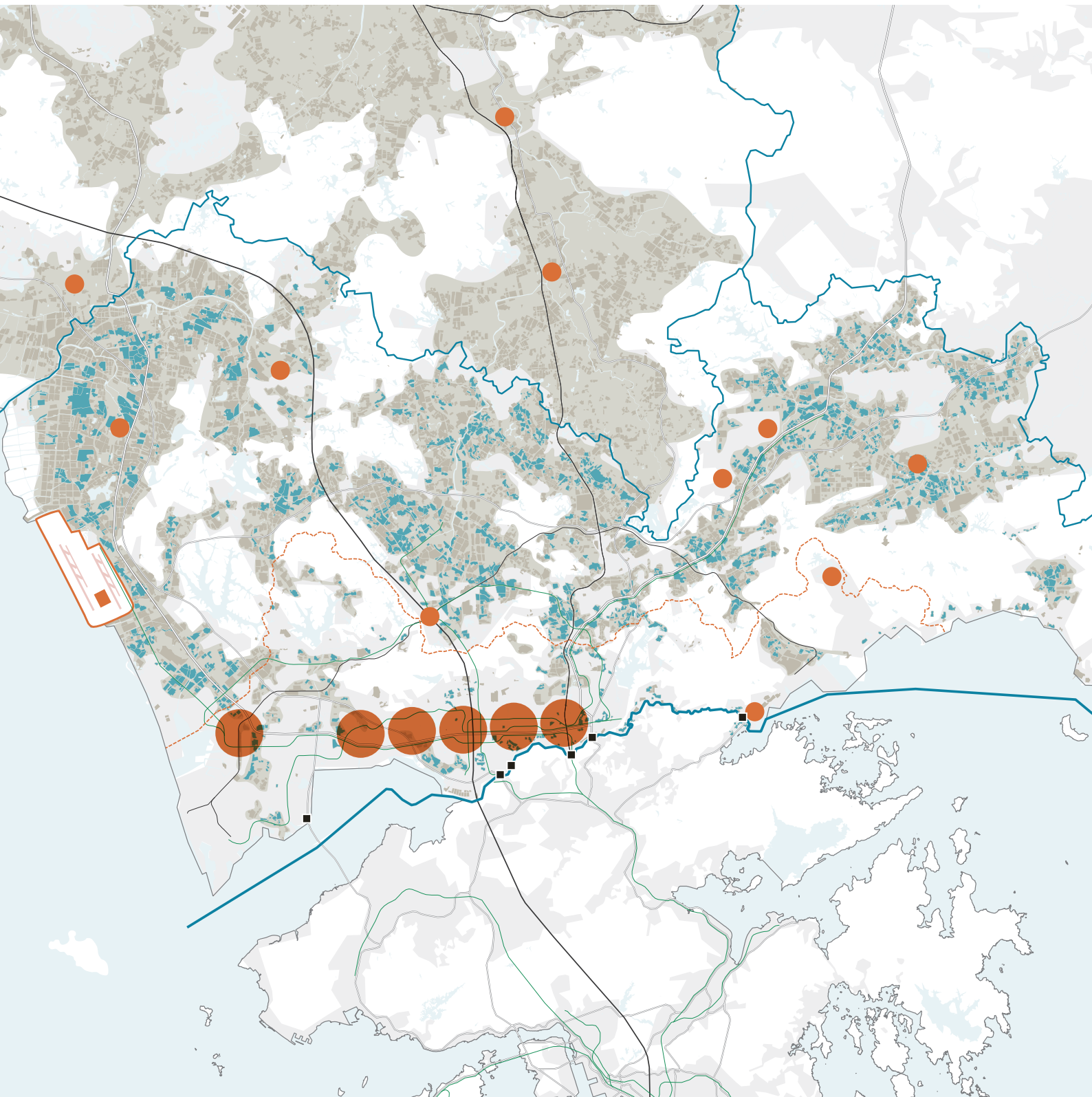

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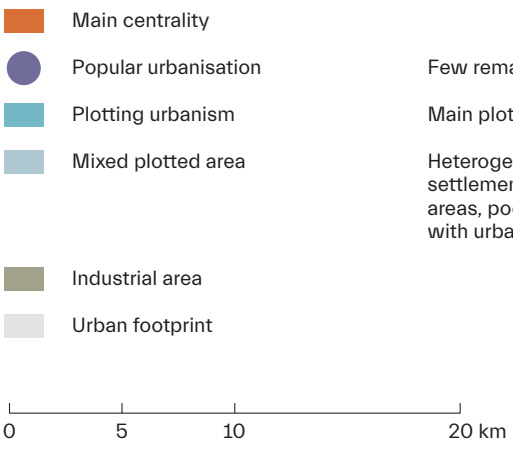

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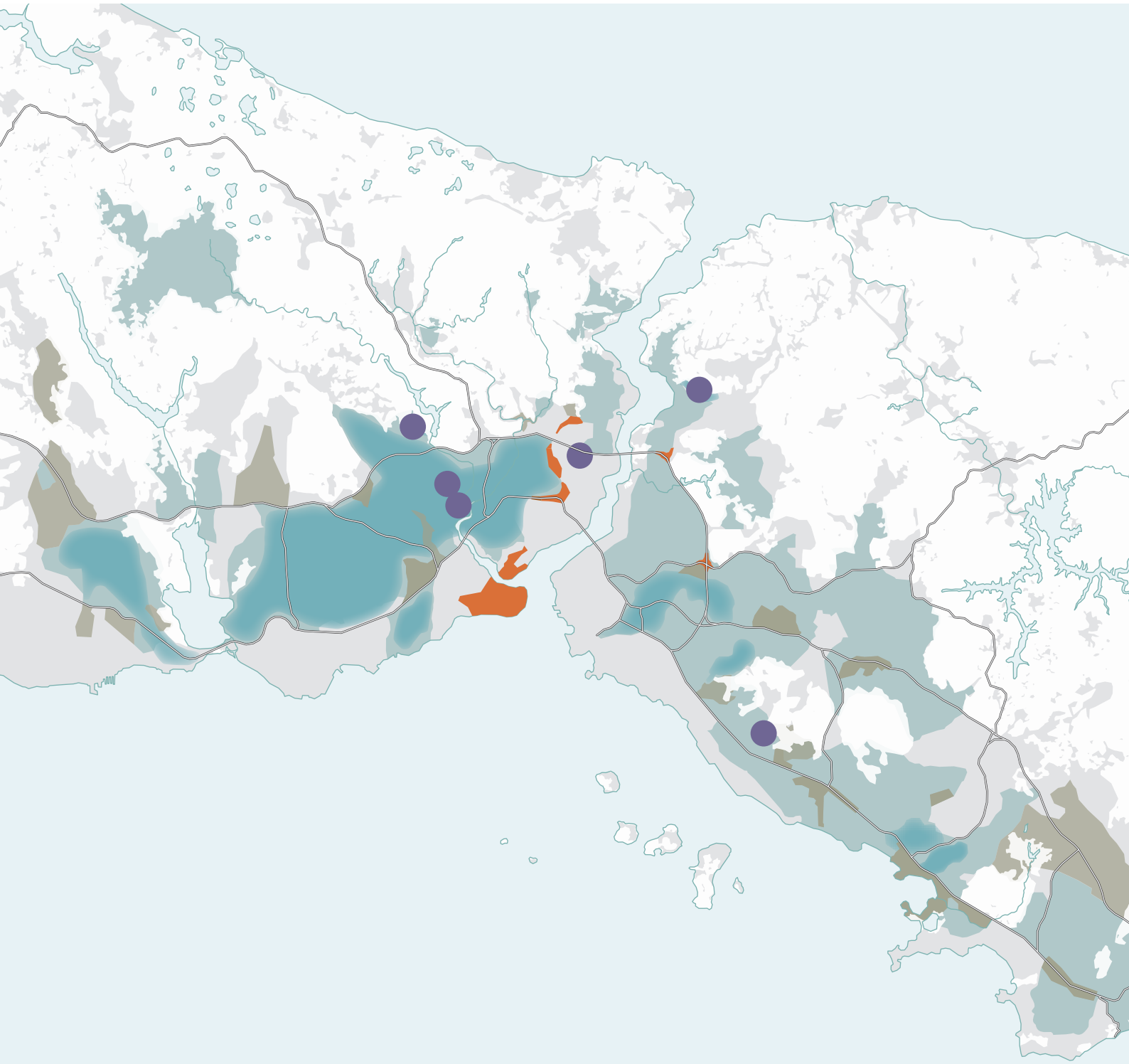
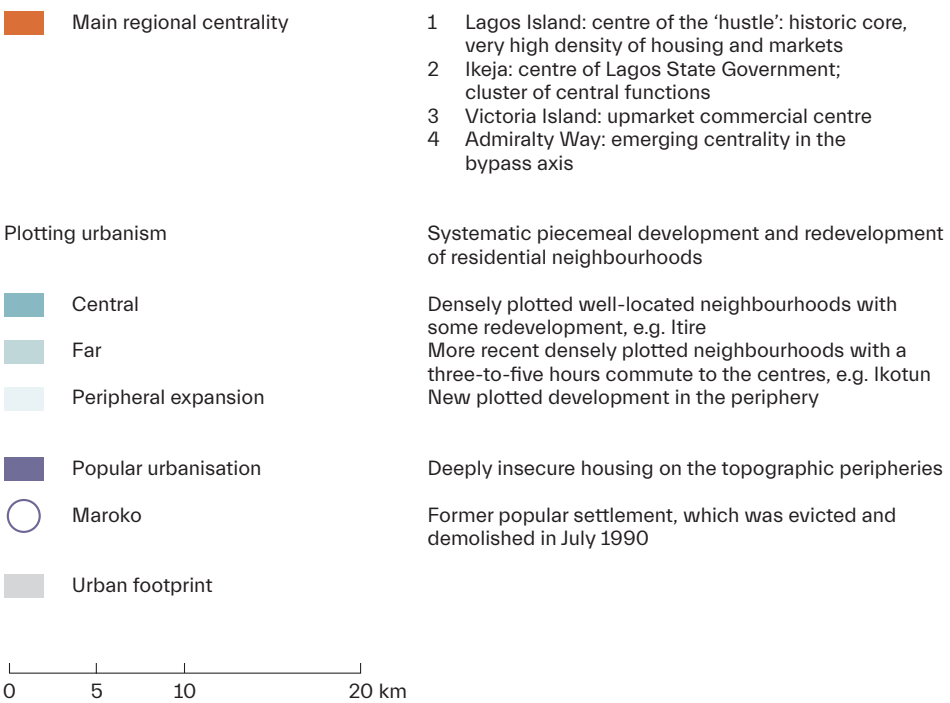
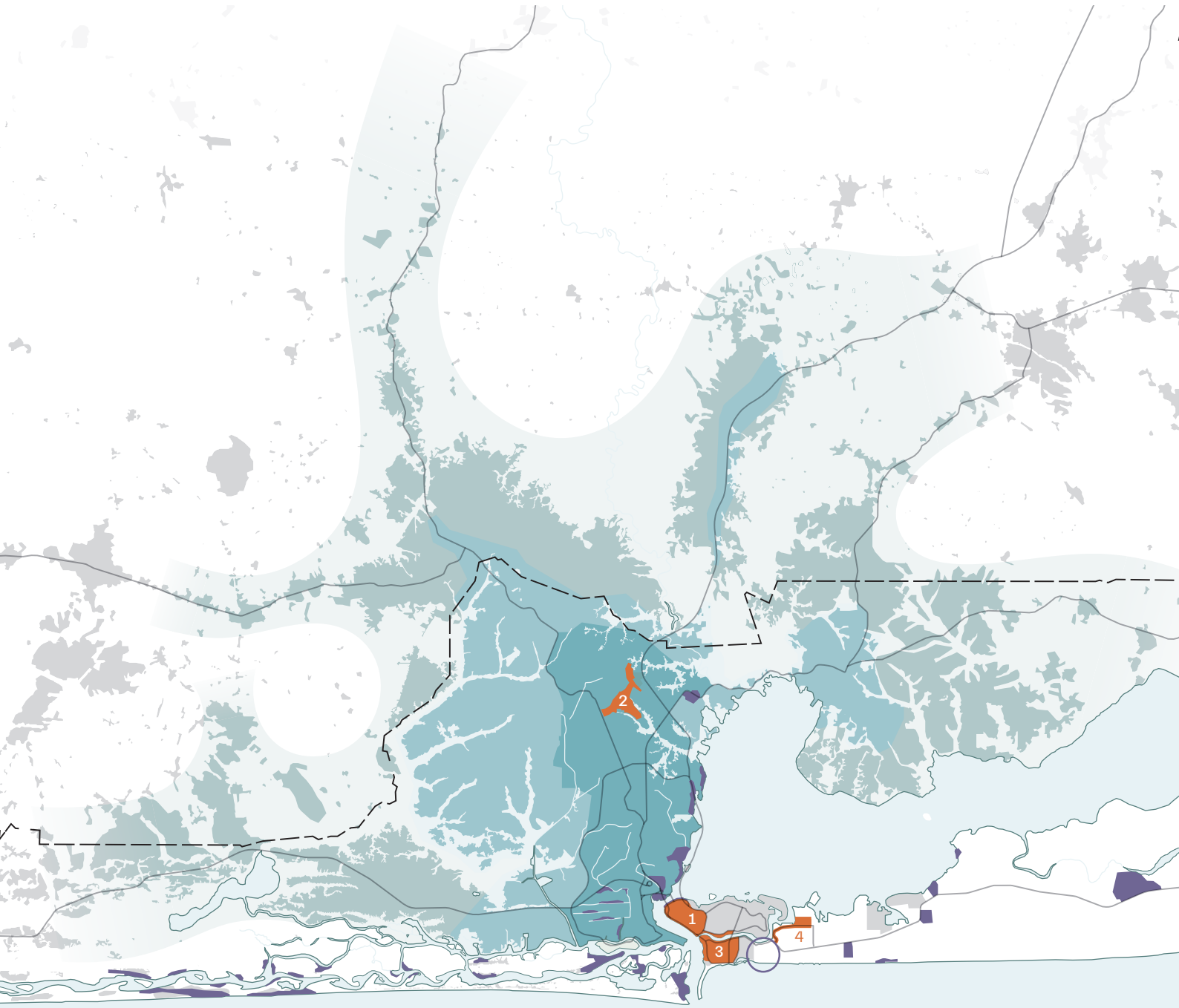


# PLOTTING URBANISM



# LAGOS



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Kit Ping Wong

# BEYOND INFORMALITY

In parts of Istanbul, Shenzhen, Lagos and Kolkata a large number of people live in urban areas that have developed plot-by-plot over time, based on speculative and sometimes exploitative land and housing markets with limited official planning. These areas are transformed by incremental improvements to individual properties or the redevelopment of individual plots. Landlords, plot-owners, government officials, tenants, local elites and authority figures form complex alliances to act for their own individual or group gain in this specific urbanisation process. They navigate, manipulate and circumvent unresolved contradictions and ambivalences, which often result from overlapping modes of territorial regulation, land tenure and property rights. These neighbourhoods are often densely built and vibrant, yet they may lack public spaces, amenities and access to reliable infrastructure due to limited urban planning. People with low incomes or without access to social housing or formal credit schemes may find affordable land, property or rental housing in these areas. More resourceful individuals and communities may also engage in exploiting economic opportunities and political connections to generate a profit through urban development. Even if each of these areas has distinctive features, we understand them as being produced through a specific process of urbanisation, which we call *plotting urbanism*, or plotting for short. Plotting has not been identified as a distinct urbanisation process in the literature so far. In this chapter we delineate the process of plotting urbanism, its characteristics and intrinsic logics and suggest a definition for further discussion and application in research and practice.

The concept of plotting urbanism is based on a somewhat counter-intuitive selection of case studies, and despite the convincing set of characteristics that hold this grouping together, existing terms and concepts kept pulling them apart. As we repeatedly compared the redevelopment of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods in Istanbul and *bustee* areas in Kolkata, the formation of ‘tenement

housing' in Lagos and of 'urbanised villages' in Shenzhen, a distinct concept kept slipping in and out of focus. On the one hand, the empirical examples we were comparing could simply be seen as specific outcomes of general processes of urbanisation or urban intensification. On the other hand, highly specific terms in each context, each with their own literature, such as gecekondu and more recently 'post-gecekondu' (Esen 2011) in Turkey and 'urbanised villages' *(chengzhongcun)* in China gave the appearance of incommensurability and impeded our ability to recognise similarities among them across time and space. In the end we decided that existing concepts for describing urbanisation processes were inadequate to the task of bringing the different dimensions of these urban experiences together. Many different terms could be applied to analyse the areas under discussion: aspects of urban regeneration are visible; physical improvements and increases in rents might point towards gentrification; some areas featured suburban characteristics; and with varying levels of official recognition and limited regulations, these areas are frequently described as informal. Yet all these concepts fall short of addressing the specificity of the processes that we detected.

In particular, the concept of urban informality that seems to capture the main feature of plotting urbanism created major problems for our analysis. The difficulties with this concept are well known and have been widely discussed (Caldeira 2017; McFarlane 2012; Roy 2009b; Roy and AlSayyad 2004; see also Chapters 4 and 12). First of all, it is based on the binary conception of 'formal' and 'informal', when in reality the distinctions between these forms of regulations are often blurred and they often even overlap. Second, common definitions of informality rest on very broad understandings of formal and informal procedures, and therefore informality can take very different forms and be identified in highly diverse settings—including affluent neighbourhoods. Indeed, one of the results of our own comparative analysis was to identify two distinct urbanisation processes that are usually subsumed under the umbrella of urban informality: plotting urbanism and popular urbanisation. We define 'popular urbanisation', which we observed in Istanbul, Lagos and Kolkata, as a people-led process of land appropriation and settlement building based on collective action, self-organisation and the labour of the residents (see Chapter 12). In contrast, plotting urbanism is characterised by more individualised strategies of urban development and intensification of land use, strong processes of commodification as well as a marked socioeconomic differentiation between property owners and tenants. Popular urbanisation and plotting urbanism therefore refer to two distinct logics of urbanisation resulting in different urban outcomes. This distinction is not clear-cut, however. There may be hybrid or transitional forms where aspects of popular and plotting urbanism can be observed at the same time in a given area. For instance, some level of commercialisation and certain tenant–ownership relations often accompany popular urbanisation (see Gilbert 1983).

In putting specific urbanisation processes in Shenzhen, Lagos, Istanbul and Kolkata in conversation with each other, the contours of a discrete urbanisation process with certain characteristics came to the fore, such as consolidation and intensification of the built-up structure, incremental urban development, ambivalent territorial regulations, landlord–tenant relationships and land speculation and commodification, particularly through rental housing. We finally arrived at the term *plotting*. It is useful for its many inferences: first, it can refer to the subdivision of land into individual plots with fragmented ownership or entitlement. Secondly, it focuses on the piecemeal plot-by-plot pattern of urbanisation over large areas that results in a more or less regular urban form that is clearly discernible in the urban fabric but emerges without an overarching plan. Thirdly, plotting alludes to controversial, strategic scheming, or even illegal actions in the production of the urban fabric at the individual or group level. And lastly, it evokes the various plot-lines that appear in official and non-official narratives about these places.[1]

The following section places the concept of plotting urbanism in relation to the wider analytical context and considers how to differentiate it from other closely related concepts. The chapter will then present the three case studies of Lagos, Istanbul and Shenzhen before offering a detailed definition of plotting urbanism and exploring some of the agendas and questions that this concept might raise. Although Kolkata formed an important part of the comparative discussions and conceptualisation of the process of plotting, the case study is not included here due to the additional degree of complexity a fourth case would have created as well as restrictions of length.

# TOWARDS A DIFFERENTIATED VOCABULARY OF INFORMALITY

Discomfort with the existing range of concepts to analyse urbanisation processes has been expressed for some time, particularly by postcolonial scholars. Thus, a series of heuristic concepts has been generated over the last two decades to grasp some specific but fleeting aspects of 'Southern' urbanisms, such as 'quiet encroachment' (Bayat 2000), 'occupancy urbanism' (Benjamin 2008), 'insurgent citizenship' (Holston 2009), 'incremental urbanism' (McFarlane 2011), 'the urban majority' (e.g. Simone and Rao 2012) and most recently 'peripheral urbanisation' (Caldeira 2017). Working from different analytical angles or entry points and not as a coherent body of work, these present a certain problematic: the prevalence of ordinary urbanisation processes in relatively poor neighbourhoods where local people are the primary agents of urbanism, which are organised across varying structures and scales and entangled with state actors in complex relationships. This is not to say that all these concepts engage with precisely the same processes, but they shed light on various aspects of widespread but not-easily-accounted-for urbanisation processes and outcomes.

Both Asef Bayat and AbdouMaliq Simone have introduced concepts, based on ethnographic research, that address the role of individual and collective action in the absence of overarching organisation or mass mobilisation, which nevertheless achieve cumulative gains. Bayat's (2000) concept of the 'quiet encroachment of the ordinary' brings into perspective often overlooked forms of resistance by subaltern groups, highlighting mundane acts that become contentious politics and encroachments that are made without a clear leadership or organisation. In a similar vein Simone's collaborative work on Jakarta (Simone and Fauzan 2012; Simone and Rao 2012) and on Yangon (Simone 2018) uses the notion of an 'urban majority' to explore the articulations and workings of districts that are often located at the core of southern urban regions and are marked by a mix of various ways of life, class backgrounds and functions (Simone 2018: 23). This heuristic concept is not derived from a quantitative measurement of the urban population, but refers to a heterogeneous group of people that constitutes itself through various practices and relationships. This idea of a heterogeneous population that is invisible in its ubiquity but which becomes visible at certain times, for example as a voting body, is a powerful one.

Solomon Benjamin and James Holston re-emphasise the importance of modalities of claims to land and show how various groups can manipulate specific power structures and legal instruments. They argue against simplistic understandings of power, politics, organisation and agency, and emphasise instead entanglement, multiplicity and complexity. In his concept of 'occupancy urbanism', Benjamin (2008) uses land as a conceptual entry point to look at highly politicised forms of urbanisms in India. He conceptualises cities as consisting of contested terrains constituted by multiple political spaces, all inscribed by complex local histories. With this concept he acknowledges the existence of a popular political consciousness that transcends passivity or exploitation and opens up a space of politics where poorer groups may engage various levels of the state but remain autonomous from it, and where low-level government agents and bureaucracy are in turn deeply embedded in local community politics. Turning to the urbanisation of the peripheries of Brazilian cities, Holston (2009) uses the term 'insurgent citizenship' to question notions of illegality, its distinction from legality, the relationship between land occupation and law and the entangled role of individuals, civil society and the state in shaping urban areas. Illegality and contradictory regulations and practices, instability and bureaucratic irresolution are shown not just as norms, but as what makes land occupation possible in Brazil, and constitute the means by which the urban poor and the subaltern make meaningful gains towards consolidation and security of tenure.

Referring to case studies from Sao Paulo, Istanbul, Santiago de Chile, Delhi and Mexico City, Teresa Caldeira (2017) develops the notion of 'peripheral urbanisation'. She uses the term 'peripheral' as a metaphor to characterise pervasive urban spaces that are produced in a very different way from North Atlantic urbanisms. Peripheral urbanisation is a broad concept that addresses the many different groups of people who are in poverty and live in inherently unstable neighbourhoods.

As this short review shows, there is already an important and inspiring body of work seeking to understand prevalent urban phenomena in southern urban contexts. These contributions conceptualise many aspects that we have also come across in our own case studies. However, the combination of aspects that our comparative analysis identified points to a specific multidimensional process of urbanisation. In the following section, we explore plotting urbanism in Lagos, Istanbul and Shenzhen, revealing that there are compelling similarities in the production of a dominant urbanisation process among these very diverse urban contexts. We finally outline a definition of plotting urbanism that might be relevant to other contexts and is therefore open to further discussion and revision.

# LAGOS: PLOTTING AS THE ORDINARY PROCESS OF URBANISATION

Mr Ladipo[2] grew up in the 1960s in rental accommodation in Mushin, a plotted area on the mainland of Lagos that was already fully developed. At the end of the 1960s his father bought a plot in Ijesha, around 5 km away, but the family remained in Mushin for another ten years while they worked to consolidate the waterlogged land and build a couple of rooms at the new place. When they finally moved in, Ijesha was still 'bush', but it gradually filled up with people and the area was fully developed by the 1990s. They had bought the plot from the *omo onile* of that area, the customary landowners, and have never had to pay any further money to them since. Omo onile is a Yoruba term that literally means 'son/child of the soil/land'. The first government intervention in Ijesha was when piped water was laid out in 1997. In 2012 Mr Ladipo's father was required by the state government to pay a land use charge of around N 12,000 per year (US $70)—now his rubbish is being collected. He has never tried to obtain formal documentation as he knows that to do so will mean paying twice, first to the omo onile (who might demand a repeat payment at the current market price) and then to the government for expensive title deeds (which cost up to 30 per cent of the land value). Mr Ladipo's father initially built a 'face-me-I-face-you', a typical Lagos multi-family tenement building, renting out rooms and adding more floors as he could afford them. More recently he made the rooms self-contained with their own bathroom and hotplate, as he reasoned that people no longer want to share facilities. The family now owns several properties in the area and Mr Ladipo is a property agent. It is incredible to his father that properties in Ijesha are now selling for N 15 to 20 million (US $85,000–115,000).

As the example presented above shows, plotting urbanism enables rapid urban development to occur in Lagos even though buildings on individual plots can take years if not decades to be finished. The typical face-me-I-face-you buildings, such as the one that Mr Ladipo's family built, are concrete block tenements with four rooms mirrored over a central corridor with shared services at the end of each floor. They can be up to four storeys high and house an average of six people per room, and occupy up to 90 per cent of the plot area but they are always detached (Towry-Coker 2011). They are a ubiquitous idiom of Lagos life, filling neighbourhood after neighbourhood from the older central areas to the far reaches of the peripheries (Sawyer 2016).

This urbanisation process follows a highly individualised pathway, which is tailored to people's personal circumstance, allowing some to become property owners and landlords without formal financing (Lawanson 2012). Because only a very few people can obtain a bank loan, people save

Lagos; peripheral plotted expansion. Ifo, 2013

over a long period of time and often take out smaller loans from religious, ethnic or home town membership groups (*esusu* savings groups). Plot-owners are thus already established in the area or in a membership group by the time they start to build. Likewise, people can obtain plots of land through customary landowners without having to resort to expensive and protracted bureaucratic procedures (Aina 1989a; Durand-Lasserve 2004; Lombard and Rakodi 2016). At the same time, plotting provides high volumes of affordable rental housing for the low-income tenants that form the majority of Lagos' residents. Yet this flexible and incremental urbanisation process also has its downside. First of all, it creates a huge social difference between the plot-owners and the tenants (Kumar 2011). Plot-owners have invested in their property and are established in the area; they may have saved or constructed buildings for years, but becoming an owner greatly increases their social standing (Barnes 1986). The masses of tenants however have few rights and, as the demand for rooms is so high, they are at the mercy of the landlords, who frequently raise the rents and often do not maintain their properties well (Oni and Durodola 2010). Yet being a tenant in a plotted area is a significant step up from living in even worse and more precarious areas of popular urbanisation with more flimsy buildings and little tenure security, and constitutes a viable option for a broad section of Lagos society, including students and civil servants.

Forged through more than a century of ambivalent governmental policies that officially condemned the development of plotted areas but did nothing to stop it, and constant political, economic and social instability as well as contradictory land policies, plotting urbanism can be seen as the prime model of urban development for the majority of Lagos (Sawyer 2016). However, few scholars have examined these vast areas as a meaningful object of study. A notable exception is Aina's work (1989b). Instead, urban research on Lagos tends to focus on the difficult living conditions, often taking the worst examples as representative of these very heterogenous building types and areas, sometimes in the process giving rise to the classic 'slum city' narrative (Agbola and Agunbiade 2009; Davis 2006). However, most urban spaces in Lagos, even for the elite, face great infrastructural challenges. When even mansion owners have to organise their own sources of dependable power, water and sanitation, it is not access to publicly provided basic services that indicates wealth or poverty in Lagos, but the form and capacity of infrastructural services that the household can afford and obtain privately (Acey 2007). The need for nuanced distinctions also applies to material space: plotted areas can be highly heterogeneous both within and between neighbourhoods according to particular features, such as access to transport links (and this differs among users of private cars and public transport) and proximity to markets (although being too close to a market is often seen as less safe). Wealthier streets are quieter, with less street activity, and plots are usually gated.

In general, the absence of building standard requirements and the lack of planning procedures, particularly in terms of densification and the provision of public space, has led to a low-quality building stock and an often degraded urban environment. However, this varies according to the relative wealth of the residents of a plot, street or area. For instance, there are high-capacity generators or cheap ones; residents may have a private borehole or need to buy water from vendors; they may employ a live-in security guard or put a gate across the end of the street at night (for more detail, see Sawyer 2014). Thus, plotting urbanism produces a finely differentiated urban fabric where services can be closely tailored to available resources and the personal circumstances of tenants and owners, and may vary from plot to plot. Recognising the viability of plotting urbanism and its affordability does not diminish the challenges faced daily by residents over the lack of publicly provided infrastructure. Thus, the strategies of plotting and individual service provision show both the potential and the limitations of urban development for most sectors of the population, almost entirely without any form of government intervention (Sawyer 2016).

While Mr Ladipo's case illustrates the pattern of plotting urbanism in Lagos, it is relatively unusual because he did not have to face any conflict over land (Akinleye 2009; Aluko 2012a). In many situations, the dual land system of Lagos has created unresolved contradictions and resulted in widespread contestations over ownership and land title. This dual land regime has existed in Lagos since the imposition of British law through colonisation in the mid-19th century (Hopkins 1980; Mann 2007). The British colonial administration was never powerful enough to impose its land laws and planning regimes on the whole of Lagos (Peil 1991). Much of its power was focused on the central Lagos Island and Apapa port areas. To regulate and service the fast-growing areas of mainland Lagos, they leant heavily on existing structures of customary authority to maintain minimal administration and turned a blind eye to the customary owners' extensive influence over land divisions (Barnes 1986). In this way, omo onile have continued to exert their social and political power on the urbanisation process and maintain their authority and legitimacy through their claims to the land (Vaughan 2000).

These disparities were even further exacerbated through the formal division of 'mainland Lagos' and the 'central district' between 1954 and 1967 as part of the creation of new regions in Nigeria that sought to more adequately represent and distribute power between the different ethnic groups (see

Williams 1975). The central district includes Lagos Island, Victoria Island and Lekki peninsula as well as Apapa, Ebute Metta, Yaba and the University of Lagos on the mainland side. Lagos mainland refers to the contiguous urban area beyond the central district. We use these two names here because the official names for these areas change frequently under different political regimes. As the central district was already densely populated at the time of this division, most growth largely occurred on the mainland, fuelled by colonial development, rural–urban migration, natural population growth and the urbanising effects of the Second World War (Harris and Parnell 2012). Plotting flourished under these conditions and the population more than tripled. What little formal development there was on the mainland at this time (mainly the development of Ikeja) served only as a catalyst for the process.

A series of military coups in 1966 started three decades of profound economic, political and social instability that further inhibited the implementation of large planned urban developments or housing programmes. In 1978 the national Land Use Act was introduced with the aim of establishing a unified policy on land and tenure that would resolve some of the contradictions between statutory land law and customary practices that had emerged since colonisation. However, plotting continued to be the de facto mode of urbanisation for the mainland. The Land Use Act in fact served to compound the contradictions inherent in the dual land regime by enshrining the paradox of dual root titles in its pages; it is written in such a way as to recognise customary landowners' claims of an inalienable right to land at the same time as it vests all the urban land of Nigeria in the government (Aluko 2012b).

The bureaucratic procedures required by the Land Use Act are costly, protracted and prone to corruption, and consequently very few plot-owners in Lagos sought formal titles. Today, notarised documents of transactions from customary authorities are the norm and offer security comparable to formal titles. However, customary concepts of land tenure, particularly the inheritance of land and property, are not standardised and therefore are open to manipulation within and between both sides of the dual land regime, giving rise to a culture of conflicts in plotted areas. Newspapers and online forums are full of stories of people who have been duped in buying a plot, or who have lost their plot to omo onile making real or fraudulent claims to an indigenous right to land (Akinleye 2009). It is not uncommon to hear of someone having to pay for their plot again (or suffer losing it entirely), a decade or more after first buying it, in order to settle with a family member of the original seller who disputed the sale (Peil 1991). In these cases, both sides often have competing and contradictory documentation.

Today, plotting urbanism continues to transform Lagos, intensifying newly plotted areas at an ever-increasing rate and pushing the frontiers of the urban region outwards beyond the boundary of Lagos state into neighbouring Ogun state. Once-peripheral plotted areas, which now find themselves in the centre as a result of the rapidly growing urban region, are increasingly desirable to a broad section of upwardly mobile people and are now undergoing what might be understood as a second stage of plotting urbanism. As there is a rising demand for self-contained apartments, face-me-I-face-you buildings are being demolished to make way for more expensive and better serviced houses. While wealthy plot-owners buy more land and redevelop their plots, less affluent plot-owners are selling to small-scale developers and moving out to the periphery to buy a new plot, fuelling subsequent rounds of plotting (Sawyer 2016). Low-income tenants are particularly affected by these urban transformations because they are likely to be forced further out.

Since democracy returned to Nigeria in 1999 there has been a period of unprecedented political stability in the leadership of Lagos state and a strong political will to promote a consistent

Lagos; ordinary inner road, unpaved. Itire, 2014

Lagos; ordinary main road, paved. Mushin, 2013

urban development (Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017). However, urban planning has primarily focused on transportation infrastructure and continued to reinforce the central axis of development between the port, Ikeja, Victoria and Lagos Islands (see Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018). Recently, this central axis has been extended to the Lekki peninsula, which has been profoundly transformed by 'bypass urbanism' (see Chapter 14). In less central areas there has been some resurfacing of main connector roads and drainage canals have been constructed. In 2012 the Governor of Lagos state implemented house numbering that included most plotted areas. Nearly 90 per cent of the entire city has a waste collection service and water levies and taxes are more efficiently collected than before (even if the service paid for is not always provided). However, continuing their ambivalent approach to the plotted areas of Lagos, the state government is not directly involved in the process of plotting urbanism and has no plans for further formalisation. In the most recent master plans commissioned for the mainland area, most plotted areas are just designated 'mixed residential', without any explicit plans beyond widening the exterior main roads (Dar Al-Handasah 2011).

In light of these ambiguities and contradictions, the future of plotting urbanism in Lagos remains open. The most pressing question for future urbanisation is how to improve the legal situation for plot-owners and tenants without unbalancing the complex social, political and regulatory status quo that helps maintain the various advantages, such as flexibility and affordability, offered by this urbanisation process.

# ISTANBUL: PLOTTING AS CONSOLIDATION AND COMMODIFICATION OF THE GECEKONDU

In the late 1980s Ahmet's family—originally from Turkey's Black Sea region—lived as tenants in Bağcılar, a rapidly transforming popular neighbourhood at the time. Ahmet bought a plot of illegally divided agricultural land in an emerging neighbourhood in the western outskirts of Istanbul. In 1991 he started to construct a house, without the necessary permits. He built the first two floors employing handymen but did not move in immediately. A year later, seeing that the neighbourhood was developing, he moved in permanently and continued to improve his building over the years, bribing inspectors along the way. Currently his building stands five storeys tall. The first three floors are complete; he benefits from two businesses located at the ground floor that he rents out. The last two floors with four apartments remain unfinished. He now has the resources to complete construction but is waiting for legal uncertainties to be resolved before he is prepared to invest further. He estimates that he can charge 300 TRY (US $133) monthly rent per apartment, which would be a decent source of income.[3]

This story from a resident of Istanbul's vast urban peripheries exemplifies a phenomenon that goes beyond the notion of gecekondu, a form of low-cost popular housing that initially emerged in the form of provisional shanties usually constructed on state-owned land. The gecekondus were constructed and extended by their inhabitants and later went through phases of densification and commodification. From the late 1940s onwards gecekondus provided much needed housing for rural–urban migrants, whose labour power was indispensable for the rapidly growing and industrialising economy of Istanbul. We use the term 'popular urbanisation' to designate such areas constructed through the collective efforts of their inhabitants (see Chapter 12).

Istanbul; old and new plotting. Esenyurt, 2014

Istanbul; urban landscape shaped by plotting in the 1980s and 1990s. Zeytinburnu, 2012

In the decades that followed, thanks to clientelist networks and populist policies, gecekondu areas were transformed into dense urban neighbourhoods. Several laws sought to control and legalise gecekondu areas (known as *gecekondu afları*, 'gecekondu amnesties'). The Gecekondu Law of 1966 was a landmark piece of legislation in this process because it recognised the existence of gecekondu areas and prescribed policies towards their containment and improvement (Şenyapılı 1998: 311; Tekeli 1992: 68–69). In increasing tenure security, however, it also facilitated the commodification of the gecekondus and the quality of buildings and infrastructure improved visibly (Tekeli 1998: 19). In subsequent stages, single storey gecekondus were replaced with multistorey reinforced concrete structures alongside the entrenchment of informal land markets (Şenyapılı 1992; Tekeli 1992: 91–92), while some gecekondus were even started with subsequent vertical extensions in mind; namely, as the first storey of an extendable reinforced concrete structure. This process of vertical development was particularly striking during election periods, when the authorities preferred to turn a blind eye to illegal expansions (Keyder 2005: 126; Öncü 1988: 47). The truly dramatic transformation of gecekondu areas occurred following a series of amnesty laws issued in the wake of the military coup of 1980 to legalise and regulate informal housing. Thus began a period of intensive plotting urbanism in Istanbul.

These amnesty laws, the most important of which is Law 2981 from 1984, issued amnesties for gecekondus and for unauthorised constructions on illegally subdivided agricultural land. Beyond granting residents assurance against eviction, these amnesties also explicitly allowed the upzoning of many low-density gecekondu neighbourhoods (Ekinci 1998). This opened the floodgates to speculation (Duyar-Kienast 2005) and ushered in what Orhen Esen (2011) calls the post-gecekondu period. Gecekondu owners were issued title assignation documents *(tapu tahsis belgesi)*, which are essentially written promises they would get a legal title deed pending the execution of an improvement plan *(ıslah imar planı)* by the local authorities. Many gecekondu neighbourhoods attained legality through this policy while some still remained in a limbo when, for various reasons, the municipalities did not implement an improvement plan. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s the central government kept on issuing new legislation to regulate unlawfully developed areas (for details see Tercan 2018).

The availability of funding schemes and the procedure of plotting urbanism depend largely on the locational advantage of an area and the degree of tenure security that is in place. In areas with low demand for renting, plot owners rely on their individual resources and are often personally involved in the construction of a dwelling

(Şenyapılı 1992). The vertical extension of the structure proceeds in different stages, as political and economic opportunities arise. In areas developed through self-financing the intensity of plotting tends to be limited, often blurring the distinctions between popular urbanisation and plotting (for instance, in the case of building on an additional storey for a family member). In areas where demand is high and with locational advantages, plotting is based on *yapsatçılık* (build-and-sell) (Duyar-Kienast 2005; Esen 2011; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Ozdemir 1999). In this model, individual owners strike deals with contractors. The plot (which typically includes the footprint of the built structure as well as outdoor spaces such as a garden and courtyard) is redeveloped as a multistorey apartment building. The owner and the contractor negotiate the share of flats to be handed over to the contractor. In parallel with the replacement of gecekondus by multistorey buildings in the 1980s and 1990s, another form of plotting urbanism became prominent, in which vast segments of peripheral districts of Istanbul (such as in Sultanbeyli, Altınşehir) were newly developed on illegally occupied or subdivided land (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001; Öncü 1988; Yonder 1987). Here, rather than replacing an existing gecekondu, plotting entailed constructing an apartment building directly on an empty plot, although often in an incremental way.

It is often argued that the development of informal land markets and the vertical redevelopment of gecekondus alleviated the negative effects of the neoliberal transition of the 1980s, which weakened redistributive state mechanisms, deepened socioeconomic inequalities and increased labour precarity (Başlevent and Dayıoğlu 2005; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 82–83, 165; Şenyapılı 1998). By overlooking and in some cases even providing incentives for squatting through frequent amnesties, and later by providing the legal framework for plotting, the state effectively offered a source to compensate for the negative effects of neoliberalisation. The amnesties also instilled an ethic of home ownership and provided incentives for precarious social groups with potentially subversive political inclinations to become profit-seeking owner-citizens (see e.g. Erman 2001: 987). Gecekondu residents actively lobbied borough councils and participated in local politics—often pragmatically switching party affiliations—so as to advance their property interests and legitimise retroactively the unauthorised structures that they had already erected (Esen 2011: 480). It is also during this time that the dominant representation of gecekondu residents changed from being the disadvantaged Other to the undeserving rich Other (Erman 2001).

Increasing commercialisation of land development under plotting has most notoriously manifested itself in a fierce competition to capture wealth based on land rent, the entrenchment of a rentier class and the exploitation of the poorest segments of the population (Bugra 1998; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 82; Payne 2001). While some of the additional apartments are usually reserved for relatives who get married, the rest are sold or rented out. In prime locations the incentives for commodification can be very strong (Esen 2011). In their analysis of the commodification of informal housing and the increasing precariousness of the urban poor, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu (2001) propose the term 'rotating poverty' to characterise the situations in which certain segments of the urban poor, notably those who arrive first, are able to accumulate wealth at the expense of latecomers. They use the case of Sultanbeyli, a hitherto peripheral rural area that was informally parcelised and rapidly settled using

Istanbul; a vestige of gecekondu amidst plotting urbanism. Zeytinburnu, 2012

religious-communitarian networks, to demonstrate that those who participate in the earlier rounds of land occupation get the lion's share of land rents, and latecomers join the network as secondary buyers or tenants. The creation of wealth under this system is dependent on new members joining and constant growth (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001). There is a reverse correlation between the date of migration and possibilities for upward socioeconomic mobility, as Altınoluk and Enlil show in their detailed study of this pyramid-like scheme in Istanbul's Çeliktepe neighbourhood. In the 1990s and early 2000s the losers of rotating poverty were often Kurdish citizens displaced as a result of the armed conflict in south-east Turkey (Altınoluk and Enlil 2008). A large portion of recent tenants are international migrants, including refugees from Syria.

Another obvious downside of plotting is the poor environmental and material quality of the resulting urban areas (Duyar-Kienast 2005: 27–29). Under conditions of continuing growth in real estate markets, and within the framework of a populist approach to unauthorised urbanisation, most of what used to be low-density gecekondu neighbourhoods and peripheral agricultural land was urbanised rapidly and in a haphazard fashion, resulting in a low quality of building construction. Even though improvement plans by local authorities sought to ameliorate the situation, their impact was limited due to the de facto nature of development and the ongoing violation of building codes. Especially in high rent areas, the owners built more storeys than was permitted and encroached on common ground. There was practically no oversight on the quality of construction and the structural robustness of the buildings. In some extreme cases this resulted in tunnel-like streets with up to six-storey buildings on both sides. Parks and other public areas are rare and if they exist they are often found in small corners left over from the construction flurry. Zeytinburnu, one of the earliest gecekondu settlements dating back to the late 1940s, which experienced heavy plotting in the 1980s and 1990s, is a prime example of this. In his meticulous documentation of Zeytinburnu, Akçay (1974: 27) mentions rows of fruit and ornamental trees, behind which 'gecekondus become invisible'. The physical situation today, characterised by a dense jungle of reinforced concrete is a far cry from that. Çetin, a shop owner in Zeytinburnu, was born and raised there.[4] Recalling his childhood in the 1970s he spoke about houses with gardens and trees and how he spent his time playing on the streets with his friends. In contrast, his children are stuck at home, as there is no space for them to play. 'Now everywhere is full of cars … I want to send my daughters swimming. But there is no place. Everywhere is full of houses. No empty space. They sit at home.' The dramatic increase in density and population was in many places accompanied by the anonymisation of interpersonal relations (Ayata 1989; Ozdemir 1999) and the increase in petty crime (Yonucu 2008).

Plotting in Istanbul came to a near halt in the early 2000s as a combined consequence of the severe economic crisis of 2001 and the ravages of the 1999 earthquake, which claimed hundreds of lives and revealed the poor quality of construction. The Justice and Development Party (AKP), which came to power in the wake of the crisis, initiated an agenda of 'urban transformation' and fortified the Turkish Housing Development Administration (TOKI) as its main agent (Karaman 2013a, 2013b, 2014; Türkün 2014). This top-down model of renewal faced resistance from residents and did not have a significant impact. In this context, plotting has resurfaced in many former gecekondu areas (such as in Gaziosmanpaşa and Esenyurt). This latest wave of plotting differs from the previous ones in two respects: firstly, the material quality of construction is vastly superior; secondly, these new buildings usually follow zoning and building codes. Nonetheless, local power relations and negotiations are still crucial for the outcome.

These various examples show that the trajectories of plotting in Istanbul are very diverse and result in uneven patterns of urbanisation and urban landscapes. These are shaped by various factors, most notably tenure and landownership status, proximity to centralities and connectivity to main transport axes (Esen 2011: 485–486; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001: 167; Şenyapılı 1998: 313). While districts such as Zeytinburnu and Bağcılar are heavily plotted today, some sections of Gaziosmanpaşa, Ümraniye, Sarıyer and Maltepe, among others, maintain their low-rise gecekondu character.

Istanbul bears the heavy imprint of plotting in its urban fabric today. Thanks to plotting, precarious settlements have turned into dense robust neighbourhoods and peripheral agricultural land has been rapidly urbanised. These settlements have provided housing for Istanbul's 'urban majority' and have so far proven to be very resistant to top-down schemes to redevelop them. Since the mid-2000s various urban renewal schemes have been attempted, with limited success. Meanwhile, plotted neighbourhoods are slowly being upgraded (in some cases at higher densities) at the scale of individual buildings, and new plotted neighbourhoods continue to emerge—albeit at smaller scales than in the 1980s and 1990s.

# SHENZHEN: PLOTTING AS A CONTRADICTORY CATALYST FOR RAPID URBANISATION

Looking from the 100th floor of the Kingkey tower in the financial centre of Luohu one may discern, in the midst of dozens of commercial skyscrapers, a cluster of closely packed seven to ten-storey buildings with thin lines of alleys and streets between them. This is Caiwuwei, whose high-density urban form with bustling street life contrasts strongly with its well-organised and controlled surroundings filled with skyscrapers, shopping malls, office blocks and condominium towers. One can also stroll around the grungy and narrow alleys of places like Hubeicun, Sungang and Baishizhou, with tangled electric and internet wires overhead, water dripping from air-conditioners and sewer lines underfoot. These are all urbanised villages, or chengzhongcun (villages-in-the-city), which are commonly represented as composed of 'hand-shaking buildings', or building spaces that leave open only 'a line of sky' because of the countless narrow alleys running between the buildings. In fact, these seemingly haphazardly constructed settlements formed the very basis of the growth of the contemporary urban region of Shenzhen, consisting of 12 million inhabitants in 2016 (Shenzhen Statistics Bureau 2017).

In 1980, when Deng Xiaoping declared Shenzhen as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ), it was a rural area located in Bao'an county between Hong Kong and Dongguan, with fields surrounding the small town of Shenzhen. Village collectives owned the land and exercised rural government functions inherited from the people's communes. The central government established a SEZ of 327 km$^2$ in the southern part of Bao'an county on the border with Hong Kong. As a forerunner of the future national economic policy, the administrative status of Shenzhen was reshuffled from a county *(xian)* to a city *(shi)*. In 1988 the city government was directly subordinated to the central government in terms of economic planning. However, this administrative reshuffle created a legal twilight zone in which rural and city government systems coexisted and became interwoven, which soon produced a whole series of contradictions and conflicts.

The first problem emerged from the fact that much of the land belonged to the village collectives, while the city only owned three square kilometres of land surrounding the former Shenzhen town (SUPLAB 1999). Since the land rights of the villages were strongly upheld in national law, the city government had to acquire farmland and compensate the village collectives, as well as offer jobs to the villagers affected. In order to promote urban development, the government introduced a new policy of land exchange: it acquired farmland while granting the village collectives the right to develop a portion of their own farmland into industrial and commercial zones ('non-agricultural land'), thereby enabling the creation of jobs and an additional income for the villagers (Zhang et al. 2003). However, this pragmatic solution in turn triggered subsequent contradictions because it created a dual institutional structure in regard to land development. On the one hand, land owned by the state was delegated to the city of Shenzhen; this land was defined as urban land and could be used for housing, industrial and commercial uses. On the other hand, the land of the village collectives retained its rural designation. This dual land policy led to a contradictory urban development process: while the city government started to develop the urban land according to master plans, it created at the same time the institutional framework for the village collectives to participate in the urbanisation process and also to develop their rural land. Throughout the 1980s, villagers were encouraged to construct new one- to two-storey concrete buildings with courtyards, which soon sparked the massive expansion of the settlement areas of the villages. As a consequence, the village collectives continued to own and manage their inherited land, while the city government enacted new building codes and regulations for this rural land, but relied on the village leaders to implement both (Wang et al. 2009). A policy of red lining

was applied to demarcate village boundaries and to contain their expansion. However, during the late 1980s, villages started to build houses on farmland outside the red lines, but only on a modest scale (Wang et al. 2009). This practice, which villagers understood to be conforming to their collective rights, was deemed illegal by the city government. Thus, the co-evolution and overlapping of the divided spaces of rural and urban government generated a legal twilight zone (Ho 2001) and led to the development of the spatial form of urbanising villages, a kind of rural–urban interface emerging alongside the expanding urban areas controlled by the city of Shenzhen. In this way, plotting urbanism started in Shenzhen.

During the 1980s Shenzhen legalised the transfer of land-use rights through several rounds of amendments, thereby accelerating urban development (Ng and Tang 2004b). In 1988 another amendment to the Constitution was approved by the National People's Congress, allowing local governments to lease state-owned land to private developers (see Lin and Ho 2005). This fuelled the widespread transformation of farmland into urban development zones throughout the 1990s, widely known as land fever (Cartier 2001). Immediately after this reform, the Shenzhen government accelerated the pace and scale of urban development and eventually deprived many villagers of their landownership rights. In 1989 it imposed an ambitious, forceful and systematised urbanisation strategy within the SEZ. This included a large-scale programme of farmland acquisition, which aimed at increasing the land reserve of the government for urban expansion, and at the same time sought to remove the administrative barriers that had emerged from the previous piecemeal land acquisition. To do so, it reclassified all rural land, giving it the status of state-owned land (administrative-allocated land), on which village collectives could hold land-use rights as leaseholders (Shenzhen Urban Planning Bureau 2005). According to the Constitution, the procedure for changing rural land into state land would have necessitated land expropriation and compensation; instead, the practice the Shenzhen government adopted was to simply reclassify all collective landownership as state-owned land. Additionally, the Shenzhen government had to integrate the existing rural collective system through a policy of 'rural urbanisation' for all villages in the SEZ—at the time, about 46,000 villagers were registered in 173 villages within the SEZ (Shenzhen Museum 1999: 383–384). This administrative restructuring meant granting the status of urban residence (*hukou*—see below) to the villagers and it also included the transformation of rural cooperatives into (modern) shareholding companies.

The purpose of these reforms was to abandon the dual land regime, to eliminate the institutional barriers between rural and urban systems and to impose urban standards of administration and planning across all village land. The then Party leaders promoted these changes as part of the modernisation of Shenzhen by integrating the rural into the urban society *(chengxiang yitihua)* (Shenzhen Museum 1999: 383). However, this top-down strategy triggered widespread discontent amongst the villagers, who responded to it with a massive wave of plotting through the illegal conversion of land and constructing buildings.[5] Plotting thus became a form of resistance through which villagers opposed government policies by occupying land, thus defending their land rights on the ground. This is a well-known practice of peasants in China, called *zhongfang baodi*, meaning 'planting houses, defending land' (*Nanfang Zhoumo* 2014).

Since the late 1980s plotting has also taken place in the outer zone beyond the SEZ border, in a vast area of about 1700 km$^2$ located in Bao'an county. While the chengzhongcun inside the SEZ gradually developed into densely built urban areas, the villages beyond the SEZ border *(er xian guan)*, for example, in Shiyan, Longgang and Shajing, were urbanised as a result of the spillover of industrial development from the SEZ. The outer zone thus developed into an assorted and fragmented urban landscape, because the agricultural plots around traditional villages were subdivided into industrial districts, multi-storeyed buildings, gated housing estates, markets or government buildings and public facilities, somehow connected by the ever-expanding highways and metro lines (UPDIS and UESPKU 1998).

Shenzhen; village towers for Foxconn workers. Longhua, 2012

The conditions for plotting in the outer zone were different from those in the SEZ (see Ma and Blackwell 2017), because of the various conflicts that emerged among the different actors involved in the development and regulation of the land, including the county government, the town governments, village collectives, village households and the city government. In order to accelerate land development, the city government of Shenzhen made several attempts to gain control over the entire territory outside the SEZ. Firstly, in 1993 it changed the territorial system so that the city government could unify and control the planning process within the whole territory of Shenzhen. Secondly, in 2002, it started to convert the rural village system and to integrate the collective landownership under urban administration; a measure that affected a much larger territory than the previous administrative reorganisation of the SEZ had done. However, even as these changes were being pursued, local officials were informally issuing housing permits, while village cadres and villagers illegally subdivided farmland for various purposes and made a profit from the sale of unofficial land leases, which finally contributed to the failure of the implementation of the new land policies (UPDIS and UESPKU 1998). These changes created conflicts over land interests and eventually led to widespread resistance by villagers through plotting the land, especially at some prime locations. Many villagers hesitated to register their properties or to sign an agreement of new landownership because by doing so they would acquire land-use rights for only 70 years and lose their landownership rights permanently. A new burst of plotting emerged after 1999 when the government announced new regulations against illegal construction. In 2001, a new policy of legalisation was introduced for some illegal structures, which fuelled another round of plotting because some villagers perceived this as an opportunity to maximise the floor space eligible for legalisation.

To summarise, the recurrent emergence of plotting urbanism in Shenzhen has been driven by various attempts by the city government to extend its control over the territory: (1) Whenever the government sought to overcome the resistance of the villagers through institutional changes, new contradictions and ambiguities were the result (O'Donnell 2017; O'Donnell et al. 2017), spurring further rounds of plotting. (2) For each round of land acquisition, the government had to cede a portion of the land to the villages and thus plotting expanded further. (3) Another contradiction arose when the reclassification of land rights deprived villagers of their inheritable land. But even after shareholding companies and villagers lost their land title, they continued to act as de facto landowners (Hao et al. 2012; Lai et al. 2017; Wang et al. 2009; Zhang et al. 2003).

Thus, through plotting, villages could generate and sustain increasing rents and market values, even if most buildings did not have official documentation. It is telling that plotting urbanism has been officially considered as 'villages boycotting' the policies of the government.[6] As noted by Bach (2010), although these villages lost their rural status they retained the discursive and spatial imprint of villages in the city. In the entire city of Shenzhen, between 1999 and 2004 the total number of illegal buildings (both residential and industrial) grew from 240,000 to 350,000 (Shenzhen Urban Planning Bureau 2005). In 2014, the total number of illegal buildings (residential and industrial) was 373,000, 87 per cent of which were located in areas outside the SEZ (Shenzhen Tequ Bao 2016). As a result, plotting urbanism has left a fundamental mark on the urbanisation of Shenzhen: it has enabled the clustering of small and medium-sized industrial companies and the construction of various types of infrastructure and facilities within village areas. It also produced a huge rental housing market: about 38 per cent of Shenzhen's total residential floor space in 2009 was located in plotted areas (Hao 2015). In short, the villages developed into mixed neighbourhoods for a rapidly growing, heterogeneous population coming from different provinces. They offered a great range of concrete possibilities available to migrants to organise their everyday lives, establish small businesses and maintain their relationships with their home towns.

Plotting urbanism in Shenzhen thus had a twofold effect: it supported massive and rapid urbanisation and it fostered the creation of a new rentier class with the transformation of village collectives into real estate shareholding companies. As Bach notes (2010: 433), 'Shenzhen's villages became as much an experiment with the market as the [special economic] zone itself'. This process of commodification also profoundly changed the social relationships between local villagers and their tenants. The key to understanding this strongly asymmetrical and unequal social relationship is the Chinese *hukou* system, which continues to impose a dual structure of rural and urban household registration after 1978, tying a large part of the rural population to their original home towns to obtain education, health and social services, thereby also affecting their social status in urban societies (Hao et al. 2013; Wang et al. 2009, 2010; Zhang 2005; Zhang et al. 2003). The state controls internal migration with this system, and in the course of rapid urbanisation it also allows the state to limit rural-urban migration to avoid additional burdens on welfare and social facilities for cities (Buckingham and Chan 2018; Chan 1996, 2009; Fan 1999). The Shenzhen government also used the hukou system as a bargaining instrument by offering urban hukou to local villagers in return for their landownership rights. Nevertheless, many villagers have been reluctant to give up their land rights for urban status. Moreover, many of the migrants to whom the city of Shenzhen had offered the hukou were equally reluctant to accept this trade-off, because they wanted to secure their investments in houses or businesses in their

Shenzhen; workers' dormitories. Luohu, 2012

urbanising home towns, where they expected to return someday.[7] Due to their rural hukou, many migrants have not settled down in a specific city but continue to migrate to different places. However, these migrants are extremely heterogeneous: while there are a great number of floating rural migrant workers, there are also small traders, shop owners, street vendors, people who are self-employed, partly employed or daily workers, or students living and working in the chengzhongcun.

The most recent round of plotting—though relatively limited in scope—started as a reaction to a new urban renewal policy announced by the city government of Shenzhen in 2004, based on the demolishing and redeveloping of chengzhongcun; a strategy that has also been launched in many other Chinese cities (Zhang 2005: 225). In the following years, urban renewal became a new strategy for economic growth and a proposed solution to land shortage. While the new system enabled market forces to produce new urban spaces by offering various incentives to developers (Hin and Xin 2011), it was also deeply motivated by the political agenda of dismantling a large number of illegal chengzhongcun.

Despite the fact that government and media discourses represented the chengzhongcun as problematic, many scholars point to the positive roles that urbanised villages play in the Chinese urbanisation process and highlight the negative social impacts of redevelopment projects (Hao et al. 2012; Song et al. 2008; Wang et al. 2010; Zhang 2005). There are still many chengzhongcun in Shenzhen, but urban renewal has become the new dominant model of urbanisation.

# DEFINING PLOTTING URBANISM

The concept of plotting urbanism allows us to understand the production of certain low-income and highly dynamic neighbourhoods from a new angle. It results from comparing an unusual combination of case studies and captures a multidimensional urbanisation process that has not been conceptualised so far. As the discussion of the three case studies reveals, plotting urbanism occurs in very different socioeconomic contexts. It is underpinned by various political constellations and follows divergent pathways. What keeps these examples in the same category? How can plotting be identified as a distinct process of urbanisation? What are its core characteristics? Despite obvious differences and idiosyncrasies, these examples show remarkable commonalities that can be summarised in four main points. Firstly, plotting unfolds in a piecemeal and incremental way, plot by plot, either escaping or bypassing—at least partly—comprehensive planning efforts. Secondly, plotting expresses and brings to life a specific social relationship to the land, which is based on various ambiguities that are temporarily stabilised by some sort of a territorial compromise between landowners, plot-owners and state actors. This compromise is often based on the conflict-ridden overlap of formal and informal regimes of territorial regulation, land tenure and property rights, and can also include traditional or customary rules. Thirdly, plotting is usually based on the commodification of housing, including in some cases highly speculative land markets. It thus rests upon the exploitation of the rent gap generated through processes of urban extension and urban intensification. Fourthly, the distinction between property-owners (as rentiers) and their tenants, who often live in the same neighbourhood or even the same building, creates specific social relationships and even conflicts in everyday life. However, as our examples clearly show, the power relations between divergent interests change constantly, eventually shifting the dynamics that led to the status quo of plotting in the first place, dismantling the territorial compromise and nudging plotting urbanism onto a different pathway of urbanisation.

## PLOTTING IS A PIECEMEAL AND INCREMENTAL PROCESS OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Plotting unfolds incrementally, either as new construction at the urban peripheries or as the intensification of existing settlements. The transformation of plots by their owners, often by the piecemeal addition of new rooms, floors or houses, but sometimes also by replacing entire buildings, forms the material basis of the process. This piecemeal

aspect marks the fundamental difference between plotting and the production of mass housing, as well as the development of condominiums and the construction of 'regular' individual homes. The latter are usually based on comprehensive housing policies and state spatial strategies, follow planning regulations to a certain degree and often use standard layouts and floor plans. While plotting might also be marked by a more or less standard house type, as in the case of the face-me-I-face-you buildings in Lagos, the yapsat apartment building typology in Istanbul and the housing towers in Shenzhen, its concrete realisation also depends greatly on various circumstances, political constellations and individual decisions, which can create a wide variety of urban outcomes. Everyday experience in such neighbourhoods may vary considerably, depending on the particular social situation: the often cramped and crowded plotted neighbourhoods can offer space for a wide range of small businesses and activities on the basement or ground floors, resulting in a lively street life. Plotted areas have a great capacity to adapt easily to changing social and economic conditions, together with the potential for developing more robust urban qualities over time. Simone's (2014) analysis of everyday experiences in mixed districts of central Jakarta illustrate the everyday difficulties and qualities experienced in such neighbourhoods.

However, the predominance of a speculative logic and the lack of comprehensive planning also lead to ambivalent urban outcomes. As actors seek to maximise the exploitation of individual plots, this often results in the lack of public spaces and utilities, dense neighbourhoods with inadequate infrastructure, limited outdoor spaces and inconvenient layouts—all common features of plotting. When up to seven-storey buildings have been constructed on the original plots, eliminating all green space, as in Istanbul's former gecekondu neighbourhoods, the streets end up with a claustrophobic, tunnel-like quality. Many chengzhongcun in Shenzhen present extreme examples of residential density, with building facades almost touching each other while sparing only 'a line of sky'. Plotting in Lagos unfolds even in the complete absence of any formal planning, often resulting in a low quality of construction, as frequent building collapses testify.

Nevertheless, the piecemeal and individualistic aspects of plotting do not imply that the state or collective agencies are absent. While in Lagos even the procurement of basic infrastructural services is individualised, in Istanbul and Shenzhen state institutions intervene—with varying degrees of effectiveness—to contain, regulate and even provoke or encourage plotting. In addition to state actors, elements of collective organising and community ties also determine outcomes to some extent. Individual actors are constrained by the construction know-how and technology available and are strongly influenced by dominant models of houses and apartment layouts, and of course their calculations about the profitability of their efforts. Thus, thousands of individual actors may end up following similar trajectories as a result of collaboration, imitation, adaptation, path dependency and the varying constraints imposed by state actors. Entire neighbourhoods with distinctive features, facilities and small businesses thus emerge without using master plans but by constant testing, negotiating and muddling through.

## PLOTTING EMERGES AS THE RESULT OF A SPECIFIC TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE

Plotting emerges under specific conditions of regulatory ambiguity and recurrent negotiations. We call this situation a territorial compromise resulting from a combination of traditional property rights, hard-fought collective claims and the formal 'legal' rules backed by state institutions. Such territorial compromises often emerge from unresolved conflicts over land and tenure, which may impede further development but may also offer opportunities to a variety of actors involved—such as landowners, plot-owners, customary authorities, state officials and small-scale developers—to make a profit. Because it constitutes a significant investment in land, and competing land rights are difficult to resolve, plotting may be an important strategy for asserting a claim over land and strengthening the owner's negotiating power. Therefore, village collectives, community groups, social movements, religious communities as well as mafia-like organisations can wield a major influence on plotting urbanism, depending on their level of organisation and the political resources they are able to mobilise. In this context, informality and illegality constitute important elements in disputes over land as ways of imposing the 'facts on the ground'. However, this kind of territorial compromise is usually not stable, as it is open to challenge or renegotiation by any of the actors involved.

In Istanbul the conflicts and negotiations underlying plotting urbanism evolved as part of long-standing processes of the consolidation of popular neighbourhoods, as they developed from squatting and tolerated illegality at the beginning to a kind of negotiated and regulated illegality, and finally to regularisation. These uncertainties about shifting rules and regulations found their expression in continuous negotiations over claims to land and development rights, and the frequent amnesties given to illegal settlements finally led to the gradual regularisation of informal areas. In Shenzhen plotting was based on the entrenched ambiguity of control over the land and its designation as rural or urban, manifesting itself in enduring conflicts among village collectives, individual villagers and the city government. In this context,

plotting became the main process driving land transformation and housing production. The village collectives were able to navigate and make use of the constant changes to the territorial governing system and challenge the government's land grab over the course of Shenzhen's urbanisation. Plotting was thus a way of claiming space and of increasing the negotiating power of the villagers, and it was a very effective strategy of resistance to the imposition of state control over village land. As a consequence, the villagers managed to play a key role in the urbanisation process itself and finally became co-owners of shareholding companies and thus developers in their own right. In Lagos, plotting is based on the dual regimes of formal and customary landholding. On the one hand, this duality creates the contradiction between plot-owners and customary land-owners, who are often wealthy families and who use (and often misuse) their claim to the land. On the other hand, it also functions as a driving force for the urban process, making land available on a plot-by-plot basis and thus allowing high volumes of affordable rental housing to be produced for low-income tenants. In a situation where people have learned to expect little from state agencies or from customary authorities, this also resulted in the extensive self-provisioning of urban services. This particular situation has developed over many decades, during which plotting has become the dominant process of urbanisation in Lagos.

## PLOTTING IS BASED ON THE COMMODIFICATION OF HOUSING AND THE EXPLOITATION OF THE RENT GAP

Various forms of commodification play a key role in the process of plotting. In contrast to popular urbanisation, social housing and forms of cooperative housing in which the use value predominates, plotting is an important instrument for generating and extracting exchange value from the land and thus for realising the potential rent gap in the area. Neil Smith (1996) defines the rent gap, in the context of the gentrification debate, as the difference between the amount of rent the current landowner extracts from a plot and the potential ground rent that could be realised if the land were redeveloped to reach its maximum profit. Adapting this definition for our purposes, we focus on the intensification and marketisation of land use (see also Ozdemir 1999)—rather than on realising the full potential of the rent gap through redevelopment or refurbishment. This revised definition follows Shatkin's (2017) understanding of the rent gap in his comparative analysis of mega real estate projects in Asia. He proposes to decontextualise the concept of the rent gap from the concept of gentrification and its Euro-American settings in order to make it applicable to a broader set of situations. He shows how the extraction of emergent rent gaps is not only a source of profit for corporations but also a means for states to consolidate and expand their power. As he observes, 'the prevalence of dualistic land rights regimes constrains the commodification of urban space and the realization of land rents' (Shatkin 2017: 28). As the case of plotting urbanism shows, the rent gap may indeed be generated through the stabilisation of land regulations and formalisation of land titles, which might turn dwelling units with low exchange value into assets that are formally recognised and may become instruments for wealth creation (see e.g. on 'dead capital', de Soto 2000). In contrast to mega real estate projects, individual property owners and small-scale contractors, not the state and large corporations, are the primary beneficiaries of plotting. And in contrast to gentrification, commodification by plotting does not necessarily result in the large-scale displacement of residents and small businesses. Even though original tenants may end up being displaced due to increasing rents (see Ozdemir 1999), the outcome of plotting is mostly intensification and densification and thus results in a net increase of housing for people on a low-income.

## PLOTTING INVOLVES SPECIFIC TENANT–OWNER RELATIONSHIPS

The relationship between landlords or plot-owners and tenants shapes the social and political situation in plotted neighbourhoods in significant ways. In offering newcomers and immigrants relatively affordable housing, plot-owners have the opportunity to maximise revenue and accumulate wealth over time. Owning a plot of land, or ultimately a share in a real estate company, can significantly increase one's social standing and can be vital to participating in local politics and decision-making. The particularities of the tenant–owner relationship depend on the degree of densification, the level of immigration and the specific property rights in place. In the case of Lagos, plot-owners own the entire building and sometimes live in the building they own until they accumulate enough savings to relocate to newly constructed buildings with better amenities. This example approximates to a certain tenement logic, as is illustrated by Huchzermeyer's (2011) study of contemporary tenement formations in Nairobi. In the case of Istanbul, a strong condominium law, which confers ownership rights based on individual apartments, undermined the grounds for a full-fledged tenement concept to be realised: in a single apartment building one may find the original plot-owners, new homeowners who have purchased units from the original owners or the contractor and tenants. In high demand areas former gecekondu owners were able to accumulate some wealth,

often at the expense of newly arrived migrants who could find housing only as tenants. In Shenzhen, the income from rents has been a major tool of wealth generation as villages were transformed from agricultural collectives into property empires. While the villagers usually remain in the area, they inhabit separate and better quality housing than the migrant labourers living in the plotted houses constructed by the villagers. In recent years the shareholding companies owned by the villagers have effectively sold their plots to great profit, thus bringing to an end the process of plotting and giving way to large-scale urban renewal projects that eventually lead to significant upgrading as well as displacement.

# CONCLUSION

In our research we detected a process that we conceptualise under the term 'plotting urbanism' that goes beyond 'urban informality' or specific 'Southern' forms of urbanisation. Plotting offers a pragmatic and viable solution to the concrete problem of urban development in specific contexts, where there is not enough affordable housing, access to land is restricted and territorial regulations are unclear, ambivalent or contested. Even if highly specific circumstances and factors have led to plotting in our case studies, the cumulative effects of the individual plot-by-plot strategy have demonstrated astonishing transformative capacities in relatively short periods of time: plotting was the main urbanisation process at a given time in each of the cities we analysed, and it permitted rapid and massive urban growth at a crucial moment of urban development.

Plotting urbanism must thus be understood as a highly dynamic process with a specific temporality, and not as a static and stable urban configuration: it transforms urban territories, but the dynamics of the process itself are also in constant change. Plotting originates from a specific set of conditions, establishing a precarious and unstable new status quo which may change again and turn into a very different urbanisation process. Specific socio-historic conditions and urban contexts may lead to a great variation of patterns and pathways of plotting. Thus, in Lagos, plotting is an almost generic form of urban development which unfolded over decades and today constitutes the bulk of the built environment; whereas in Istanbul the urban process usually started with popular urbanisation, which was based on solidarity and social networks, and over decades turned into plotting, in which the commercial logic dominates. In Shenzhen, plotting can be understood as a specific historical phase of the urban process which formed the basis for the development of an entire new urban region, and now is gradually fading away in the face of large-scale state-driven urban renewal. As the speculative logic becomes stronger, we see conditions for the end of plotting, or a transition to scaled-up versions of it with the involvement of more powerful actors.

As a result of our comparative analysis we finally arrived at 'plotting urbanism' as a concept that we think may enrich the vocabulary of urbanisation. We believe this concept could be fruitfully applied to other places and could thus help us to conceptualise hitherto unrecognised urbanisation processes. Soliman's (1996) account of 'semi-formal housing developments' in Alexandria features many elements of plotting. In Jakarta, plotting could be applied to the question of urbanised kampungs, which have been analysed in great detail by Simone (2014) among others.

These areas currently experience another dramatic round of rapid transformation into condo-developments (Leitner and Sheppard 2018), a process that shows striking similarities to the case of Shenzhen. The process of urbanisation through the development of census towns in Delhi and other Indian urban regions also displays many aspects of plotting—an observation that merits further investigation (see e.g. Mukhopadhyay et al. 2020; Bathla 2023).[8]

By conceptualising plotting urbanism as an ordinary and widespread process of urbanisation and by locating it in its historical and territorial context, we may also be able to start formulating more focused, policy-relevant questions and exploring the modes and procedures of housing production that could make use of the positive urban qualities of plotting—such as the adaptability of the built structure to various uses, providing people with access to relatively affordable land and housing and the rapid delivery of housing at a large scale while limiting its drawbacks, such as exploitative owner-tenant relationships, the low quality of construction and infrastructure and the lack of common amenities and public spaces.

1 We thank AbdouMaliq Simone for proposing the last connotation of plotting.
2 From interviews during November 2014, Lagos. All names throughout the chapter are pseudonyms. All exchange rates are standardised to 2014 values.
3 Fieldnotes, 28 September 2014.
4 Fieldnotes, 30 August 2013.
5 Information given in an interview with a planner from Shenzhen, October 2014. This can be also found in a speech by the then Shenzhen municipal party secretary (see Nanfang dushibao 2003) and in local documents (see Luo 2014).
6 Interview with a Shenzhen planner, 2015.
7 Fieldwork in some villages outside the former SED border from 2013 to 2015.
8 We thank Nitin Bathla and Marie-Hélène Zérah for advising us on this relationship.

Mexico City; Lomas del Chamizal neighbourhood with condominium towers of Santa Fe. Cuajimalpa, 2012

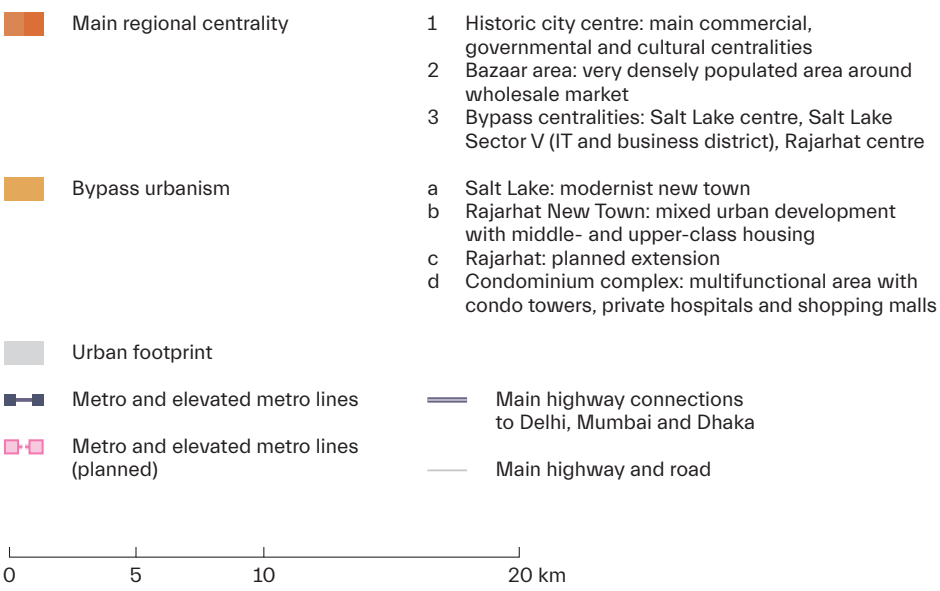
Lagos; company housing estate. Lekki, 2013

# BYPASS URBANISM

# RE-ORDERING CENTRE-PERIPHERY RELATIONS

Kolkata; condominium settlement constructed by Singapore developer. Rajarhat New Town, 2012

# BYPASS URBANISM



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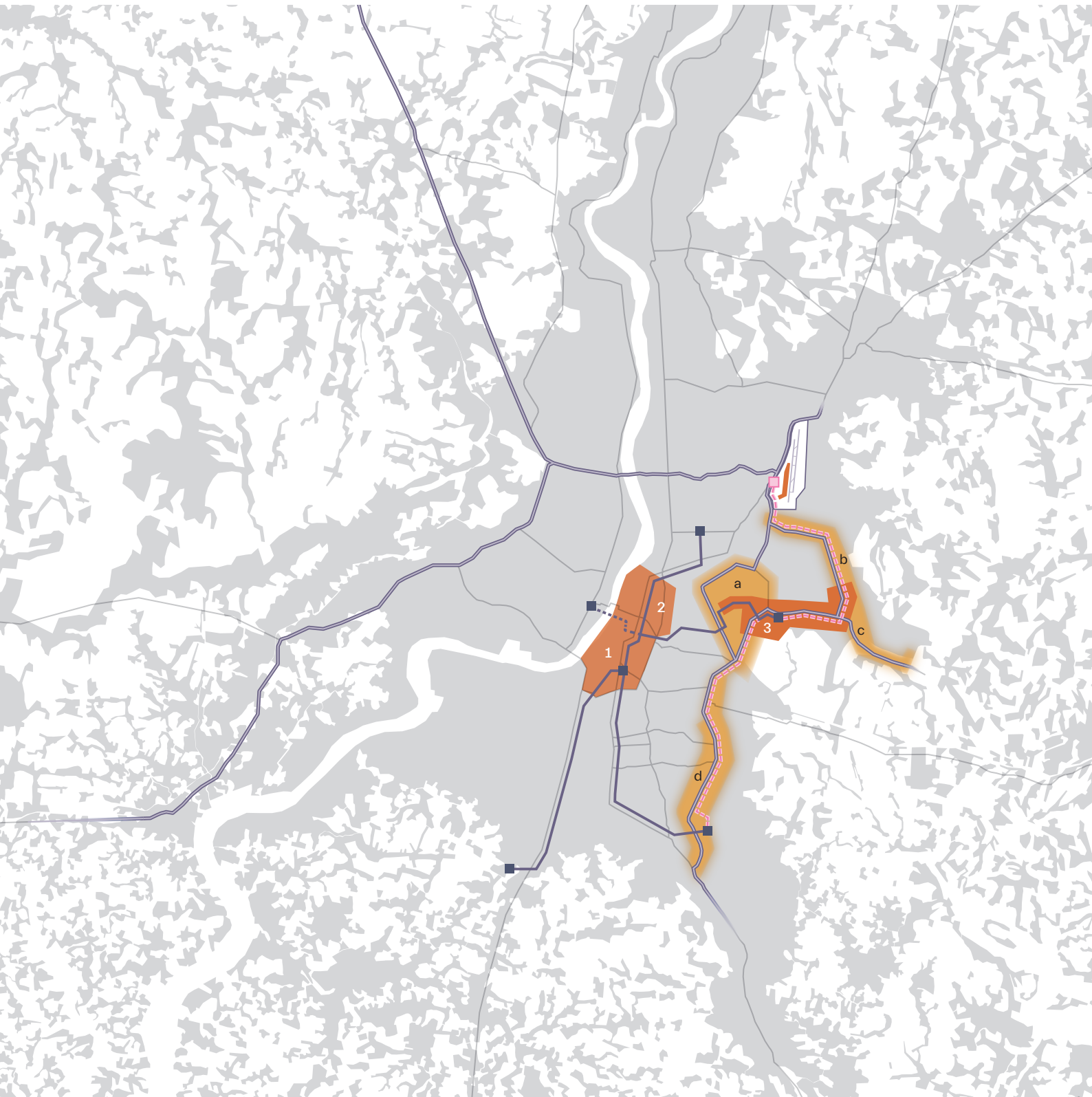

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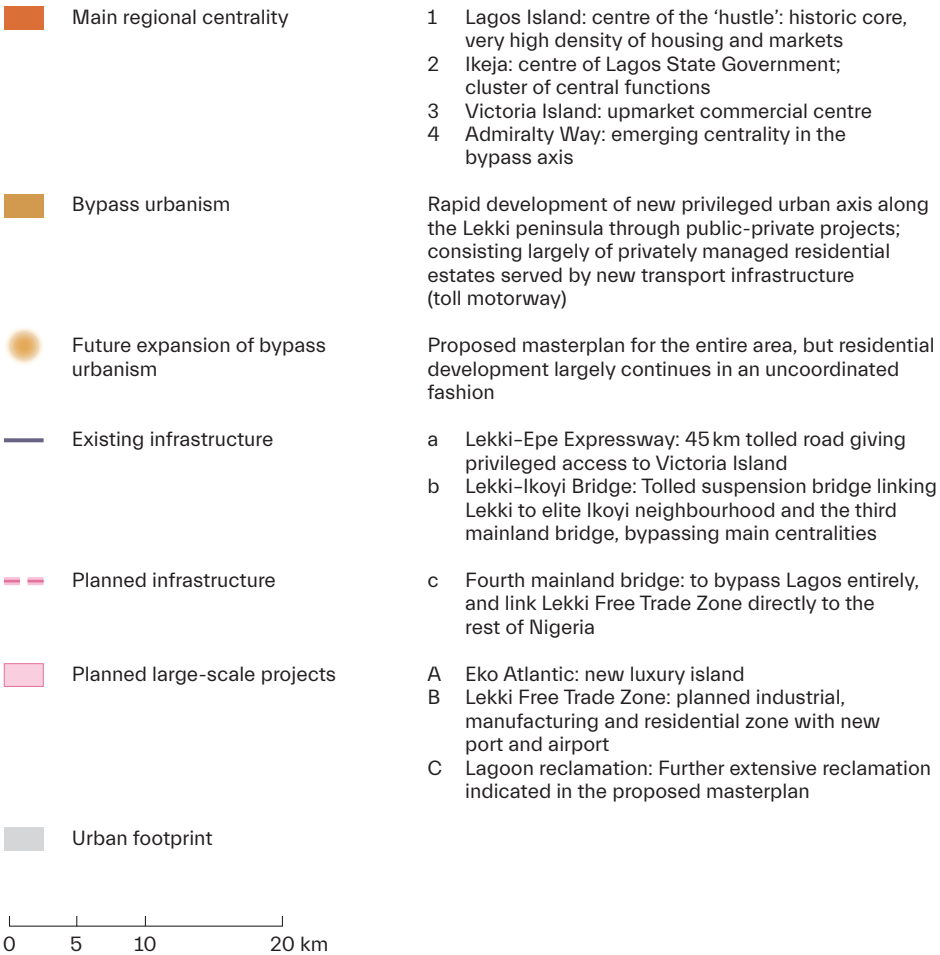
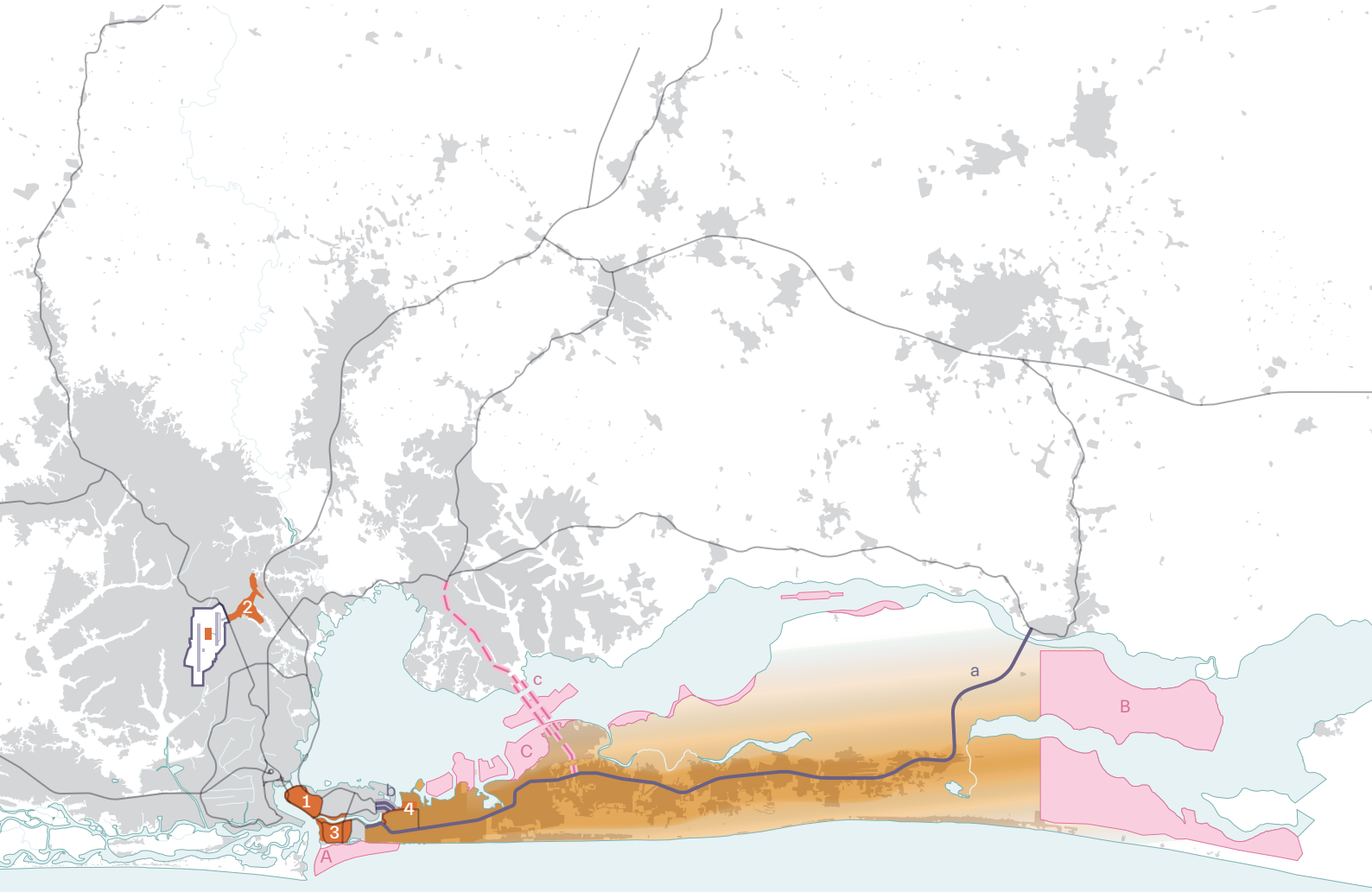


# LAGOS



# BYPASS URBANISM

Main regional centrality

1 Centro: historic core, cultural, political and urban centrality on a metropolitan scale
2 Paseo de la Reforma: economic and political centrality, losing importance since the development of the new centrality Santa Fe; backbone of established residential areas like Lomas de Chapultepec and Polanco
3 Santa Fe: financial centrality, headquarter economy and emerging CBD; attracting condo development in adjacent residential areas of Interlomas

Efecto Santa Fe

Production of discontinuous territories induced by new centralities; rapid development of new privileged urban axes through public-private projects; consists mainly of privately managed residential estates served by new toll roads; further development of condominium towers and gated communities in ecological preservation zones

Existing transport infrastructure

a Autopista Chamapa–La Venta: toll road bypassing the western part of Mexico City connecting Santa Fe and Interlomas
b Autopista Chamapa–Lechería: extension of the toll road Chamapa–La Venta, connecting Santa Fe and Interlomas with northern residential areas like Esmeralda and Sayavedra
c Supervía Poniente: Toll flyover linking residential estates and Santa Fe with the main circular highway Periférico
d Circuito Exterior Mexiquense: Toll road bypassing the eastern part of Mexico City

Planned large scale infrastructure project

A Autopista Toluca–Naucalpan: toll road connecting Toluca with Mexico City
B Tren Interurbano México–Toluca: commuter rail service connecting the western part of Mexico City with the International Airport of Toluca
C Phase III of Circuito Exterior Mexiquense: further extension of the toll road connecting western and eastern highways to bypass Mexico City in the north
D NAICM: international airport planned in the federal zone of former lake Texcoco; project officially cancelled after a non-binding referendum in October 2018
E AIFA: international airport on the former Santa Lucía Air Force Base; inaugurated in March 2022

International airport

I Mexico City International Airport
II Toluca International Airport

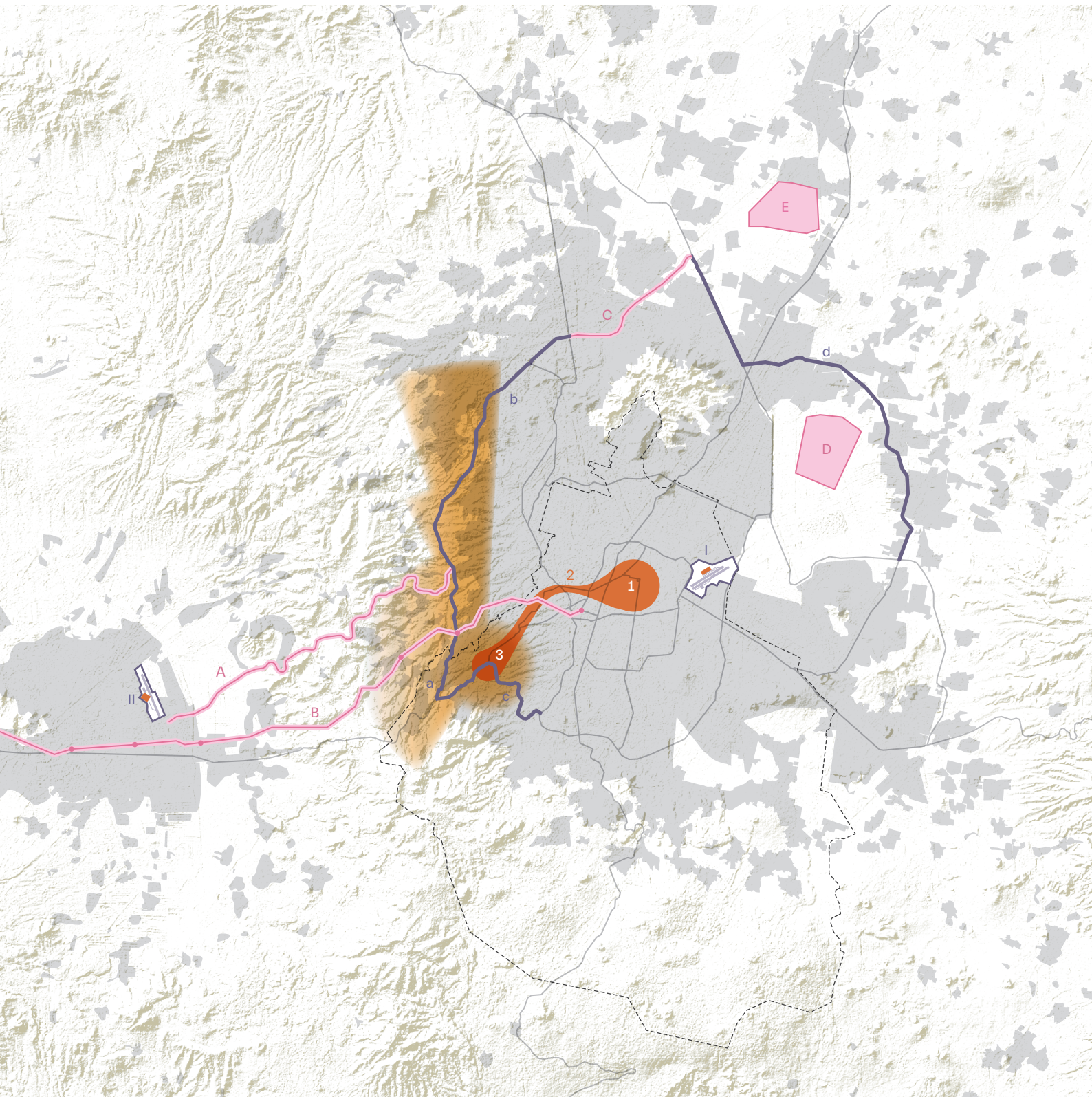
Urban footprint

Main highway

---- Administrative border of CDMX (Ciudad de México)

0 5 10 20 km

# MEXICO CITY



Lindsay Sawyer
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# BYPASSING

This chapter introduces the notion of bypass urbanism to conceptualise a process of urbanisation that reorders the centre-periphery relations of urban regions into new hierarchies. Bypass urbanism became visible through a comparison of large-scale urban transformations at the peripheries of Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City by zooming out and considering their impact on the socio-spatial structure of extended urban regions. Bypass urbanism does not designate the construction of a single new town or one real estate project. It is a result of the simultaneous development of various independent but related projects. Therefore, bypass urbanism usually does not emerge from a coherent planning initiative, even less so from a hidden masterplan at the hands of any single developer or state agency; it emerges through a convergence of interests over large areas of land at the geographical periphery of urban regions that have become available for new urban developments by various measures. We understand bypass urbanism as a multidimensional process that includes material-geographical bypassing, bypassing regulatory frameworks and socioeconomic bypassing in everyday life. It results in the creation of exclusive and exclusionary spaces that enable people to live middle- and upper-class lifestyles, at the same time leading to the peripheralisation of the existing urban areas that it bypasses and neglects. The massive scale of bypass urbanism that we have observed represents a new quality of urban development that does not result in isolated urban enclaves or archipelagos but in the fundamental restructuring of the extended urban region with far-reaching and incalculable repercussions.

## THE EMERGENCE OF BYPASS URBANISM

Something astonishing is happening in the urban peripheries, or what were once the peripheries, of Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City. Developments such as highways, airports, tunnels, toll roads and

bridges, private schools, universities and hospitals, business districts, office complexes, industrial parks, shopping malls, gated communities, condominium towers, luxury residences and other real estate projects at various scales have been rapidly built in past decades over huge areas that once were sparsely settled agricultural lands, wetlands, nature reserves, *terrains vagues* or even contaminated areas and dumping grounds at remote locations of these three urban regions.

The massive scale of these transformations became apparent in our research when we compared these extended urban regions; particularly through mapping, which revealed situations that are not easily visible from the ground alone. In each of these urban regions we observed conglomerations of large-scale real estate megaprojects, new centralities and newly constructed urban infrastructure in certain sectors of the urban periphery, resulting in huge affluent and exclusive urban zones that bypass existing urban areas. We name this process bypass urbanism. Similar terms have already been used, such as 'bypass-implant urbanism' (Shatkin 2008) and 'bypass approach to urbanisation' (Bhattacharya and Sanyal 2011) to characterise certain aspects of individual large-scale urban projects at the urban periphery. We use the term here to conceptualise an urbanisation process that goes beyond the reach of even the largest new town or urban megaproject.

Until recently, analyses of such urbanisation processes have focused mostly on individual projects. In Mexico City, Santa Fe has been mainly analysed as an emergent business district and the adjacent neighbourhood Interlomas is famous for the proliferation of gated communities (Jones and Moreno-Carranco 2007; Parnreiter 2011; Tamayo 2001; Valenzuela 2007). In Lagos the rapid urbanisation of the Lekki corridor between Lekki Phase I estate and Epe is gaining increasing attention because of its private housing estates, the violent forced evictions that took place there and its negative effects on the environment (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Nigeria 2014; Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018; Uduku 2010). The adjacent new town Eko Atlantic is noted as one of the new megaprojects in sub-Saharan cities (Mendelsohn 2018; Murray 2015; Watson 2014). In Kolkata there is a growing body of literature on the new town developments of Salt Lake and Rajarhat New Town (see e.g. Das 2020; Dey et al. 2016; Rumbach 2014, 2017; Sen 2017). However, these projects need to be addressed in a comprehensive analysis of the extended urban region by scrutinising the combined effects of new transport connections and the interplay of various megaprojects which are transforming entire sectors of the urban periphery into new parallel cities that bypass large parts of each urban area under study. These findings were stimulated by the decentring perspective offered by the planetary urbanisation approach (Brenner and Schmid 2015; Schmid 2018). By positioning ourselves at the peripheries of these urban areas it was possible to invert the usual centripetal perspective and to look from emerging urban territories on the outskirts towards the existing centre.

Our methodology was based on iterative rounds of field research in each urban region by individual researchers who used mobile and multi-sited ethnographic methods, interviews with inhabitants and a comprehensive consideration of the works of local scholars (Kallenberger 2018; Sawyer 2016; Streule 2016, 2018, 2019a). Mapping was the key tool for making these comparisons, as it allowed us to move analytically and imaginatively across different contexts to identify emergent similarities. Bypass urbanism is one such specific urbanisation process that emerged in our comparison in three of our eight case studies; namely, Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City.

In the following, we explore the characteristics of bypass urbanism and propose an analysis that leads to a revisable conceptualisation, which is open to further examination and discussion. Lekki corridor and Eko Atlantic in Lagos, Rajarhat and Salt Lake City in Kolkata, Santa Fe and Interlomas in Mexico City, together with a range of infrastructural projects almost constitute huge parallel cities on their own. The maps of the bypass processes reveal the scale of this transformation of peripheral areas. It looks almost as if new cities are coming into existence, bypassing the existing urban areas in terms of the material structure of the urban fabric, the territorial regulations that apply and their socioeconomic characteristics. It is thus our hypothesis that the entire urban region is being reconfigured through the production of various emerging centralities and new transport networks with the resulting off-centring of the urban structure. The emergence of heterogeneous but powerful alliances of various state and private actors and the concomitant transformation of regulations specific to these projects are also shaping and defining a process of urbanisation that bypasses conventional modes of urban and regional governance. Our study shows that these actors do not follow a clear, predefined masterplan or overarching strategy, but that the logic of capital accumulation and commodification is resulting in a new kind of urbanism that affects people inside and outside the bypass areas. The comparison of these three very different contexts suggests that the process also leads towards a peripheralisation of other parts of the urban region as socioeconomic inequalities are deepened and enshrined in the reordering of the urban fabric.

The following section explores the idea of bypassing in recent literature on urban megaprojects and new towns in large and fast-growing southern urban regions. We focus particularly on the deepening of socio-spatial segregation and the reinforcement of socioeconomic inequality, the inclusion of complex alliances of actors in the public

and private sectors in planning practices, and the increasing role of (global) corporate power and private investors in the urbanisation process. We then develop our specific understanding of bypass urbanism by bringing together a range of features to conceptualise a multidimensional process of urbanisation. The following sections present detailed discussions of bypass urbanism in Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City, which the final section will draw together to propose a more detailed and nuanced definition of bypass urbanism.

## URBAN MEGAPROJECTS AND NEW TOWNS: BYPASSING AS METAPHOR IN URBAN STUDIES

Large-scale urban developments in urban peripheries are not a new phenomenon. They have been framed through terms such as 'new towns' and 'satellite towns', usually without distinguishing whether they are built by the state or privately, or considering their specific spatial forms and concrete locations in different urban regions (see Gotsch 2009). As Murray (2017: 55) points out, such concepts were originally deeply rooted in modernist planning principles that aimed at taming and controlling the chaos of urban life: new planned towns at the urban periphery were intended to create ideal urban landscapes characterised by the imposition of a rational order. In past decades, however, the character of such urban megaprojects has changed profoundly. As neoliberal urban governance practices take hold they are increasingly being developed as private, gated luxury enclaves, designed to meet the world-class aspirations of real estate developers and corporate elites (Murray 2017: 165). They are usually located at the geographical peripheries of existing urban regions and are clearly and intentionally segregated, with the aim of attracting the new urban middle classes and excluding the rest of the population. Developers sell these buyers the image of prestigious and exclusive, modern, healthy lifestyles in highly securitised and green surroundings (see e.g. Datta and Shaban 2017).

The metaphor of bypassing is alluded to in various contributions on these developments. Chakravorty (2000: 71) states that Kolkata's new towns Salt Lake and Rajarhat would 'bypass the city's ills—poor infrastructure, slums and poverty'. Referring to Jakarta, Firman (2004: 358) notes that the choice many people make to move to a new town reflects their desire for new modes of everyday life, separate from, but close to, the amenities of the existing city, thus avoiding congestion, pollution and lack of space. For Metro Manila, Shatkin describes a form of 'bypass-implant urbanism' that meets the 'imperative of the private sector to seek opportunities for profit by cutting through the congested and decaying spaces of the "public city" to allow for the freer flow of people and capital and to implant spaces for new forms of production and consumption into the urban fabric' (2008: 388).

By analysing new towns on the outskirts of major urban regions in India, Bhattacharya and Sanyal (2011: 42) note the emergence of a 'bypass approach to urbanisation' where 'older metropolitan centers are ceded to the existing mix of wealth and squalor, while new towns are developed as the location of a new economy and a new class of producers and consumers', with the consequence that people are displaced to make way for the new urban elites. Rumbach (2014: 118) writes of Salt Lake in Kolkata that 'this "bypass urbanism" seeks to create new zones of exclusivity, where urban elites can, from a comfortable distance, enjoy the amenities of the metropolis, and its informal labor force'. However, as various researchers have observed (see e.g. Bhattacharya and Sanyal 2011; Datta and Shaban 2017; Rumbach 2014; Shatkin 2008, 2017), this advertised and much desired mode of segregation may reveal a range of contradictory effects once it is realised: often these projects worsen the commuter congestion they are supposed to alleviate; the built forms do not always live up to shiny brochures and in many cases the plans are only partially implemented. These 'urban fantasies' (Watson 2014) are confronted with the deep poverty of everyday realities and emerging economic and financial crises, and entire new towns remain unfinished and appear more like ghost towns than new middle-class paradises.

The construction of new towns usually reinforces existing uneven urban development and access to public infrastructure, reconfiguring the urban fabric and exacerbating socio-spatial inequalities and segregation (Wang et al. 2010). These large-scale projects divert public (and potentially private) investment away from existing urban areas and their lower income groups, compounding the problems that arise from longstanding infrastructural deficiencies (Bhattacharya and Sanyal 2011; Firman 2004; Ghertner 2014; Shatkin 2008; Siemiatycki 2011). The market-driven rationality for these developments (for example, privately funded toll roads) gives privileged access to them for those who can afford the associated charges (Ong 2006). These mechanisms have the effect of widening pre-existing socioeconomic disparities, and while socio-spatial segregation is not new in most of these urban regions, it is being reinforced on an unprecedented scale by the development of such new towns (Datta 2017; Firman 2004; Garrido 2013; Shatkin 2008; Wang et al. 2010). These large-scale urban projects can be realised only by the provision of new modes of urban governance, in which private regulatory regimes shield these enclaves of wealthy people from public oversight and interference, leading to an 'urbanism of exception' (Murray 2017).

Such projects often violate existing master-plans and land-use plans and are very poorly executed, with only short-term profit-oriented goals. Many researchers observe that global private developers are given increasing power in urban and regional planning, and public–private sector relationships are being reshaped so large-scale developments can be implemented. This is what Shatkin (2008) calls 'the privatisation of urban and regional planning' and Garrido (2013) calls 'corporate planning'. In China, state entrepreneurialism promoting urban projects on the outskirts of major urban regions has been a prominent theme for quite some time (Lin 2014; Shih 2017; Wu and Phelps 2011). In general, Shatkin (2017: xiii) identifies a 'real estate turn' in urban politics as a result of a range of reforms in urban governance, land management and state–community relations, in which state actors play an active role in making land available for urban development to increase their power and authority. He raises the hypothesis that in an era when state actors face intense fiscal constraints and are exposed to vagaries of global investment and finance, they increasingly seek to exploit opportunities to monetise urban land. He sees these tendencies as being the result of a convergence of state, corporate and real estate interests, leading to new strategies of rent-seeking and land commodification (Shatkin 2017: 214).

These new modes of governance involve controversial methods of land acquisition, which are often seen as a way of masking predatory land grabs. In order to consolidate large tracts, state actors and private developers often apply unscrupulous and unfair strategies, which are hard for local actors to counteract as they are relatively powerless and disorganised by comparison (Bhattacharya and Sanyal 2011; Firman 2004; Ghertner 2014; Rumbach 2014). Sometimes the violent displacement of residents living and working in the area can spark various forms of resistance, contestation and subversion by the existing land-users (Shatkin 2011; Wang et al. 2010). While megaprojects are usually justified by claims that they bring about economic growth and environmental sustainability and that they provide much-needed infrastructure, there is little accountability as to whether these goals have been achieved or not, to say nothing of systems for evaluating their long-term effects (Datta 2017). Nevertheless, the concrete social and environmental impacts of these projects and the roles of various actors involved in the development process vary hugely according to context and must be carefully differentiated (see also Hogan et al. 2012: 61).

The scholarly work discussed so far predominantly refers to discrete urban developments, such as specific real estate or infrastructure projects. While the massive restructuring impacts of such projects are often clearly visible, most analyses focus on individual projects and treat them as isolated islands—as terms such as 'satellites', 'new towns', or 'luxury enclaves' indicate—while the broader spatial context in which they are located is often not analysed. Only very recently has the large territorial scale of urban development come into perspective. One example is Datta and Shaban's (2017) edited volume, which presents various observations about the emergence of unprecedented modes and scales of transformation of peripheral areas in urban regions of Asia and Africa. These new urban zones, which they term 'fast cities' emphasising the rapidity of development, bypass the pressing challenges of existing mega-cities and may lead to the development of urban mega-clusters and new industrial corridors (Datta 2017: 9).

## THE CONCEPT OF BYPASS URBANISM

Throughout the works discussed here, the notion of 'bypass' appears quite often as a metaphor, mostly in the sense of bypassing planning instruments and territorial regulations, local actors and existing modes of everyday life. In our own comparison of Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City we arrived at a much more literal notion of bypass urbanism. We used it to describe the material urbanisation process unfolding along the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass in Kolkata, which became the backbone of the development of a large urban corridor of varying width including new shopping malls, private hospitals, business centres and condo towers. The obvious result of this kind of urban development is not the production of an isolated enclave or an archipelago of wealth and luxury, but a fundamental restructuring of the entire urban region with far-reaching and incalculable repercussions. In our terminology we extend the range of meanings expressed by bypass urbanism to capture a multi-dimensional urbanisation process that includes material-geographical bypassing, bypassing of territorial regulations and socioeconomic bypassing in everyday life.

Firstly, in our usage bypass urbanism involves a series of projects that together initiate the development of an entirely new urban configuration at the edge of an urban region. This includes new infrastructures such as airports, ports, highways, tunnels, toll roads and bridges; urban amenities such as private schools and hospitals, malls, private universities, golf courses, recreation facilities; as well as real estate projects, new towns and technology centres. All these projects together have the effect of physically bypassing the existing urban area. In this way, a fundamentally new model of urbanisation is introduced into the extended urban region.

Secondly, in order to be implemented, the production of these large-scale urban projects usually cut short or circumvent existing territorial regulations and planning procedures or take

advantage of certain ‘flexibilities’ and grey legal areas in the regulatory system. These projects involve alliances of various private and state actors, and often expand the reach of the private sector into urban planning and reinforce the entrepreneurial role of the public sector.

Thirdly, bypass urbanism offers an alternative to the messiness of existing urban space by the creation of exclusive and exclusionary urban spaces that enable comfortable or prestigious lifestyles to a limited group of people. In terms of everyday life, they bypass large parts of the urban region, reinforcing tendencies of uneven urban development, socioeconomic segregation and peripheralisation. We now discuss each of our case studies in turn and then return to the elaboration of bypass urbanism as an emergent urbanisation process.

# THE KOLKATA EASTERN BYPASS: MORE THAN JUST A HIGHWAY

Travelling from the central Bazar area to Salt Lake, we left the dense and congested urban core and drove slowly eastwards, noticing a steep gradient in manifestations of urban wealth. The roads became narrower and bumpier and most of vehicles using the road changed from the yellow Tata Indigo cabs to motor and cycle rickshaws. Suddenly, the road turned into an unpaved track leading through a poor popular neighbourhood. Just as we thought we were driving in the wrong direction, the scenery abruptly changed and we arrived at a highway bordered by buildings with shiny glass facades and skyscrapers under construction. We had reached the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass. While the urban centre of Kolkata slowly decays, new projects of an immense scale and scope are emerging on the eastern urban edges. In the East Kolkata Wetlands, a roughly 30 km long urban corridor has been developed from the International Airport in the north, passing the rapidly developing Rajarhat New Town and the modernist satellite town of Salt Lake and following the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass all the way to the south-eastern outskirts of Patuli Township and New Garia area. Along this corridor, hundreds of condominium towers and office blocks and a wide range of private hospitals, shopping malls, luxury hotels, private high schools, universities and

Kolkata; food stalls in front of condominium towers. Rajarhat New Town, 2012

a science museum have been built. Many more such projects are under construction or being planned.

The beginnings of Kolkata's bypass urbanism have somehow remained obscure. Chakravorty recalls how he became aware of the existence of the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass in the early 1980s, when he took it regularly to reach his new home in Salt Lake. When his friends found out that he used the bypass—which was then just a two-lane road—as late as 11 o'clock at night they were 'foreboding and solicitous', warning him about 'dacoits' (armed robbers) (2014: 184). The construction of the new town in Salt Lake, where he lived,

Kolkata; traditional centrality. Bazaar area, 2012

was in its first stage. Until the mid-20th century, Kolkata had developed mainly along the Hooghly River, one of the many tributaries of the Ganges. Towards the east the land gently declines to marshland, jungles and tidal lakes, forming an important nature reserve as well as an economically and ecologically vibrant region (see Bose 2015: 91). Through its unique ecological system, domestic wastewater from Kolkata is disgorged and cleaned in these wetlands and produces nutrients for growing vegetables and fish farming (Dey and Banerjee 2017). The first plans by the state to build an urban extension for Kolkata's fast growing lower- and middle-class population in the municipality of Bidhannagar date back to the late 1940s. They followed the tabula rasa planning model of modernist new towns of the time, such as Chandigarh and Brasilia. Land reclamation began in 1962 and the first houses were ready for occupation in 1970, but further development proceeded slowly. It was not until 1981 that the population of Salt Lake exceeded 10,000, but by 2011 it had reached about 276,000 (see Rumbach 2017: 5). During the planning process, multifamily apartment buildings for the middle-class were replaced in the plan by more up-market, detached single-family houses, and plots originally intended for civic amenities and green spaces were illegally transferred to well-connected individuals and commercial developers. Furthermore, state actors were responsible for recurrent demolitions of villages and repeated evictions of hawkers and street vendors from public spaces, often using the argument that their presence would conflict with the desired aesthetic and function of a planned modern city (Rumbach 2017).

From a broad perspective, this change can be seen as the result of a paradigm shift from a developmentalist towards a neoliberal or 'post-Marxist' (Sen 2017) planning regime. From 1976 to 2011 the state of West Bengal was governed by the Left Front led by the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M). Its main focus was land reform and reduction of rural poverty (see e.g. Bose 2015: 81; Sen 2017: 193). Urban development policies were neglected and limited to the improvement of *bustees* (poor tenement settlements). This changed around 1986, when restructuring within the CPI-M prefigured a turn towards neoliberalism within the party. On a national level, this change fully unfolded only after the economic crisis of 1991, when the negative Indian trade balance and a massive fiscal deficit led to the devaluation of the Indian rupee and the International Monetary Fund and World Bank forced the government of India to make wide-ranging economic and financial 'adjustments' so they would be eligible for emergency loans. The urban development of Kolkata was greatly slowed down by this crisis. It had already been held back for decades by Kolkata's weak economy and it was further hampered by a 'politics of deliberate uncertainty' (Roy 2003) in relation to landownership. This

policy was used by the Left Front to take state control of urban development, in a situation where most of the urban and agrarian land was marked by multiple claims of ownership (see also Shatkin 2011).

At the beginning of the new millennium Kolkata started to catch up with the booming Indian economy and underwent great growth in financial and producer services. As a result, the last undeveloped part of Salt Lake was developed into an information technology (IT) hub. At the same time, the West Bengal government changed its approach to become much more business friendly. Sen (2017: 195) cites an urban regeneration programme from 1996 that was directed against hawkers and street vendors as a turning point. Roy (2004: 152) notes that 'the New Economic Policy of the Left Front has taken hold most vigorously on the eastern fringes of Calcutta' and that the urban developmentalism of the 'new communism' remained Marxist only in its radical rhetoric, while it started to enact a neoliberal agenda by bypassing its own regulations; most notably restrictions on the urbanisation of agricultural land (Roy 2004: 153). Shatkin (2017: 160) explains this policy change as emanating from the growing interest of the Left Front in fully seizing opportunities for economic growth through land monetisation and the commodification of urban space in order to strengthen its political and economic influence.

After the development of several upper-income housing projects using public–private partnerships the Government of West Bengal launched the Rajarhat New Town project adjacent to the IT hub in Salt Lake, on fertile agricultural land with long-established villages, orchards, ponds and wetlands. The name is somewhat confusing because the municipality of Rajarhat, stretching from the north of Salt Lake to the airport and with about 400,000 inhabitants (in 2011), is not part of the new town. Rajarhat New Town, an area of about 3,075 ha with about 190,000 inhabitants (in 2011) is located outside the municipality of Rajarhat towards the south-east (see Biswas and Singh 2017). It was announced as being a green, eco-friendly and socially inclusive smart city in the 1993 concept plan of the Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority. In 1999 the execution of the project was handed over to the development corporation WBHIDCO (West Bengal Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation), a public–private partnership between the State of West Bengal (that held 51 per cent of the shares) and private investors. This corporation acquired the land and leased it to developers and private owners, securing funds from capital markets and building the necessary infrastructure. Based on a law dating from 1894, the government forced farmers to sell their land directly. This forced acquisition of the land, combined with the government's lack of transparency and unfair compensation which generated huge windfall profits for the government and its partners, and finally a range of forced evictions and demolitions, created widespread resistance and controversy (see e.g. Das 2020; Dey et al. 2016; Kundu 2016; Sengupta 2013). However, due to the piecemeal procedure of the project and the poor farmers' low level of organisation the new town project proceeded relatively quickly.

The Left Front's model of land acquisition came under pressure in 2006 when the government of West Bengal tried to acquire about 400 ha of agricultural land in Singur in the north-western part of Kolkata to develop a factory and a related settlement for the production of the Nano, Tata Motors' new low-cost car (see Shatkin 2017: 157). After the project met with powerful and widespread opposition by farmers, activists, NGOs, academics and opposition parties, Tata decided to locate the factory at Ahmedabad (Mallik 2017). The long-term fallout from this and other scandals was that the Left Front lost its majority in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly to the new All India Trinamool Congress in 2011 (see e.g. Das 2020; Sen 2017).

The overall plan and development pattern for Rajarhat New Town did not change substantially with the new government. The first part of about 2700 ha was close to completion in 2020. It consists of the usual high-rise gated residential complexes, a number of important global and regional IT and real estate companies, institutes of higher education, luxury hotels and several big malls. In contrast, the second part of Rajarhat New Town still sits in a splintered and rugged landscape, with some patches of new high-rise apartment buildings, together with scattered construction sites and fallow land. The proudly announced Kolkata Museum of Modern Art, designed by award-winning Swiss architects Herzog and de Meuron is just an excavation pit. The rest of the designated new town area contains 16 pockets of remaining villages, some recent popular settlements, agricultural land with herds of cattle grazing and the last remaining wetlands and ponds (see also Basu et al. 2020; Mitra and Banerji 2018). There are several reasons for buying an apartment in the bypass area:[1] On the one hand, Kolkata's emerging middle and upper middle-class residents are looking for fashionable apartments where they can live that are less crowded and less noisy. On the other hand, a large number of individual and corporate investors are buying here for speculative reasons. Some of them, mostly non-resident Indians who live in North America or Europe, are looking for apartments as potential residences for their retirement. Others, such as immigrants from other parts of India who work for a few years in Kolkata's IT sector, are buying (instead of renting) apartments as an investment. Additionally, some companies acquire apartments as housing for their staff. It is noteworthy that the luxury speculative tower developments in Rajarhat were until recently occupied only sparsely,

whereas the small condominium towers produced for the local market sold much more quickly, particularly if the developers agreed to make compromises with the local residents (see also Shatkin 2017 for the Bata Riverside project).

The construction of Rajarhat New Town in an already densely populated area with about 250,000 inhabitants in 1991 (see Basu et al. 2020) had massive consequences. It led to displacing residents and farmers from their land and the concomitant loss of their of livelihood (Das 2020) as well as to their cultural marginalisation (Huque 2018), ambivalent changes in gender relations (Dhar 2016), and increasing dependency upon unstable sources of income (Mallik 2017). Kundu (2016) shows in detail the contradictory relationships that have emerged between the newcomers and the old-established residents in this area. Many of those who lost their land now work as servants, housekeepers, security guards, drivers and cleaners for the wealthy newcomers. Others have opened shops and food stalls in front of the new office towers, or rent out parts of their homes to poor migrants from other parts of the country. 'Though villagers agreed that some job opportunities had opened up, these were few and far between and gave them little dignity' (Kundu 2016: 97).

A similar situation developed in the southern part of the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass, where all sorts of private real estate projects mushroomed, creating massive intrusions onto the wetlands with new office blocks, hotels, private hospitals and amusement parks. These projects could be realised only through various deals involving the illegal filling of ponds and lakes, and the demolition of popular settlements and evictions, often affecting poor migrant communities (see Bose 2015: 91; Mukherjee and Chakraborty 2016). This bypass urbanism is currently gaining even more traction, propelled by the recent extension of Kolkata's Metro Line 2 from the centre to Salt Lake and the construction of the new elevated Line 5 along the entire Eastern Metropolitan Bypass. These investments at the urban edge go hand in hand with disinvestment in central Kolkata, not only because of the congested urban situation but also because many houses in the inner city are subject to various different claims to ownership, which is stalling reinvestment. Urban development is thus figuratively and literally bypassing the historical centre and diverting most governmental and private investment towards the bypass area, creating a new kind of social segregation (see also Antenucci 2017).

Bypass urbanism in Kolkata has not followed a predefined path. Despite the fact that the State of West Bengal took the lead, it was not guided by a clearly defined masterplan and a coherent development strategy. The underlying reason for bypass urbanism in Kolkata was the political change from a developmentalist strategy focusing on rural areas towards a neoliberal urban policy. This change was not expressed by new investments in the urban centre but found its expression in the urban periphery where new urban projects were easier to establish. Bypass urbanism was thus the result of several, sometimes haphazard, attempts by West Bengal's government to urbanise rural land in various locations of the urban region. While some of these attempts failed badly, others succeeded. Faced by strong opposition in some places, the government developed those areas where the lowest resistance occurred—in the eastern wetlands. Thus, behind the back of individual actors and state planners, a range of projects developed, resulting not in a patchwork of urban enclaves, nor in an archipelago of wealth and modernity, but condensing into an entirely new urban configuration. The Kolkata Eastern Bypass can almost be seen as the paradigmatic case of a new kind of urban corridor, bypassing large parts of the urban region together with their vivid and rich cultural, political and social urban life.

# THE LEKKI CORRIDOR: ‘THIS IS LAGOS!’ ‘THIS IS NOT LAGOS!’

To travel out from the Lekki peninsula located between the Atlantic and the Lagos Lagoon residents suddenly had choices: they could either take the toll Lekki–Epe Expressway to reach Ikoyi and Victoria Island, Lagos’s major centres, or the toll Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge to bypass them to get directly to mainland Lagos, where the main part of the metropolitan region is located as well as the city government, airport and university. This is a novel luxury in Lagos, where the chronic lack of transport connections across the waterways and marshy terrains has contributed to its notoriously bad congestion. The toll expressway dating from 2012 and the toll bridge dating from 2014 were the first major pieces of infrastructure to be built in Lagos for two decades, and they serve almost exclusively the wealthy residents on the Lekki peninsula.

Today, the Lekki corridor is massive in scale. it stretches along the Lekki–Epe Expressway from the Lekki Phase I settlement, with its luxury housing estates and commercial areas adjacent to Lagos’s central islands, through the mixed areas of Ajah and Ibeju Lekki, to the fast-growing Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ) near Epe, some 45 km down the expressway. One source estimates that the entire area covers about 60,000 ha. In only one decade the Lekki corridor has become the new place for wealthy private residential estates, private schools and new industrial developments (Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018). Lagos’s privileged areas have ballooned from small elite strongholds such as Ikoyi or Apapa in central areas to the almost open-ended expanse of the Lekki corridor. Lekki Phase I is emerging as a new centrality in its own right and is hugely popular with Lagos’s elites and upper-middle classes. This leads to an ambivalent situation where, as expressed in an exchange between a resident of Lekki and a resident of Ikoyi, the Lekki corridor can either be seen as an extension of Lagos or as something that is ‘not Lagos’.[2] On the one hand, this kind of urban development is what people have been waiting for for a long time: readily available land and housing, with fast and direct links to the centre and with easier and more secure procedures for renting and buying houses (‘This is Lagos!’). On the other hand, Lekki is a world away from the defining hustle and energy of Lagos (‘This is NOT Lagos!’). From either perspective, this kind of urban development is changing the structure and dynamics of the entire urban region. Bypass urbanism is producing an urban fabric with material, regulatory and everyday experiences that are vastly different from the rest of Lagos.

Territorial regulation in the bypass area is quite different from the usual method of urban development in Lagos, which we have called plotting urbanism (see Chapter 13; Sawyer 2016), which is the unplanned, plot-by-plot development of land where statutory and customary rights are intertwined in a dual land regime, causing widespread disputes and fraudulent activities over landownership, land divisions and property transfers (Sawyer 2014). In contrast, in 2003 almost the entire Lekki corridor underwent what is still the largest acquisition by the government of land in Lagos to date. During the acquisition powerful traditional landowners retained some key areas of prime land

Lagos; private estate development. Lekki-Epe Corridor, 2012

and small traditional landowning families were able to claim back land through a process of 'land excision' (Lagos Development Envision Lab 2020). Thus, traditional landowners retained control to develop their land, but nominally have to comply with statutory regulations.

This procedure has led to a new power relationship among the state and powerful landowners and to patterns of urban development that differ from those elsewhere in Lagos. Statutory and customary landownership regimes are more clearly delineated and the availability of large swathes of state-owned or excised undeveloped land has led to the proliferation of large housing estates. Private developers do not have to go through protracted negotiations for each individual plot (as described in detail in Chapter 14; see also Sawyer 2016) as they can obtain legal titles for large pieces of land in one fell swoop, either directly from the government or from traditional landowners who have officially excised land. Some powerful landowners in prime locations, such as the Oniru and Elegushi families, have profited massively from developing their excised land in Lekki.

The Lekki peninsula is very marshy and requires much investment for infilling; it is prone to flooding by ocean surges on the Atlantic coast and very serious coastal erosion that threatens existing communities living in coastal areas (Mendelsohn 2018). It was therefore only sparsely populated at the time of its acquisition by government, with the exception of Maroko, a vibrant popular settlement of 300,000 people which was situated in the western part of the Lekki peninsula on land of the Oniru family. The residents had been originally relocated to Maroko after government clearances of Lagos's centre in the 1950s (Agbola and Jinadu, 1997). In the early 1980s both the Oniru family and the government began to develop plans for the Lekki corridor and to agitate for the clearance of Maroko. The Oniru family sought to evict Maroko's residents by citing non-payment of rents and the end of a 25-year lease agreement. The military government then razed Maroko in 1990 with no notice or compensation, claiming that an attempted coup had been hatched by its residents (Agbola and Jinadu, 1997). The clearance of Maroko is an example of the blatant collusion between the state and powerful customary families (Soyinka, 1999). Violent forced evictions have continued along the Lekki corridor right up to the present, with one of the most recent examples being the Otodo Gbame neighbourhood (Amnesty International 2018; Mendelsohn 2018). Lekki became notorious once again when peaceful protestors of the #EndSARS movement were shot and killed at Lekki toll gate in October 2020 by soldiers, allegedly with the acquiescence of the Lagos State government (Busari et al. 2020).

Lagos; market stalls and housing in old Lagos. Lagos Island, 2013

However, little development took place following the clearance of Maroko due to the continuation and deepening of Nigeria's social, political and economic crises during the 1990s. Although the state encouraged urban development by offering subsidies, levies and the release of newly acquired government land (Al-Handasah 2011: 82), private developers and even customary landowners were reluctant to invest in Lekki and the government had little financial capacity or political will to carry out its plans (Kuris 2014). It was not until its acquisition by government in 2003 that the development of Lekki began in earnest. After the return of a civilian democratic government in 1999 Lagos entered a period of unprecedented stability and growth: over the course of six consecutive terms with the same political party in office,[3] Lagos State Government has focused on re-engineering its internal sources of finance, gained access to global financial markets and maintained an agenda of infrastructural development and public service reform (Cheeseman and de Gramont 2017).

Another catalyst for bypass urbanism has been the construction of new transport infrastructure. The Lekki–Epe Expressway and Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge were constructed and are operated using public–private partnerships. Rapid development around the western part of the expressway on land owned by Lagos State (Lekki Phase I) and the Oniru family (Oniru estate) helped to accelerate urbanisation. This continuous political stability, together with the proven commitment of the state and visible progress encouraged a range of additional actors to invest in properties in Lekki, including middle-class residents, the diaspora, companies seeking accommodation for their expat workers and developers. In retrospect, we can see that bypass urbanism needed just the right conditions to

flourish: land that was available, clear land tenure regimes, political stability, political will, a deficit of middle-class housing, public financing mechanisms and efficient tools of urban governance to enable private investment.

While the development of the Lekki corridor marks an important departure from the usual process of urbanisation in Lagos, it also reproduces some of the existing patterns. The same infrastructural deficiencies exist in Lekki as in the rest of Lagos: there is no piped water, no centralised sanitation and sparse electricity supply from the grid (Adedire and Babatunde 2018). This makes private developers, residents' associations and individuals responsible for infrastructure provision on their estates. Additionally, despite being under stronger government control and receiving more investment than ordinary neighbourhoods, the effects of poor planning are painfully obvious: building regulations and development controls are frequently circumvented; natural drainage channels are often blocked, contributing to bad flooding; many roads, even in the government schemes, are still unsurfaced; and the Lekki–Epe Expressway is already congested.

Nevertheless, Lekki offers the possibility of a relatively high quality of living and a desirable lifestyle for those who can afford it. The expressway, the choice of housing and new centralities combine to make Lekki an extremely desirable location. The Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge has had a particularly marked impact: it is very popular with residents as an iconic landmark and has become something of a promenade. Admiralty Way, where the bridge meets Lekki Phase I, has been redeveloped into a new upmarket commercial zone, with malls, bars, galleries, boutiques, restaurants and spaces for events. In this initially unregulated area, the state government not only tolerated the conversion from residential to commercial uses but encouraged the emerging centrality by increasing the permitted building height and essentially rezoning it. It is perhaps no coincidence that the Lekki tollgate became an important site during the #EndSARS protests of 2020, which were driven by young Nigerians protesting against police brutality and, amongst other things, being targeted for being 'fresh' for having smartphones, laptops, natural hair and nice clothes.

The amenities here are very exclusive, entrenching stark socioeconomic and socio-spatial inequalities. The Lekki–Ikoyi Bridge, for example, does not allow public transport and the high tolls make it prohibitively expensive for many, although it is an important piece of public investment and infrastructure. Housing estates are heavily guarded and gated by both state police and privately organised security companies, who limit and control access not only to the estates but to supposedly public areas and streets (Uduku 2010). However, an entire population of service workers is also very visible in these luxury estates, including housekeepers, cooks, security guards, guards of empty plots, construction workers and tailors. The small provision stalls that pop up to cater for their needs introduce a contrasting rhythm and character to the locked-down streets, bringing a bit of old Lagos to new Lekki.

Currently, two additional megaprojects are underway that are expanding bypass urbanism: the LFTZ at the eastern end of the Lekki corridor, which promises to be a 'model mega-industrial city'[4] with a new deep-sea port, new industrial and manufacturing zones, residential development and tourism—and even a new airport (see Lawanson and Agunbiade 2018), displacing key functions in existing urban areas. Further, Aliko Dangote, known as one of Africa's richest businessmen, is rapidly constructing a new oil refinery near the LFTZ, which is increasing land speculation and investor confidence. On the opposite side, at the very western edge of the corridor, the new town Eko Atlantic is steadily becoming a reality. This new exclusive enclave, planned for 250,000 residents and 150,000 commuters, has been built on reclaimed land in the Atlantic Ocean directly south of Victoria Island. The government has had little to do with the project besides granting it permission; few controls have been placed on it and a report that warned that landfill here would generate serious environmental consequences (especially for tidal patterns) was ignored.[5] The masterplans of Eko Atlantic and LFTZ exist separately from the 2012 masterplan for the 'Lekki sub-region' (Al-Handasah 2011), which has already been rendered obsolete by urbanisation and poor planning. Current plans for the Lagos metropolitan region continue to entrench the logic of bypass urbanism: a proposed mass transit light rail line along the Lekki peninsula will strengthen the corridor and a fourth bridge to the mainland from LFTZ will bypass the centre and provide a direct link to the rest of Nigeria.

In summary, despite the fact that Lagos State has played a key role in supplying land and transport infrastructure for decades, bypass urbanism in Lagos is not the result of an overarching masterplan. It developed gradually, involving varying power and actor constellations. Private–public partnerships, private developers and powerful traditional landowning families all played influential roles. Despite the seemingly haphazard circumstances in which the different projects were conceived, the current transformation of the Lekki corridor is a process of unprecedented force, exacerbating to new extremes existing historical tendencies for the segregated and unequal production of space in Lagos and the effects of weak planning controls. The corridor not only gives residents direct and privileged access to the main centralities of Lagos, but it is also gradually adding new urban functions and centralities to the peninsula, to some extent insulating its residents from the challenges the rest

of the urban region continues to face and displacing key functions from other areas, with unknown consequences. As bypass urbanism spreads east, taking up a significant proportion of the remaining prime and well-connected available land in Lagos, it spurs further peripheral urbanisation in other areas. The people who are routinely excluded from privileged developments—the urban majority—are left to languish in the ever-expanding north and west of Lagos, even further from the centralities and the new opportunities developing in the Lekki corridor. The increasing competition over land and housing continues to push up prices along the corridor, creating new divides between ordinary urban areas and the exclusive bypass corridor.

## SANTA FE AND INTERLOMAS: 'WHAT'S THE VIEW FROM YOUR APARTMENT: SAN DIEGO OR TIJUANA?'

To reach the western periphery of Mexico City, we leave the circular highway Periférico. Gaining altitude, we cross high bridges over deep canyons and finally arrive at one of the largest and most luxurious shopping malls in Latin America. Over this one-hour drive the urban landscape changes profoundly: densely urbanised neighbourhoods with two- or three-storey houses suddenly give way to skyscrapers and condominium towers. This area is known as the Santa Fe central business district, where transnational corporations like Hewlett Packard, Chrysler Group and Telefónica (Movistar) have their headquarters (Jones and Moreno-Carranco 2007). Santa Fe's urban transformation over the last four decades has been spectacular: what used to be a huge dumpsite and landfill of former sand mines at the periphery of Mexico City is today a business district, surrounded by condo developments, gated communities and country clubs (see Streule 2016, 2018; see also Duhau and Giglia 2008).

This area is often seen as the most western extent of Mexico City's linear central business district stretching from the Centro Histórico, a vibrant commercial centrality with a wide range of users undergoing profound urban transformation (see Chapter 17), all along the east–west axis of Paseo de la Reforma, a boulevard cutting through the affluent residential neighbourhoods of Polanco and Lomas de Chapultepec (Graizbord et al. 2003; Tamayo 2001). However, this conventional image of the connections between the periphery and the established centralities obfuscates an alternative perspective; one that focuses instead on the numerous luxury residential and office areas in the western urban periphery and their various internal connections. With this change of focus, a barely recognised but huge emerging urban configuration comes into view. The built area encompasses the Santa Fe business district and Interlomas, the adjacent residential and commercial area in the State of Mexico and also expensive residential estates like Herradura, Bosques and Lomas as well as residential areas located further north, such as the constantly expanding gated communities of Arboledas, Esmeralda, Sayavedra and Valle Escondido.

The urban configuration of bypass urbanism is located in two different federal states; namely the City of Mexico (CDMX) and the State of Mexico (Estado de México), which are the two main political-territorial bodies forming the metropolitan region

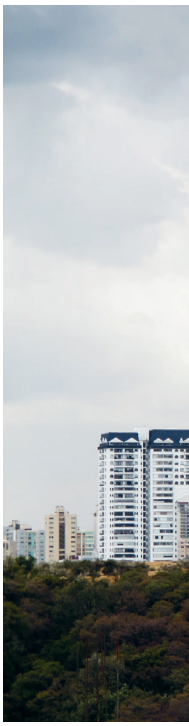
of Mexico City. The full scale of this emerging urban configuration becomes discernible by examining the newly built transport infrastructure. One of the most important of these routes is the toll highway—Chamapa–La Venta—and its extension, Chamapa–Lechería leading north. It is one of the most expensive highways in Mexico, connecting Santa Fe, Interlomas and Bosque Real with Ciudad Satélite and Atizapán further north. Another example is the Supervía Poniente toll flyover, which bypasses the winding roads in the western hills to facilitate rapid connection to the wealthy southern areas of Mexico City. The flyover was inaugurated in 2013, after strong resistance by the people who were displaced to make way for its construction (see Pérez Negrete 2017). Other such projects are still at planning stage, such as the toll highway connecting Toluca and Naucalpan and the Mexico City–Toluca commuter rail project, Tren Interurbano. Toluca, the nearby capital of the State of Mexico, is important to residents of Santa Fe and Interlomas mainly because of its international airport, which offers them a better alternative to the Mexico City international airport that is located to the east of the vast metropolis. Thus, far from creating an isolated enclave, bypass urbanism in Mexico City is profoundly restructuring the entire metropolitan region, resulting in a fundamental socio-spatial reorientation towards the western periphery.

All these new transport infrastructures are changing the mobility patterns of people who can afford to pay the tolls, while excluding less wealthy people (Streule 2018). Thus, the new urban configuration offers affluent people a range of amenities, such as a direct link to the airport, private universities, malls and hospitals, and at the same time allows them to avoid the urban threats and problems found in more central areas, which are located in an earthquake zone and plagued with chronic traffic jams and air pollution (see also Bayón and Saraví 2013; Ortiz Guitart and Mendoza 2008). However, even in this privileged area, the social reality of Mexico City cannot be fully erased and even these wealthy neighbourhoods still exist side by side with popular ones. It is common for residents of the luxury condominiums in Interlomas to ask: 'What's the view from your apartment: San Diego or Tijuana?'[6] Depending on whether they see Santa Fe or the popular neighbourhoods of Naucalpan, they may indeed imagine that they are living in different worlds.

Although the imaginary of upper-class white Mexican residents includes the notion that they are living in a 'first world city', the area suffers severe infrastructural deficiencies. Urban services are limited, and infrastructure problems like water shortages or the erosion of soil walls are common. In 2015, for instance, buildings in a central area of Santa Fe nearly collapsed during a spectacular landslide. And even if such real estate developments are sought after so residents can bypass the existing urban structure, they need access to established centralities for many functions and therefore this kind of bypass urbanism is still connected to the vast majority of Mexico City's territories (for a broad discussion see Hiernaux Nicolas 1999; Lindón 2006; Müller 2014).

The government of Mexico City launched the large-scale Santa Fe real estate project in 1987, in the wake of Mexico's dramatic economic crisis and after a major earthquake that had destroyed large parts of the central areas of Mexico City in 1985. The project was intended to follow the global trend set by urban megaprojects such as La Défense in Paris and Docklands in London (Moreno-Carranco 2013). In the mid-1990s, just after NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) has been signed, the Canadian developer Reichmann International went into partnership with financier George Soros and joined ICA, the largest construction company in Mexico, to build a housing, office and entertainment complex in Santa Fe. Their plan covered only a part of the overall Santa Fe development, which included office buildings, a huge shopping mall and a private university.

At the time, it was considered one of the most ambitious real estate projects in Latin America (see Depalma 1994). In order to bypass the usual urban planning procedures, the government declared Santa Fe a 'special zone of controlled urban development' (Zona Especial de Desarrollo Controlado; ZEDEC). This zone covers around 940 ha and incorporates land in the two boroughs *(alcaldías)* of Álvaro Obregón and Cuajimalpa. An urban development project that transcends administrative borders was a novelty



Mexico City; Interlomas, 2013

at the time and is still extraordinary in Mexico City today. ZEDEC Santa Fe was thus located on ambiguous administrative terrain; a grey zone for planning and administration.

The government assigned a newly founded semi-private company, Servicios Metropolitanos (SERVIMET), to manage the special development zone and gave it responsibility for constructing the necessary infrastructure, as well as marketing and the sale of the land. The company was also made responsible for the implementation of the masterplan and thus de facto for undertaking most planning-related tasks. In 2002, due to operational irregularities and various charges of corruption, SERVIMET was liquidated. It was replaced by the Fideicomiso Colonos de Santa Fe, a public–private trustee company, which included representatives of both the government and the main private investors, but it was fully financed through public funding. Its task was to manage the official public budget for Santa Fe, to plan the infrastructure and to implement safety programmes. The government argued that the de facto privatisation of the local administration was necessary because the ZEDEC Santa Fe stretches across two boroughs and therefore the responsibility for the whole zone was not clearly defined. However, after 2010 protests arose and residents of popular neighbourhoods in the area challenged the exclusive use of state financing and criticised the public agenda of the trustee company, saying it was in fact based largely on self-interest. The protesters thus demanded financial transparency and the renationalisation of the public services. In 2013 the city government finally transferred the public administration back to the two corresponding boroughs.

Mexico City; El Pedregal at the México-Huixquilucan road. Naucalpan, 2013

Privatised institutions were key to successfully bypassing ordinary planning procedures and turning Santa Fe into the first and only privately managed territory in Mexico City (see also Valenzuela 2007, 2013). The government created new planning mechanisms in order to foster the faster, more flexible and site-specific management of large building projects (Parnreiter 2011, 2015). However, manifold contestations and protests arose against this exclusive and segregated urban development, further fuelled by the state-led expropriation of land and the displacement of residents due to privately developed infrastructure projects and rising land prices (Castañeda 2014; Pérez Negrete 2013, 2017). Whereas in the first phase of the construction of Santa Fe the residents of popular neighbourhoods were evicted and deprived of their livelihoods based on the dumpsite, today Indigenous villagers forcefully struggle against other effects of bypass urbanism, such as the privatisation and extraction of natural resources like water and land. One example of this is San Francisco Xochicuautla, a village of Hñähñu-Otomí people north-west of Mexico City, where the attempted expropriation of common land to build the Toluca–Naucalpan toll highway provoked local resistance (González Reynoso 2014; Streule 2019).

As has become evident, bypass urbanism in Mexico City is not the result of a top-down planning process but of the converging interests of a variety of influential governmental and private actors, such as federal states, local governments, private national and international investors and developers, particularly transnational real estate groups.[7] Although the state played a key role in initiating bypass urbanism, private investors dominated this process, not least through their major influence

on planning bodies, as shown above. The massive change in territorial regulations designed mainly to benefit private interests unleashed an unprecedented urban dynamic: office towers, apartment blocks and gated communities are becoming predominant both in Santa Fe and Interlomas, and in a vast part of the western periphery including boroughs of CDMX such as Álvaro Obregón, Cuajimalpa and Magdalena Contreras as well as municipalities in the State of Mexico like Huixquilucan, Naucalpan and Ocoyoacac.

Thus, a regional effect of spontaneous speculation has unfolded, that we call 'effecto Santa Fe' (Streule 2018). Real estate prices in Santa Fe are cited in US dollars and monthly rents are among the highest in Mexico City, exceeding prices in prestigious neighbourhoods in the vicinity of the Paseo de la Reforma like Polanco, Lomas de Chapultepec and Lomas de Tecamachalco. This emerging exclusive real estate market is attractive to expatriates and for very wealthy Mexican families, who prefer to live in the safety of a gated community rather than in these more central affluent residential areas (see also Angotti 2013; Roitman and Giglio 2010; Sheinbaum 2008).

From a broad perspective, the bypass effect in Mexico City is less marked than in Kolkata and Lagos, mainly because the peripheralisation of the historically entrenched centralities is less evident. After decades of neglect and decay, the Centro Histórico, for instance, has recently undergone massive urban transformation. Successive city governments have implemented a multifaceted programme of revitalisation, beautification, policing and displacement, in partnership with private investors, most notably billionaire Carlos Slim (see Chapter 17; Streule 2008). The Centro Histórico has thus regained its importance as a cultural and political centre, yet it is still only a partial centrality and thus does not challenge Santa Fe as a financial and commercial centre.

# BYPASS URBANISM: COMMODIFICATION AND PERIPHERALISATION

What are the specific characteristics of bypass urbanism? The analysis of the three case studies allows us to refine our initial definition:

Firstly, bypass urbanism implies the material production of a relatively dense, affluent and exclusive urban landscape in a remote part of the urban region. The core of the process may be one or several large infrastructural or real estate projects (such as Rajarhat New Town and the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass highway in Kolkata, the financial centrality of Santa Fe in Mexico City or the Lekki–Epe Expressway in Lagos), which are complemented by various additional infrastructural projects (such as toll highways or bridges) and attract facilities such as business districts, exclusive residential areas, shopping malls, private schools and hospitals. Bypass urbanism thus does not arise from constructing a particular new town or a megaproject: it is the result of the simultaneous development of an ensemble of various independent but related projects, which together have the potential to restructure the entire urban region.

Secondly, this form of urbanism bypasses existing territorial regulations. It does not usually emanate from a coherent planning initiative, even less so from a hidden masterplan at the hands of any single developer or state agency, but emerges through a convergence of interests over large areas of land at the geographical periphery of urban regions that have strategically been made available for urban development. In most cases, it is promoted by alliances of numerous public and private actors; private corporations and developers acting for profit as well as various state actors making use of private capital for their own infrastructural and financial gain, prestige and political power. Bypass urbanism is also an often-desired form of urban development for emerging middle classes and globally mobile elite urban populations, as it fulfils their demands for housing, comfortable and prestigious lifestyles, good transportation and investment opportunities.

Thirdly, the resulting urban configuration is marked by its socio-spatial separation from existing urban areas and generates socioeconomic segregation at a very large scale. It is partially linked to the existing urban fabric through newly built transport routes and thus takes advantage of existing centralities, at the same time as redirecting investments towards the emerging centralities. Bypass urbanism, as the outcome of a wide range of individual initiatives and decisions, thus incorporates a fundamental logic of uneven urban development through the reordering of centre–periphery relationships.

In this concluding section, we compare the different insights that emerge from the three case studies and discuss the main specific conditions and outcomes of bypass urbanism, such as the formation of territorial alliances that underpin bypass urbanisation and the ceaseless struggles over land that accompany this process. We then look at the results and consequences of bypass urbanism affecting the entire urban region: the commodification of the urban periphery, the production of new centralities, the process of large-scale peripheralisation and changing centre-periphery constellations.

## TERRITORIAL ALLIANCES

Bypass urbanism is based on pragmatic but not necessarily coordinated decisions by a variety of public, parastatal and private actors that may also intersect and overlap. The role of the state in this process varies greatly over time and context: state actors are not the only significant actors and they do not merely act to facilitate private investment. They also intervene in bypass urbanism as regulators, landowners and financiers. They exploit their legislative and administrative powers to intervene in real estate markets and they also acquire and consolidate large areas of land. However, in a situation in which the potential to generate value and extract profit from urban land has increased dramatically, corporate actors and private finance influence the development of urban space at a much larger scale.

In Mexico City the government and private actors were explicitly intertwined, and private interests were incorporated into the planning process by the creation of parastatal agencies and semi-private management bodies. Private actors, including transnational corporations and investors, played a direct role in managing public funds set aside for urban development, and at the same time they developed their own major projects in the area. In Lagos, although the management of urban development remained more clearly under the aegis of Lagos State, due to the massive deficits in the provision of infrastructure and the limitations in state finances private actors played a major role in supplying public infrastructure and developing prime urban land. While the roles of parastatal and non-state actors were formalised through various acts of legislation in different contexts, negotiable regulatory systems opened up many opportunities for private exploitation and unplanned development. Powerful traditional landowning families colluded with the state to maximise the value of their land and became influential actors in the urban development of the Lekki corridor.

In Kolkata, the State of West Bengal played a key role in developing the infrastructure, such as the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass highway and the metro system. It also took the lead in planning and construction of the new towns of Salt Lake and Rajarhat and was responsible for acquiring and expropriating the land from the people who lived there. Private investors and individual landowners took advantage of these state initiatives and projects in many ways by exploiting various opportunities for constructing buildings, often through illegal practices such as encroaching onto the wetlands and filling up ponds and water bodies. As these examples show, the roles played by the state and private actors in bypass urbanism cannot be assumed in advance: in every case specific territorial alliances may be formed with the intention of taking maximal advantage of their power and resources to exploit the urbanisation process.

## STRUGGLES OVER LAND

The acquisition and consolidation of land is a highly contentious process in all three urban contexts because developers and state agencies often operate in a grey legal area. In Kolkata, the State of West Bengal took the lead in providing the land for urban development by expropriating land designated as rural for urban development and by maintaining and exploiting a 'deliberate uncertainty' about land tenure and acquisition (Roy 2014). In Mexico City, the bypass area extends across municipal and state boundaries, creating uncertainty over jurisdiction and responsibility that is open to manipulation. The government of Mexico City also expropriated land in the initial phases of establishing the special development zone Santa Fe.

In Lagos, after a protracted legal battle with traditional landowners, the state government took control of almost the entire Lekki corridor but left key areas of prime land under the control of some of the powerful landowning families. The resulting increase in land tenure security unleashed the urbanisation process and allowed state actors, some traditional landowners and private developers to exploit the opportunities of bypass urbanism to the maximum. In Kolkata and Mexico City there was much resistance to the expropriation of private and communal land, the access to centralities that resulted, the destruction of livelihoods and ecosystems and the environmental degradation. In Kolkata, various projects have been stalled or even stopped due to popular protests. However, the lack of transparency in the land acquisition process and the bypassing of formal planning procedures has hampered organised resistance. Furthermore, in terms of its 'unintended' impacts over a vast area and with no overall masterplan, bypass urbanism is capable of slipping under the radar of public attention, and the lack of public awareness of these occurrences may further inhibit popular action against it.

## THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE URBAN PERIPHERY

A key feature of bypass urbanism is the fact that it takes place at the urban periphery and transforms large tracts of non-urban land into prime urban land with a much higher market value. This land was originally peripheral in a double sense. In geographical terms it was at the outskirts of the urban regions and in socioeconomic terms it was relatively sparsely populated land, designated as agricultural land, as a nature reserve or as unsuited for urbanisation, such as wetland, steeply sloping or unstable land or land that had become contaminated. Bypass urbanism is thus a process that produces new, exclusive urban spaces out of peripheral land; such as the eastern wetlands in Kolkata, the sparsely populated and flood-prone Lekki peninsula in Lagos and the unstable sand mines filled with contaminated waste in the western hills of Mexico City. In all three cases peripheral land with little value has been transformed into a commodity to be used for urbanisation. In this logic, the realisation and extraction of the potential rent gap inherent in this land is a key aspect of bypass urbanism (see also Shatkin 2017: 214; Smith, 1996).

## THE PRODUCTION OF NEW CENTRALITIES

However, bypass urbanism goes far beyond the simple commodification of land, as it also entails the production of new centralities in these peripheral areas. This process has far-reaching implications and impacts outside the areas directly concerned, because it fundamentally alters the centre–periphery constellation of the entire region. Only in a relational understanding of urban space do the full dimensions of this process come to light. It is thus useful to recall Lefebvre's reflection that centrality is the basic condition of the urban. He understands centrality as a key resource, as it condenses the wealth and the potential of an urban society and creates a situation in which different elements no longer exist separated from one another. Centrality therefore promotes exchange, convergence, gatherings, encounters and meetings (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]). Seen in this light, bypass urbanism fundamentally alters the configuration of centralities in an urban region because it has the effect of relocating centralities, thus depriving entire parts of the urban region of this crucial resource, and it also alters the quality of the existing centralities. Bypass urbanism thus entails the strategic production of new centralities and the establishment of a reciprocal relationship among them and existing centralities.

Analyses therefore need not only to focus on the newly built areas but also to consider the effect that bypass urbanism has on the wider urban context. In Mexico City we observed a Santa Fe effect when a large area at the western fringes of the city was upgraded as a result of the development of the financial centrality of Santa Fe and the concomitant construction of toll roads, bridges and tunnels. Bypass urbanism also creates the potential for displacing functions such as new government agencies and corporate facilities of existing centres to the bypass area. In Kolkata, important public institutions and even state functions were relocated to Salt Lake and Rajarhat, while the existing centralities in the inner city face disinvestment. In Lagos the industrial developments planned for the eastern end of the Lekki corridor will displace key functions from existing centres, drawing labour and investment to the corridor on a massive scale.

## LARGE-SCALE PERIPHERALISATION

It is in this way that the process of peripheralisation is set in motion by bypass urbanisation. We use this notion here to highlight the reordering and reconfiguration of socio-spatial relations. Sassen (1994) applies it in the context of global city formation, in which the production of new strategic centralities leads to the devaluation of other economic sectors and hence also of other urban spaces. In bypass urbanism, however, entire parts of urban regions are downgraded.

This process of peripheralisation of central urban areas marks a main distinction between it and other forms of urban restructuring. Bypass urbanism thus constitutes a clear difference from the well-known restructuring processes that were conceptualised in terms like 'edge city' (Garreau, 1991), 'exopolis' (Soja 2000) or 'in-between city' (Sieverts 2003). While many new centralities emerged in the urban peripheries through these processes, the metropolitan centres were strengthened at the same time. The result could be seen as 'regional urbanisation' (Soja 2000) with a marked tendency towards poly-centrality and the densification of the urban peripheries. However, in the process of regional urbanisation the existing hierarchy of centralities persists and sometimes it is even reinforced: while new centralities emerge in the urban peripheries, they neither replace nor bypass existing centralities in the urban cores.

## CHANGING CENTRE–PERIPHERY CONSTELLATIONS

The distinction between bypass urbanism and other forms of peripheral urbanisation is illustrated by our own comparative research. While in all our eight case studies massive transformations of urban peripheries have occurred, only three of them underwent bypass urbanism. This can be seen in

our case study of Paris, where many centralities in the *banlieue* have been planned and built since the 1960s, including the famous *villes nouvelles* (new towns) with their own newly developed centres and the spectacular business district La Défense that served as a model for Santa Fe in Mexico City. However, these peripheral centres did not become an alternative to the main central area of Paris, which became an even more attractive and privileged urban space in the meantime (see Chapter 15). A different situation developed in Los Angeles with its entrenched polycentric urban structure, which was also a case study in our project. While Downtown LA struggled over decades to become a major centrality, countless new centralities scattered across the extended urban region emerged. In the last decade, however, Downtown LA has been transformed into a re-newed and refurbished centrality, attracting new businesses and affluent middle-class groups in the search of urbanity (see Chapter 17).

These observations illustrate the wide range of different possible relationships between the centre and the periphery and highlight one crucial aspect of bypass urbanisation: it goes hand in hand with the peripheralisation of existing centralities. Thus, with bypass urbanism a new kind of disparity appears, leading to the inversion of the centre-periphery relationship. In this way, bypass urbanism constitutes the opposite of current development trends in most large metropolitan regions across the world, where central areas are upgraded through flagship projects, urban regeneration strategies and large-scale redevelopment efforts, intensifying gentrification and the socioeconomic upgrading of entire inner-city areas. With bypass urbanism, however, it is the geographical periphery that is made into the privileged space, avoiding the messiness of existing urban situations together with their complex urban structures, opaque land regulations and the endless negotiating processes with their various stakeholders. Thus, what formerly was the edge becomes the centre and has a reciprocal and privileged relationship with existing centralities.

Bypass urbanism thus leads to the fundamental structural transformation of urban regions on an unprecedented scale. The production of huge, exclusive territories where residents have privileged access to an efficient infrastructure and various urban functions and amenities intensifies existing inequalities, strengthens socio-spatial segregation and reconfigures existing centre–periphery relationships. These tendencies are often difficult to discern. Using the excentric perspective of planetary urbanisation has allowed us to grasp this particular urbanisation process and contextualise various urban projects in the entire region. The main goal for introducing the concept of bypass urbanism has been to highlight and create awareness of the regional scale of urbanisation that occurs in and beyond the three cities presented here, and to add an additional layer to the wide range of important contributions on megaprojects and new towns that are available in the literature. Moreover, this awareness may enable policy-makers and activists to intervene in the process, develop responses to the large-scale changes that bypass urbanism brings about and link isolated local struggles with each other.

1 Source: numerous interviews with experts at the CSSSC (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta), including Sohel Firdos (2009), Saibal Kar (2010–2012), and Keya Dasgupta (2011–2012); and at CBE (Centre for Built Environment, Kolkata) with Santosh Ghosh and Probhas Kumar (2010–2012) as well as with Venkateswar Ramaswamy (2009, 2012).
2 This exchange took place in November 2013 between two local architects.
3 Currently known as the All Progressives Congress (a merger of several parties dating from 2013).
4 According to the Lagos State Development Plan 2012–2025 (Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, 2013).
5 The project was approved before the environmental impact assessment report by Heinrich Böll Stiftung was released (Heinrich Böll Stiftung Nigeria, 2014). Interview by author with Keya Dasgupta, 2012.
6 Source: interview with a resident of a gated community in Huixquilucan in November 2013 (Streule, 2018: 225–235).
7 Other actors who are deeply involved are transnational private infrastructure developers (e.g. IDEAL, OHL, LAR, HIGA, or FRISA) as well as Mexican investors, who develop the urban infrastructure and private urban projects like malls or gated communities.

Hong Kong; New town, urbanised villages, warehouses and logistic zones. Tin Shui Wai, 2012

Tokyo; a collision of contrasting urban spaces. Saitama Prefecture, 2012

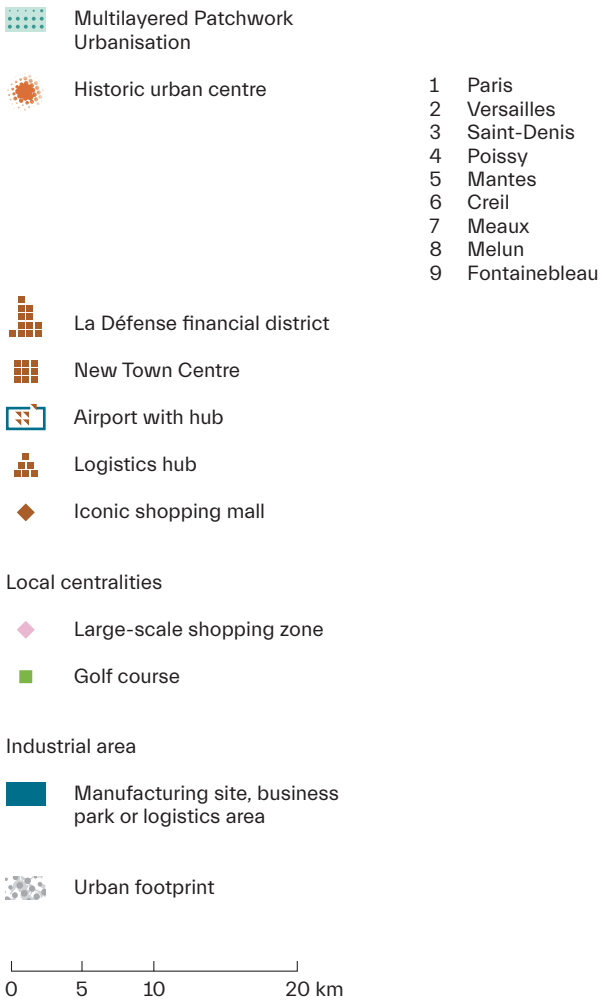
Los Angeles; Crystal Cathedral by Philip Johnson and John Burgee. Anaheim, 2013

# MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION

## THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE URBAN PERIPHERY

Paris; quartier Les Pyramides. Ville nouvelle Évry, 2023

# MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION



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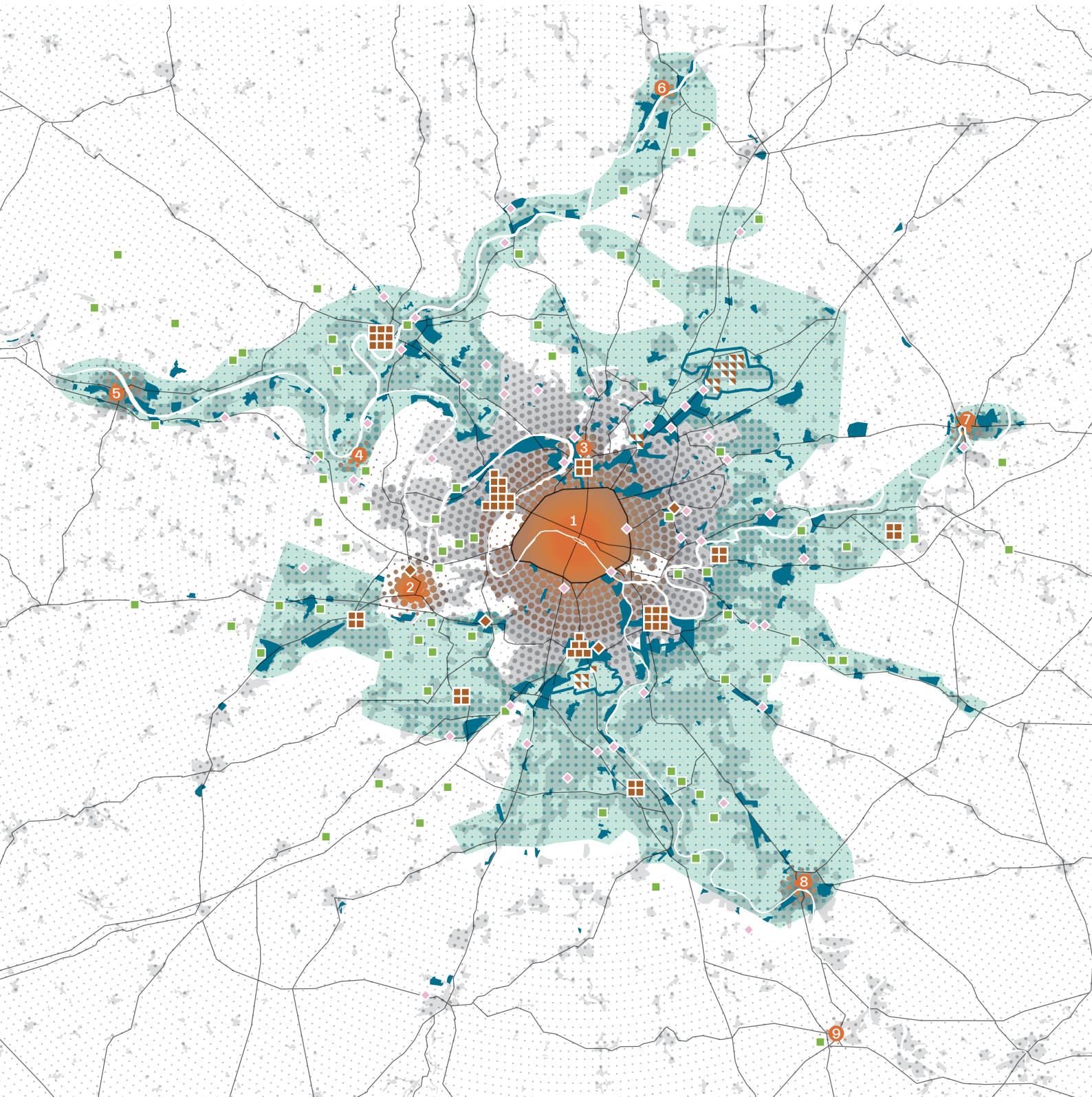

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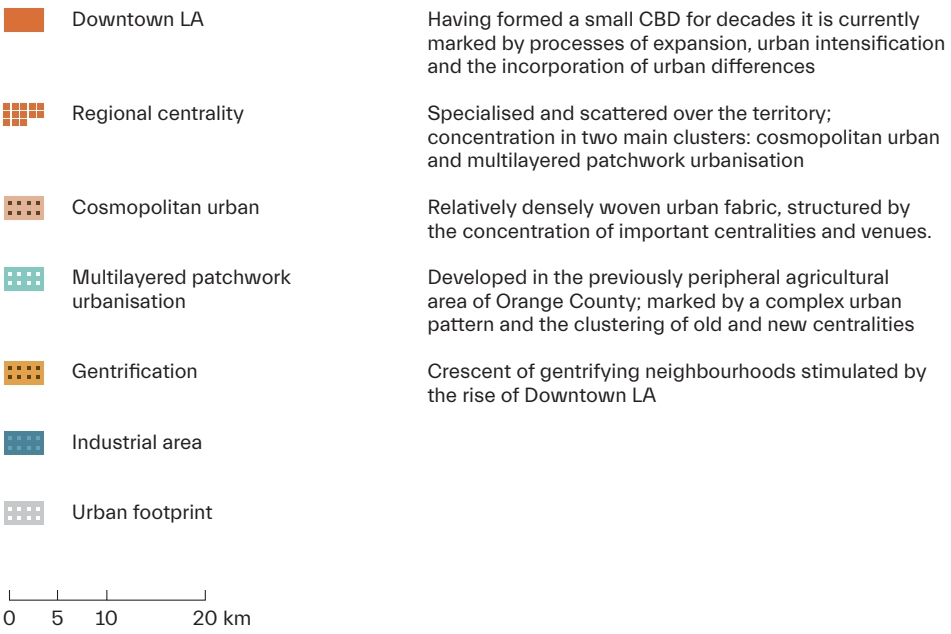

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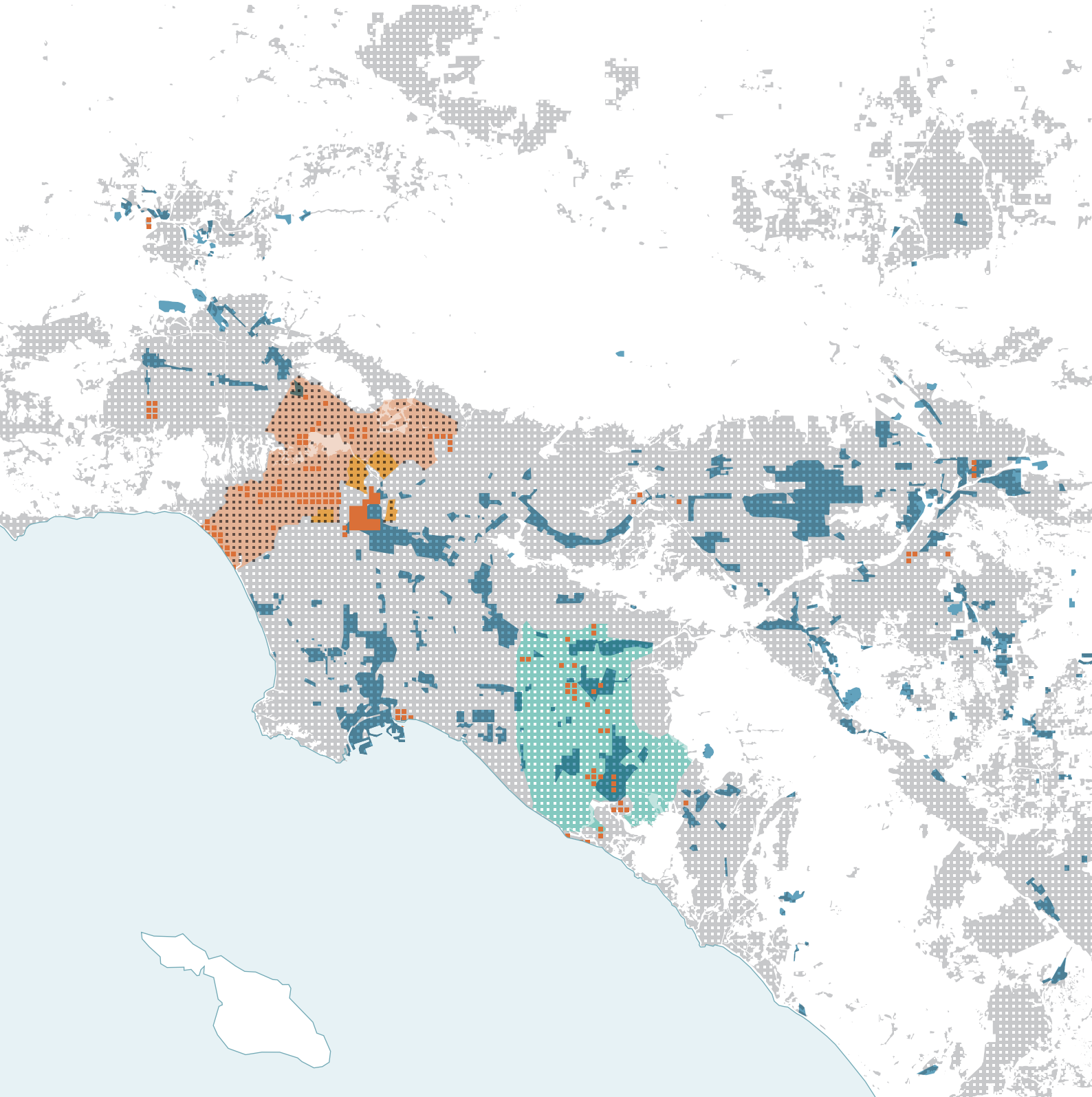

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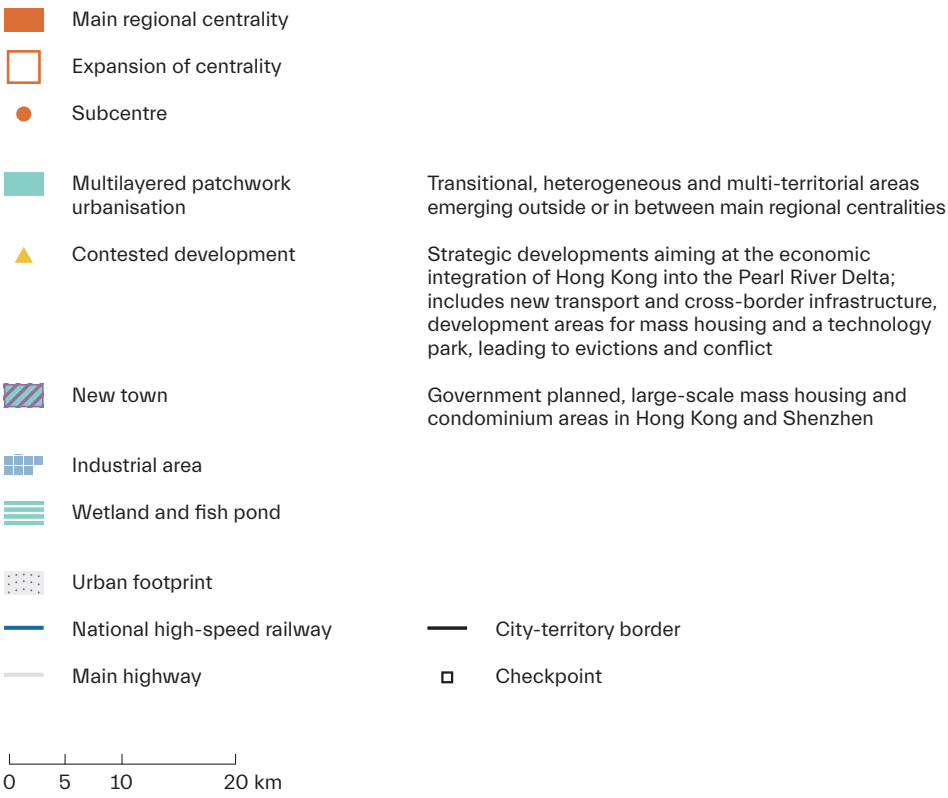
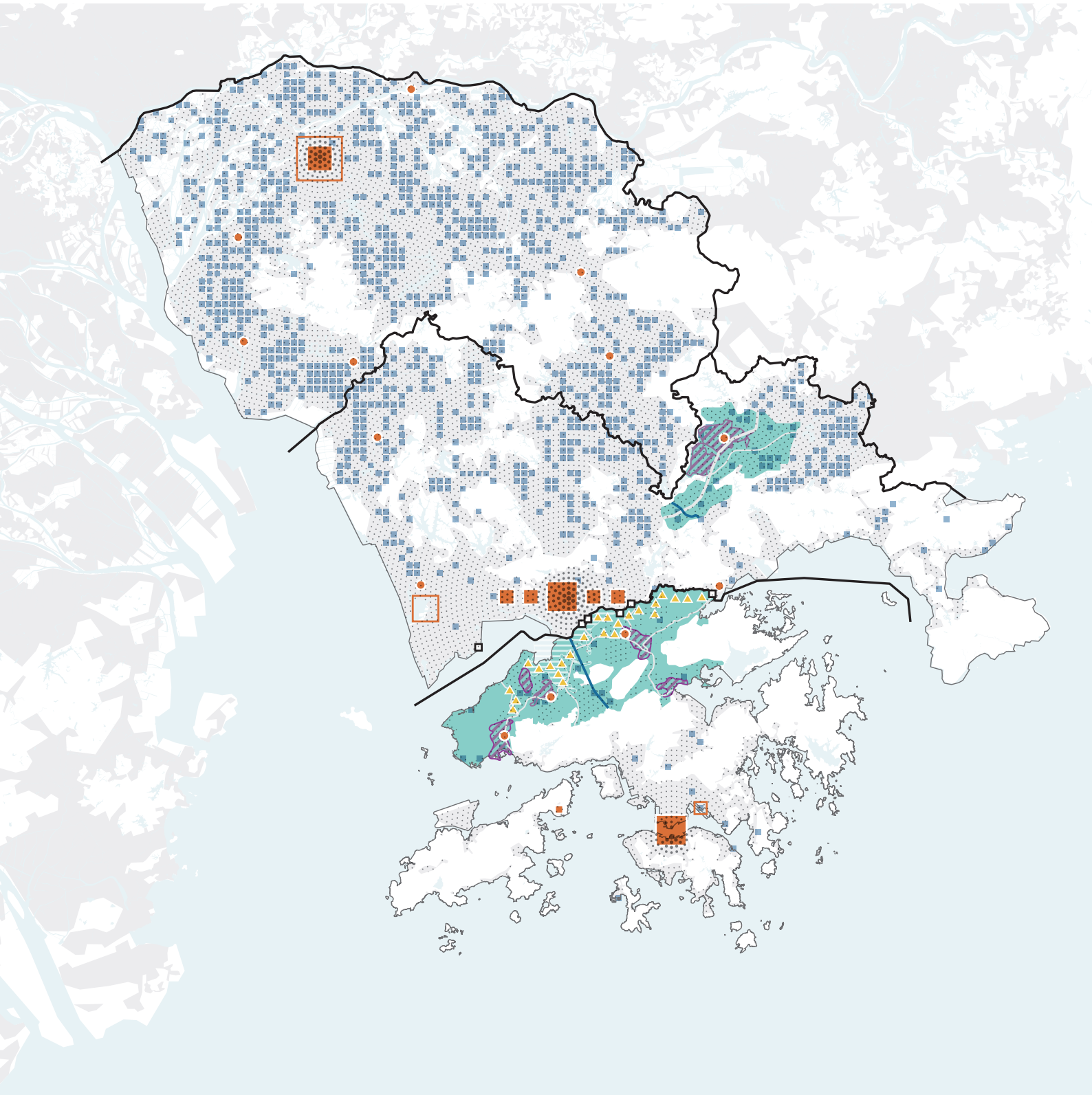
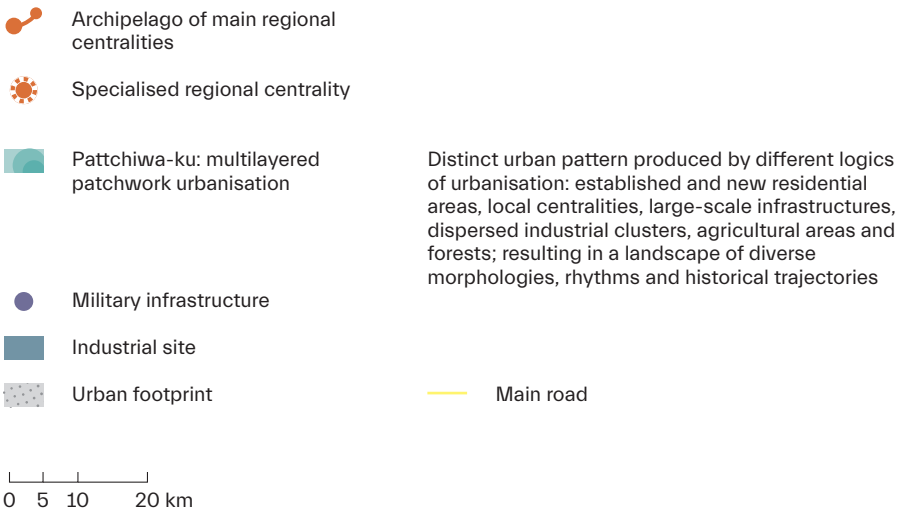


# HONG KONG



# MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION



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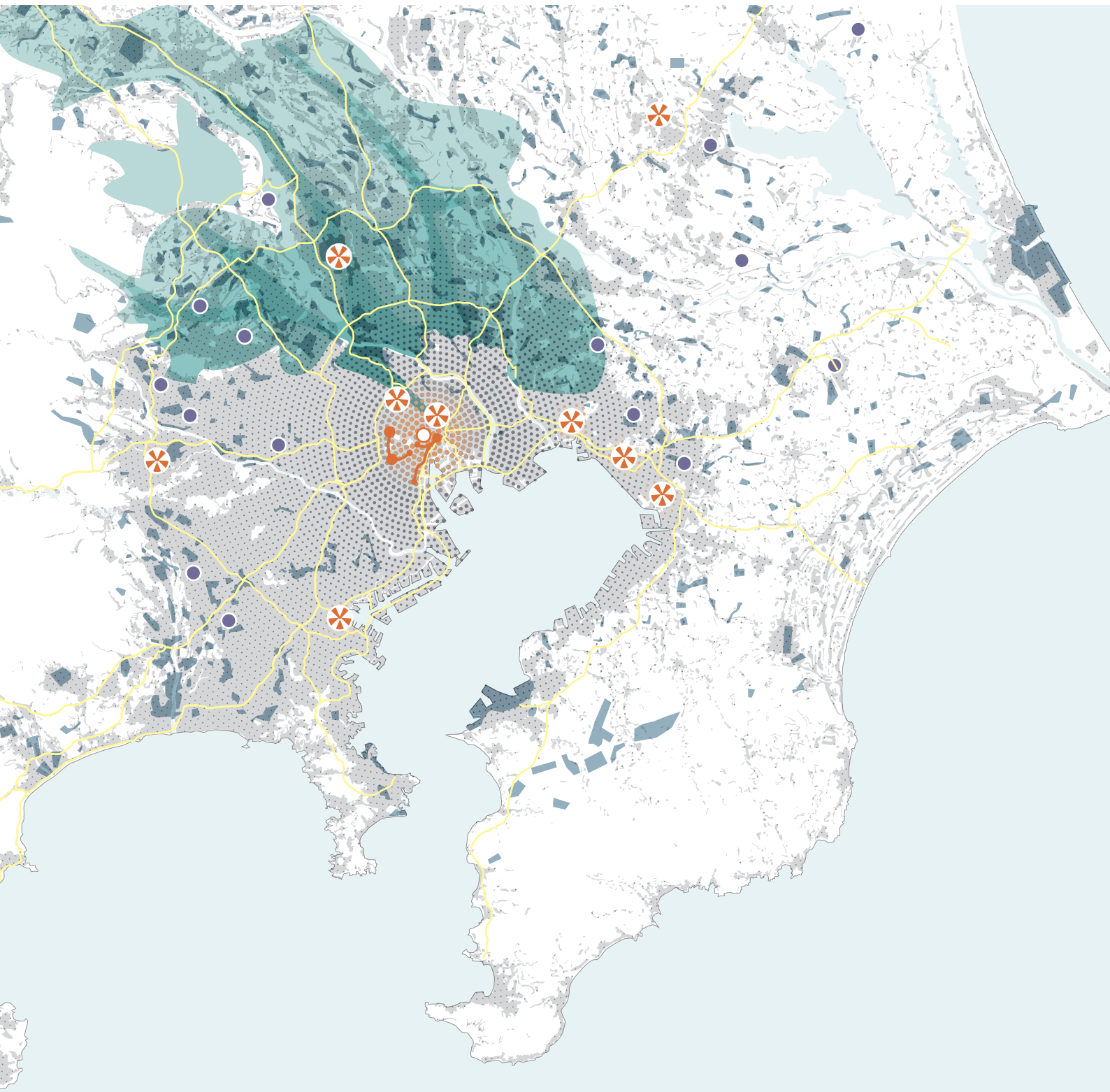

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# NEW CENTRALITIES IN THE URBAN PERIPHERY

The concept of multilayered patchwork urbanisation emerged from an experience familiar to many urban researchers: driving through our field study site somewhere on the outskirts of a large metropolitan area (necessarily by car or train, because of its huge dimensions), we lose orientation and get lost among the contrasting, seemingly unrelated and disjointed urban fragments.

What distinguishes multilayered patchwork urbanisation from other urbanisation processes in the urban periphery is, first of all, the simultaneous presence of multiple logics that are determining the urbanisation of the territory, resulting in a pattern of urbanisation that appears like a complex, irregular and illegible patchwork. This situation is usually generated through the historical succession of several paradigms of urbanisation which produce different layers of the urban fabric. They are superimposed upon each other, without the earlier layers being erased. This leads to a particular pattern of urbanisation that is characterised by a multiplicity of spatial orientations and temporal rhythms and by a marked functional, social and spatial heterogeneity. In our research project we found similar processes in Los Angeles, Paris, Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Tokyo.

These fragmented and splintering urban spaces are often taken to be the defining characteristic of a modern metropolis, as in, for example Deyan Sudjic's *Hundred Mile City* (1992) and in *Splintering Urbanism* by Steven Graham and Simon Marvin (2001). However, what might seem to be no more than the normal characteristic of any larger urban region is, in fact, a very specific urban feature. Our analysis shows that such extremely heterogenous urban configurations do not appear in all of those huge metropolitan territories but exist only in certain parts. They stand in stark contrast to other parts of the urban periphery, possibly in the very same metropolis, which are well structured and show a clear and regular urban pattern. We thus identified in these areas a different urbanisation process that conforms more to the classic North

American concept of the suburb as a mainstream, monofunctional middle-class area with detached single-family houses largely lacking in major centralities and public amenities. This process unfolds under specific geographical, socioeconomic and historical conditions; namely, when urban settlements expand almost unhampered into the surrounding hinterland, covering the territory like a carpet or laminated flooring. We therefore called this process 'laminar urbanisation'. In our research, we found this process only in two of our eight case study areas—in Los Angeles and Tokyo. This is to be expected, given that both metropolises are seen as almost paradigmatic examples of metropolises that consist mainly of suburbs. Laminar urbanisation and multilayered patchwork urbanisation are just two examples of the multitudes of urban configurations that are currently developing in urban peripheries across the world.

## FROM EDGE CITY TO EXOPOLIS

Multilayered patchwork urbanisation is a new concept for a process that has developed over a long time, sometimes over centuries, but whose specific characteristic has become apparent only relatively recently. It thus has significant relationships with other concepts that have been discussed since the 1980s and have been used to designate seemingly new urban forms in the urban peripheries of western cities. In the 1980s, spectacular new discoveries were being reported from the 'urban frontier' and identified in middle-class suburbs, such as novel urban forms composed of huge shopping malls, hotels and conference halls, office towers, research centres and even corporate headquarters. Leinberger and Lockwood (1986) call these new forms 'urban villages'; Robert Fishman (1987, 1991) 'technoburb'; Joël Garreau (1991) 'edge cities' and Paul Knox (2008) 'metroburbia'.

Many scholars took these new urban forms to be indicators of a sea change in urban development. They proclaimed the onset of a new postmodern life style in suburbia and the dawn of a new post-suburban age: 'During the 1980s America discovered post-suburbia. By the close of the decade journalists and scholars were churning out articles and books on this remarkable and supposedly new phenomenon. With its postmodern office towers, its high-tech industries, and its state-of-the-art shopping malls, it seemed the embodiment of American life in the 1980s' (Teaford 1997: 161).

These observations were soon to be followed by similar discoveries in Europe, where these new urban forms were called *Zwischenstadt* (in-between city, Sieverts 2003 [1997]), *Netzstadt* ('networked city', Oswald et al. 2003) or 'technopoles'. In general terms, the new spatial forms of the exploding metropolis were captured by terms such as 'Exopolis' (Soja 1996a), indicating that these urban forms were developing outside the urban agglomeration cores (exo-city) and did not resemble the familiar forms of a city (ex-city), '100-mile city' (Sudijc 1992), emphasising the spatial extension of the new urban developments and 'FlexSpace' (Lehrer 1994) highlighting the flexibilisation of urban structures. For an overview of these concepts see also Lehrer (2013).

However, all these concepts faced theoretical problems. Firstly, many of them focused on the emergence of new urban forms. But identifying an edge city or an urban village does not tell us much about the dynamics that generate this form, and naming it in this way may miss other manifestations of these dynamics. Often, these urban forms are analysed as isolated phenomena, but they are in fact part of broader urban configurations and should be understood as elements of more encompassing urbanisation processes. Furthermore, an urban form is generally a moment in the maelstrom of urban restructuring over time and is therefore constantly in flux. Today, most of those terms have disappeared from scientific discourse, as the urban forms they name have become blurred and have dissolved over the course of further development into even more complex and novel urban configurations.

A second problem is that it has often been claimed that these changes are directly related to the advent of a new urban lifestyle, a new model of urbanisation or a new regime of accumulation. Thus, they have routinely been interpreted as resulting directly from Post-Fordism and neoliberalism and at the time they were understood as the expression of postmodern urban development. However, as researchers like Fishman and Teaford argue, these new urban forms do not spring into being overnight; they result from long-term developments. We thus have to distinguish between what is called in German *Entstehungszusammenhang* and *Entdeckungszusammenhang*, which can be translated into English as the context of formation and the context of discovery. However, the German term *Zusammenhang* expresses more than just context, because it includes the totality of connections and relations involved in a process. In other words, a new urban form may develop gradually over a long time without being recognised. Then, suddenly, this form is discovered and declared to be a new form or formation. The confusion of discovery and formation can lead to misleading interpretations, particularly if the origins of a form are ascribed to present conditions and not understood in its historical development process. To give an example: an in-depth analysis of the development of new urban configurations in the urban periphery of Zurich North showed that they resulted from a succession of three different phases of urbanisation. In a first phase in the 1960s and 1970s Zurich North developed into a mixed agglomeration zone. It then turned into multilayered patchwork urbanisation during the 1970s and 1980s. Later, in the 2000s, a phase of urban intensification followed, which made the

splintered and fractured urban patchwork into a more coherent urban form (Nüssli and Schmid 2016, see also Schmid 2006 and Hitz et al. 1994). Keil and Addie (2015) offer a similar analysis for the Toronto and Chicago regions.

## ANALYSING MULTILAYERED PATCHWORK URBANISATION

In order to understand these territories, we need to contextualise them in space and time. This requires extending the analysis onto the regional pattern of urbanisation and reconstructing analytically the pathway that has been taken. In our analysis, we therefore followed a three-step procedure to identify multilayered patchwork urbanisation by applying the horizontal and vertical analysis explained in Chapter 2. In a first step, we position the analysed urban configuration in the context of the wider territory. A horizontal or synchronic analysis of the patterns of urbanisation allows us to identify other urbanisation processes at work in transforming this territory and develop a comprehensive understanding of how they expanded and interwove with each other. This analysis freezes the urban process conceptually so its various constituents can be discerned and the pattern of an urban territory examined as it appears at a given moment. It thus helps to understand the broader regional context. We then focus on the multilayered patchwork urbanisation process itself and identify the different elements that constitute it. This results in a list of the range of elements that constitute multilayered patchwork urbanisation.

In a second step we have to identify underlying principles and thus the history of the production of these elements. This necessitates a vertical analysis that reveals when and how these elements were produced over time and which layers constitute this territory. We do this using a regressive-progressive analysis: by descending in time to reveal the origins of the process and then ascending with a genetic analysis that shows the evolution of the different elements and the superimposition of the different historical layers. As André Corboz (1983) shows, the territory can be understood as a palimpsest, a parchment that has been overwritten again and again while retaining traces of earlier writing. This analysis helps us to understand which layers subsist and why they subsist. And it helps to answer a key question: at what moment does multi-layered patchwork urbanisation appear?

Finally, we return to the present and analyse the current pattern of urbanisation. What are the effects of this urbanisation process? What is the relationship between the different principles? What effects are resulting from the superimposition and confrontation of these principles? What kind of friction and conflicts emerge? And what are the potentials for a possible future development?

# GRANDE COURONNE, PARIS

Our starting point for the conceptualisation of multilayered patchwork urbanisation was Paris, where large parts of the outer banlieue developed into a bewildering patchwork of all sorts of uses and functions in the last decades. The fragmentation and recombination of the urban fabric mainly unfolded in an area of the outer banlieue that begins close to the second ring road and stretches to the zone where transport connectivity slowly fades out. This is by far the largest urban configuration that we identified in the Paris Region. It mainly includes the départements of Yvelines, Essonne, Val d'Oise and Seine-et-Marne. In the next paragraphs we identify the five layers of urban development that have unfolded over the last five centuries.

The first layer developed in the 16th and 17th centuries on the surrounding productive hinterland of Paris within a radius of about 30 to 50 km. It constituted a crucial space for supplying the city with all sorts of products and it established a strong reciprocal relationship with the city of Paris. According to Fourquin (1964), the concept of *contado*, which characterises the unity of Italian city states with their rural hinterlands in the Renaissance, can be accurately applied to the Paris Region. In the 17th and 18th century the population of Paris doubled and the hinterland around Paris was reoriented to meet the needs of the growing bourgeoisie. Agricultural production was improved by the construction of drainage systems, new

Paris; single family homes and powerlines. Champlan, Essone 2023

Paris, shopping centre Villebon 2 in the grande couronne. Villebon, Essonne 2023

Paris; Chateau de Rentilly (16th century) and a distribution centre of Cibetanche. Ville nouvelle Marne-la-Vallée, 2023

roads, bridges and canals (Picon 2012). As a result, this region—and not the city of Paris itself—became the centre of French absolutist power and its colonial empire. The marks of this period are still visible today, such as the winding narrow street patterns that the banlieue inherited from the former villages and which today generate traffic jams in dense urban settlements, and also the châteaux that have become historic monuments and the large feudal estates and hunting grounds, some of which have been transformed into public and private parks.

With the beginning of industrialisation, the entire structure of this hinterland changed profoundly, when agricultural products began to be imported from the most remote corners of France and from abroad. To protect Paris against all sorts of real and imagined threats from outside, a massive new city wall was constructed in 1845. This wall defines and demarcates the city to this day; when it was demolished in the 1930s, it was replaced by a circular motorway, which still forms a material and symbolic division between the inside—the city—and the outside—the banlieue. At the same time, the city of Paris underwent the most spectacular and brutal transformation in the era when Baron Haussmann, prefect of the Département de la Seine under Emperor Napoleon III, transformed the city of Paris over 15 short years into a modern metropolis, determined by commodity production and controlled by the bourgeoisie (see Chapter 9).

Beyond the wall that demarcated the boundary of the city of Paris, the banlieue was produced, the outskirts and the 'other side' of Paris. During the Belle Epoque and the interwar period the process of urban extension was marked by the construction of *pavillons*, usually small, working-class or lower middle-class single-family homes, some of which were at least partly self-built by its owner-occupiers. The inner zone of the banlieue, the *petit couronne,* was gradually densified and thus developed into a huge, industrial district with working-class housing. In the outer zone, called the *grande couronne*, the urban fabric extended along main roads and train lines, transforming towns, villages and hamlets.

The thorough urban transformation of the grande couronne started with the *trentes glorieuses*, the three decades of economic boom from 1945 to 1975 that were marked by the Fordist-Keynesian development model, which included the creation of a welfare state, mass production and mass consumption. As a result of the Fordist boom, the Paris Region underwent a wave of intense immigration from peripheral parts of France as well as Spain and Portugal. Additionally, the Algerian War and the process of decolonisation drove about one million refugees to France, many of whom fled to Paris. This massive population growth aggravated the already existing housing crisis in both the Paris Region and other French cities. In response, the central state launched a huge national programme of mass housing urbanisation, which is analysed in

detail in Chapter 16. The result was what contemporaries called *urbanisme parachuté*: entire settlements, called *grands ensembles*, with usually more than 500 housing units, were parachuted into the interstices and meshes of the urban fabric. To make housing affordable in a time of sharply rising land prices in the Paris Region, many grands ensembles were constructed on cheap land in territorial enclaves placed adjacent to motorways, rail lines and industrial sites and cut off from local centralities (Vadelorge 2014: 106, 116). This led to the logistical peripheralisation of the grands ensembles. Territorial isolation and inadequate public transport resulted in the creation of a double periphery: many grands ensembles were peripheral to the centre of Paris and also cut off from easy access to local centralities and the essential amenities of daily life, what sparked widespread criticisms and protests (see Chapter 16).

At the beginning of the 1960s a new strategic intervention was prepared to restructure and redefine the outer banlieue of Paris. It proposed to construct five state-planned *villes nouvelles* (new towns) with their own urban centres. In 1965 a regional master plan was launched, called the SDAU-RP (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement et d'Urbanisme de la Région Parisienne), in light of the estimate that the population in the Paris Region would swell to 16 million inhabitants at the end of the 20th century (Murard and Fourquet, 2004). However, although they had the same name, the Parisian villes nouvelles were based on a very different concept from the new towns that were developed at the same time around London. Based on the New Towns Act of 1946, individual new towns were constructed at a distance of about 30 to 70 km from London. In Paris, however, the main goal was to reorganise and decentralise the entire metropolitan region. For this purpose, the new plan envisaged to build new centralities together with a new regional express transit system, the RER (Réseau Express Régional).

The design of the SDAU-RP as well as the process of implementation of the villes nouvelles followed an almost classic top-down procedure. For each ville nouvelle a parastatal real estate company was founded, an *établissement public d'aménagement* (EPA), tasked to urbanise the territory and thus realise the interests of the state on the terrain. The state actors involved in the planning and implementation of the villes nouvelles had a great degree of autonomy. They decided where the perimeter of the ville nouvelle should lie, secretly purchased the first parcels of land from farmers and had the right to expropriate the rest of the land. The EPA of each ville nouvelle developed the infrastructure and the public facilities and sold the land on to private developers, then reinvested the profit into public amenities and schools. All this was done without the participation of local actors in decision-making and without the support of existing local and regional administrations and local politicians, and thus without being legitimised via democratic procedures and elections.

The construction of the five villes nouvelles that were laid out in the plan began at the end of the 1960s. However, the high expectations for these towns did not materialise. Changes in public strategies transferred the initiative for urban development into the hands of private investors in 1969, and followed by the economic crisis of the mid 1970s, markedly slowed down the accomplishment of this plan. As the population growth of the Île-de-France was much lower than predicted, the number of planned housing units had to be drastically reduced (Vadelorge 2014). Furthermore, a subprime mortgage crisis struck in the early 1980s triggered by the neoliberal reforms of 1978 (see Chapter 16).

The villes nouvelles thus never became the kind of independent cities that the original concepts promised. While Cergy-Pontoise and Evry had a clearly defined urban structure and identity, others, especially Marne-la-Vallee, developed into a patchwork of old and new settlements that were seamlessly interlaced into the existing structure of the grand couronne. Due to the urban densification outside the perimeter of the new towns, a huge urban zone emerged in which large parts of the villes nouvelles had merged into their surroundings to form an additional layer of multilayered patchwork urbanisation.

The main impact of the villes nouvelles was to create new centralities that tied the development of the grande couronne towards a polycentric urban structure. Together with other centralities that were independently planned and built, such as the business hubs around the airports Orly and Paris Charles de Gaulle, they generated the structure of multilayered patchwork urbanisation that we see today.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the villes nouvelles absorbed a large part of the massive population growth within the grande couronne. At the beginning large-scale urban developments continued to dominate the built structure, but in the course of the 1970s, low-rise, mainly family-oriented housing for middle-class households was constructed with pedestrian zones, kindergartens and playgrounds that became 'children's paradises'—but had little to offer adolescents, who felt isolated in these relatively monotonous settlements. Since the 1990s the process of embourgeoisement in the city of Paris and in parts of the petite couronne have pushed middle-class residents into the grande couronne (see Chapter 9). The arrival of relatively affluent people has strengthened local centralities, and fewer residents in the periphery are willing to undertake long commutes into Paris, preferring to find work opportunities nearby. Additionally, population growth has slowed and the existing population has aged, leading to a more locally oriented form of residence and community life (Berger et al. 2014).

The long-term transformation of the grande couronne makes clear that the urban periphery offers many possibilities for urban development, and can also accommodate contradictory dynamics. It is particularly interesting to see how specific state-driven urban strategies played out on the terrain. The modernist strategy of mass housing urbanisation, conceived in the 1950s, was missing a clear urbanistic focus, and led to a fragmented urban development. The encompassing regional strategy of the villes nouvelles, conceived only 10 years later, tried to correct the shortcomings of mass housing urbanisation by designing new centralities as pivotal points for the restructuring of the entire region. However, this regional strategy did not succeed in producing a well organised region, but instead created the decisive layer for the emergence of multilayered patchwork urbanisation.

# ORANGE COUNTY, LOS ANGELES

The story of Orange County has a very different starting point to that of Paris. While the construction of the villes nouvelles in Paris was the result of strategic planning that was conducted over many years, the configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation in Los Angeles developed for a long time under the radar of public debate and scientific discussions. It surfaced suddenly in the late 1980s as part of the discussion on (postmodern) urban development in the urban periphery discussed above, fuelled by the rise of the Los Angeles School of Urbanism (see Chapter 11). It was in this context that Orange County became the paradigmatic example of a polycentric, multinucleated postmodern development (Gottdiener and Kephart 1991: 51; Jackson 1985: 265).

Two of the most important contributions to this discussion were by Allen Scott and Edward W. Soja, and both took Orange County as the key example of postmodern urban development. In his research on the industrialisation of Los Angeles, Allen Scott made an unexpected and astonishing discovery. He found in the seemingly unspectacular suburbs at the southern periphery of the endless Los Angeles metropolis a huge high-tech complex in the defence and space sector similar to the one that had emerged in Silicon Valley in the Bay area. He took this as a paradigmatic example of the new patterns of industrialisation and urbanisation in Western countries, with their transaction-intensive economies,

Los Angeles; incorporation of differences in the centre of Santa Ana, 2013

their deeply segmented local labour markets and their regressive labour relations. Scott showed that industrial production began to emerge in Orange County after the Second World War, then grew rapidly in the following decades so that by the early 1980s the manufacturing industry was employing about a quarter of a million workers. In the mid-1950s Orange County was a quiet backwater, while Los Angeles was already a major centre for the aerospace and electronics industry. As this industry grew in response to new military and space programmes, it started to decentralise and relocated branch plants to the suburban fringes, particularly to Orange County. In the 1960s manufacturers began to form an industrial complex by using a common pool of labour and various infrastructural services. The branch plants were thus complemented by small-scale service and supplier firms. By the early 1970s this complex had become a tightly woven network, concentrated around two subsystems: around Anaheim and Fullerton to the north, and around Irvine farther south. In the following years, industrial land use further intensified and the production diversified towards electronic components, computer and instruments industries. By the mid 1980s, the industrial complex was fully developed.

At the same time, partly based on Scott's findings, Edward W. Soja identified the new form of the urban that encompasses all other new urban forms: 'Exopolis, the city without, to stress their oxymoronic ambiguity, their city-full non-cityness. These are not only exo-cities, orbiting outside; they are ex-cities as well, no longer what the city used to be. Ex-centrically perched beyond the vortex of the old agglomerative nodes, the Exopolis spins new whorls of its own, turning the city inside-out and outside-in at the same time, unravelling in its paths the memories of more familiar urban fabrics, even where such older fabrics never existed in the first place' (Soja 1996a: 238–239).

Soja then invites us in his text to a journey through exopolis, and combines his account with adverts and promotion texts selling a bewildering imaginary world. Soja starts his trip in Knott's Berry Farm and in Disneyland and visits the Richard Nixon Presidential Library in Nixon's hometown Yorba Linda. Soja then takes us to the campus of the University of California and the neighbouring business complex in the private new town of Irvine. He shows us the 'Grand Axis-Mundi of exopolitan Orange County' (Soja 1996a: 259), running from Santa Ana to the John Wayne Airport all the way down to the Fashion Island shopping mall and the beach resort in Newport. He then moves north to Costa Mesa and the South Coast Metro Center, California's largest shopping mall, and the adjacent Orange County Performance Arts Center. He ends his trip at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, built during the Second World War on remote bean fields and orange groves. In the 1980s the station was engulfed by tracts with tightly packed housing. In 1999, after Soja had published his text, the station was decommissioned and transformed into a public park.

These two very different accounts deliver a vertical (Scott 1988) and a horizontal (Soja 1996a) analysis of Orange County's urban development that would allow us to reconstruct the process of multilayered patchwork urbanisation. But both accounts have a narrow perspective on urbanisation. Scott offers a precise analysis of the development of an industrial complex from its early beginnings to the fully unfolded model and he explains how this complex took shape on the terrain. But he does not explain the urbanisation process in the wider region, nor does he illuminate the context of the urbanisation process in Orange County itself. Soja, on his part, conveys an illuminating trip through the postmodern urban landscape of exopolis, but he does not offer an overall picture of the urbanisation of Los Angeles, even if he has written a whole range of impressive articles on the topic. Furthermore,

Los Angeles; Segerstrom Hall, Segerstrom Center for the Arts. Costa Mesa, 2023

Los Angeles, City Hall. Fullerton, 2014

we do not really understand the pathway of development, because Soja portrays this urban landscape only in its simultaneity. However, this exopolis did not emerge like a mirage in the desert. It is the result of a full century of urban development. At what moment can this continually changing landscape be called an exopolis; or in the bigger picture of Soja's conception, at which moment is this landscape a postmodern one?

Nevertheless, there are other analyses of North American urban peripheries that examine this pathway more closely. One such by Fishman reconstructs step by step the transformation of the North American suburb, and another by Teaford (1997) presents a detailed historical comparative analysis of several exemplary case studies. Further insights can be found in the edited volume *Post-suburban California* by Kling et al. (1991). According to Janet Abu-Lughod, Orange County is 'not simply decentralized but organized around many distinct specialized centres which differ markedly from one another in terms of land use, social classes, and ethnic composition, in a complex of and decentralized mixture of urban, suburban, and rural spaces' (1999: 361). Jackson (1985: 265) notes that Orange County began to evolve from a sleepy rural backwater into 'a new type of centreless city'; a collection of medium towns and small cities, none of which is dominant over the others. By 1980 there were 26 cities, each with their own centres, shopping malls and amenities.

In our own analysis we embedded the development of Orange County in the wider context of regional urbanisation. As our map at the beginning of this chapter shows (see also the map in Chapter 11), Orange County is a unique urban configuration in Los Angeles. Despite the fact that Los Angeles is often seen as the prime example of a polycentric metropolis, our map shows that centralities are distributed very unevenly across the territory. They are in fact almost completely concentrated in two zones: one of which is Orange County and the other is a configuration that we called 'cosmopolitan urban'; it is extending out from the Hollywood Hills in the north to South Central Los Angeles in the south and from Pasadena in the east to Santa Monica in the west, and thus covers the entire urban core area of Los Angeles. Beyond these two configurations Los Angeles has various zones of laminar urbanisation and exurbanisation, forming huge zones of classically suburban areas that often also contain industrial and logistics zones, because Los Angeles is, after all, an industrial metropolis. But these are all commuting territories without major centralities. So why is Orange County so different?

I cannot develop a broad analysis of the pathway of multilayered patchwork urbanisation in Orange County in this chapter, but instead give a short overview. Gaspar de Portolà, a Spanish explorer, came to the area in 1769. His expedition led to the establishment of forts and missions by the Spanish Crown. After Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821 the Mexican government secularised the missions and began distributing their land to Mexican citizens, who built huge haciendas upon them. After the Mexican–American war, California became part of the USA and the first American settlers arrived there. When Orange County split from Los Angeles County in 1889 it counted about 13,000 inhabitants. Basically, it had a mixed agricultural economy and its new name served to attract prospective home-owners; it is continuing to shape the image of this territory to this day, even if urbanisation has in the meantime almost completely erased all the orange groves.

Early urbanisation started along the railway lines. By 1877 a branch line from Los Angeles to Santa Ana, the seat of Orange County, was built by the Southern Pacific Railroad and 10 years later the California Central Railway offered a service between Los Angeles and San Diego by way of Santa Ana. By 1905 the Los Angeles Interurban Railway, a predecessor of the Pacific Electric Railway (Red Cars), was extended from Los Angeles to Santa Ana. Firestone Boulevard, the first direct automobile route between Los Angeles and Santa Ana, opened in 1935 and was enlarged to become the Santa Ana Freeway in 1953.

At the beginning of the 20th century the oil boom in Los Angeles started and oil fields were also discovered in Orange County north of Fullerton, which soon was dotted with derricks, refineries and oil terminals. Petroleum extraction became the basis for further industrialisation in the county after the Second World War. As explained above, the development of the Orange County industrial complex started in the 1950s. Manufacturing employees increased from about 6000 in 1947 to 97,000 in 1963. With all these economic activities, Orange County was no longer a classical commuter area. In 1970, out of more than 1.4 million inhabitants, only a quarter (26%) were commuting to Los Angeles (Teaford 1997: 95).

After the Second World War the urbanisation of Orange County started in earnest. Its geographical position between Los Angeles and San Diego, the abundance of open space, cheap land, excellent transport connections, agricultural and natural landscapes, appealing beaches and abundant recreational facilities made it attractive to relatively affluent middle-class families (Scott 1988: 166). In the early 1960s, when southern Los Angeles was fully developed, more and more housing units came to Orange County, mainly detached single-family homes, but increasingly also apartments and condominiums (Davis 1990: 174), leading to a suburban explosion in Anaheim, Fullerton, Buena Park, Santa Ana and other municipalities in northern Orange County. At the time, Orange County was commonly seen as a business-friendly bastion of conservatism and later as a Reaganite county.

This, however, did not prevent protests and mobilisations against further urbanisation. In the 1970s and 1980s, protests erupted in various cities and slow-growth movements tried to restrict density and preserve open spaces (Davis 1990: 176).

The entertainment industry was another important attractor to Orange County. Knott's Berry Farm, which started in 1923 as a roadside fruit stall, developed into a modern amusement park after the Second World War and in 1955 Disneyland opened, making Anaheim not only a centre of tourism but also a huge centre of employment (Teaford 1997: 56). In his essay, 'How Eden Lost Its Garden', Mike Davis points out that the Anaheim area is brimming with contradictions (1996: 179–180). Just south of Disneyland is Crystal Cathedral, a drive-in theme park and postmodern flagship project designed by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, completed in 1981. It was originally the principal place of worship for one of the foremost mega-churches in the USA, founded by the Rev. Robert Schuller, who called himself a Christian capitalist. After the church filed for bankruptcy it was sold to the Roman Catholic diocese of Orange.

Just on the other side of the freeway is another attraction that is today called the Platinum Triangle—a wedge of land that ends in a cone between the Santa Ana and the Orange Freeway that includes the Angel Stadium, which had been built by 1966. It is the location of the Los Angeles Angels baseball team and also hosts college football games, concerts and other events. Another stadium, the Honda Center, which is the home of the National Hockey League team Anaheim Ducks, was completed in 1993; recently a huge new development project has been launched with apartments, hotels, offices and entertainment venues surrounding the stadium.

A very different pathway of development occurred in the southern part of Orange County where large ranches—a legacy of the Mexican period—were sited, which for a long time had resisted urbanisation. The largest of those was the Irvine Ranch, which was left untouched until the 1950s. The ranch formed a huge barrier cutting through the middle of Orange County from the south-west to the north-east. From the 1960s onwards, this huge tract of land was transformed step by step into a science hub that included several university campuses and a business centre for the technology and semiconductor sectors, with several national or international corporate headquarters and a privately planned new town. Nearby, in 1966 in Costa Mesa, on another ranch owned by the Segerstrom family, who were famous for the production of lima beans, opened the South Coast Plaza, a huge shopping mall complex that today constitutes the core of Orange Counties 'postmodern downtown'. In 1986 a performing arts complex called the Segerstrom Center for the Arts opened on the other side of the road. In the following years this complex was continuously extended and today contains an opera house style theatre, a concert hall, an arts museum, and some other theatres and venues.

Another example of Orange County's urban diversity is Santa Ana. At the beginning of the 20th century, this settlement had a relatively affluent population, and many of its residents had migrated from confederate states following the American Civil War. After the Mexican Revolution from 1910, a first major wave of Mexican immigration arrived; many of these immigrants found jobs in the agricultural industry. In the 1950s, Santa Ana became a boom town driven by the rapid growth of the defence industry. During the 1960s and 1970s, more working-class families from Mexico arrived in Santa Ana and found low-skilled and low-paid jobs. At the same time, more and more white middle-class families relocated from Santa Ana to surrounding suburbs, an example of the 'white flight' that occurred in many US cities at the time. As a result, the socioeconomic and ethnic composition changed, and by the 1970s Santa Ana had become a 'Latino city' with a vibrant downtown mainly attracting Mexican working-class immigrants. With the argument that it needed to 'restore the economic and social health of the downtown area', the city council proposed a downtown redevelopment plan in 1973 (González 2017: 26). As Erualdo González shows in detail, this plan was soon opposed by residents and grassroots activists, and the controversy that followed led to political change. By the mid-2000s, all members of the city council of Santa Ana were Latinas and Latinos. Nevertheless, they continued to propose urban redevelopment strategies, oriented to 'creative city' narratives and 'new urbanism' concepts, which today have resulted in urban upgrading and gentrification.

These different histories illustrate the specificity of Orange County's urban development. It is composed by a multiplicity of individual territories, each with their own pathways of urbanisation, creating a wide variety of logics. In the course of this development, the intensification and densification of the urban fabric continued until there was almost no vacant space left for further development. Today, Orange County forms a metropolitan area of its own. Between 1950 and 2000 its population increased from 200,000 to 3.2 million. During this time its social diversity also increased, propelled by immigrants from Latin America and Asia. Gradually, its political orientation also changed. In the 2016 presidential elections, Orange County voted for the first time for a democratic candidate—Hillary Clinton. As with the villes nouvelles in Paris, a certain maturity or normalisation arrived. All these centralities, venues and attractions that so greatly excited people 30 years ago are no longer new or spectacular, because they have become part of everyday life in a dense, polynucleated and fairly cosmopolitan urban space.

# NEW TERRITORIES, HONG KONG

In Hong Kong a comparable urban configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation emerged in the New Territories area, which for a long time has formed a peripheral frontier zone between the former colony and China. Today, it is a strategic zone connecting the two metropolitan centres of Hong Kong and Shenzhen. The New Territories constitute one of the three main regions of Hong Kong, together with Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon peninsula. It encompasses about 86% of the territory of Hong Kong and is home to around half its population. The southern part, currently dominated by dense mass housing estates, has been integrated into the central urban area under the colonial system (Nissim 2012). The outlying islands include the international airport and Disneyland, as well as tracts containing peripheral residential areas and dispersed urbanised villages. The northern part of the New Territories between the Kowloon mountain range and the Chinese border is marked by a patchwork of regional town centres, condo towers, large-scale mass housing estates, urbanised villages, various public and private facilities, farmlands, open storage fields, country parks, wetlands and ecological zones, as well as cross-border transport infrastructure such as highways, metro lines and a high-speed railway.

The British Empire founded the colony of Hong Kong in 1841 on the small and rocky Hong Kong Island that was ceded by China. In 1860 this small territory was extended to the Kowloon peninsula. In order to get an additional buffer zone to protect the colony against rival imperial powers, the British government leased the New Territories in 1898 for 99 years from the Qing government. In the second half of the 20th century, this area would become a strategic land reserve to ensure the colony's self-sufficiency and further development.

The land lease contract with China was a political invention that changed Hong Kong's territorial system. While the British Crown had full prerogative authority over the ceded territories of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, it was obliged to respect the customary rights of several hundred 'recognised villages' that enjoyed special privileges and rights, and thus consultations and negotiations with village leaders were necessary to implement local administration (Wesley-Smith 1980: 90; Merry 2020: 187; Hayes 1993; 2006). The resulting territorial regulations fundamentally changed the existing territorial system, uprooted the power of the great family clans and legalised ancestral land and customary family landholding institutions. It also contributed to the development of a new social space, enabling villagers to adhere to their customs (see e.g. Baker 1966; Chun 1990; Nissim 2012; Wesley-Smith 1980). At the time the New Territories included large rural areas clustered around old market towns (e.g. Tsuen Wan, Taipo, Yuen Long and Sheung Shui) and walled village settlements with ancestral estates and temples surrounded by agricultural land, rivers, hillsides and fengshui forests (Hayes 2006; Merry 2020).

Hong Kong: intensive juxtaposition. Yuen Long, 2012

In the second half of the 1940s, the Chinese civil war and the rise to power of the Communist Party fundamentally changed the urban dynamics of the New Territories. The colonial government had to address a series of challenges and crises, such as the arrival of a large number of refugees from China, an international trade embargo on China that greatly affected Hong Kong's economy, and socio-political unrest and anti-colonial activities in Hong Kong. In the mid-1950s the government constructed resettlement housing to clear the squatter settlements, and started to develop entire industrial towns in Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan to relocate families and allow Chinese industrialists to set up new factories. In the following years, mass housing urbanisation became the motor of post-war industrial development that established a new territorial order for the colony: While Hong Kong's core area developed into an international commercial and financial centre, industrial plants and mass housing settlements were relegated to the peripheries. Similarly to the Parisian banlieue, the New Territories became the space for the reproduction of the industrial working class (see Chapter 16).

The urbanisation strategy of the colonial government changed in the aftermath of two riots in 1966 and 1967. Urbanisation was made a key component of the new social reform agenda, by which the government sought to rebuild its legitimacy in society, to establish a new Hong Kong identity and to increase its bargaining power in negotiations with China over the future of Hong Kong. The new strategy was based mainly on constructing high-density new towns along major roads and railways in the New Territories, including areas in Shatin and Tuen Wan and around market towns in Taipo, Fanling and Sheung Shui. In addition to providing housing and local employment opportunities, the government also implemented policies to improve public facilities, infrastructure and transportation and to maintain food, water and border security in the colony. This included constructing water reservoirs, supporting agricultural cooperatives and expanding land for cultivation, together with constructing military camps and barracks. Thus, a large-scale process of urban extension was initiated in the New Territories during the 1970s.

However, as villagers held most of this land the colonial government had to expropriate farmland from the villagers. It had thus to negotiate with the Heung Yee Kuk, a statutory rural organisation founded in 1926 to represent the interests of the indigenous villagers in the New Territories (Chiu and Hung 1997; Merry 2020). To circumvent the process of expropriation and the resultant monetary compensation it needed to offer by law, in 1960 the government began to issue land exchange entitlement certificates, which granted leaseholders the right to plots for building in exchange for surrendering ownership of their agricultural land. The villagers were allowed to sell their entitlement certificates to investors (Chun 1991), and by this means developers built up huge land banks for future housing developments and were able to let vacant land or lease it for informal use (Poon 2011: 71). In 1972 the negotiations

Hong Kong; urbanised village. Yuen Long, 2012

between the government and the Heung Yee Kuk led to a territorial compromise, called the 'small house policy'. It allowed male villagers to build three-storey houses on their land without paying a land premium, or on government land at a concessionary premium and with exemption from major building control. However, most of these new village houses, called 'Spanish villas', were built to lease or sell to developers for profit (see Merry 2020; Huang 2017).

In the 1980s, when China initiated its opening up politics and economic reforms, Shenzhen became China's first Special Economic Zone, sparking off a spectacular process of export-oriented industrialisation. In parallel, Hong Kong developed into a global city, a process that was accompanied by fast deindustrialisation and the relocation of industrial activities to Shenzhen and Dongguan. The government adopted a strategy of metropolisation that included large urban renewal programmes in the central areas, leading to the peripheralisation of many low-income families (see Chapters 6 and 16). The New Territories were integrated into this strategy by the expansion of a public transport and highway system, which improved connectivity between the new towns and the city centre and facilitated the construction of more new towns (Ho 2018). While the coupling of public housing and industrial production had been guiding the development of new towns for decades, the private real estate sector now became the motor of territorial development (see Chapter 16), and private housing estates and condominiums were built in areas close to or above new railway stations and adjacent to wetlands to capitalise on the 'natural scenery'. With the increase of interactions and trade relations between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, the New Territories developed into an in-between zone that facilitated all kinds of cross-border activities and mediated the process of metropolisation in Hong Kong with industrialisation in Shenzhen and Dongguan. During this process, villagers began to convert farmland informally into container yards, open storage facilities and truck parks to capture higher land rents, which resulted in severe environmental degradation in these areas (Tang and Leung 1998). Thus, in the New Territories, a number of juxtaposing and conflicting land-use patterns coexisted, together with the activities that went with them, and the region thus became a place where conflicts arose between the colonial government, private developers, villagers and residents. In this way, multilayered patchwork urbanisation emerged in the New Territories.

Following the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty to the People's Republic of China, the Hong Kong government strengthened the strategic importance of the New Territories by promoting a process of regional integration and real estate expansion. It introduced new incentives to encourage private developers and launched three new town projects as public–private partnerships located in areas where developers held large reserves of farmland for speculative purposes, leading to the eviction of residents in some non-indigenous villages (see Hui and Au 2016). The government also constructed new highways, railways and cross-border infrastructure to connect new towns and other real estate projects with Shenzhen's booming centres. This combined urbanisation strategy entailed a large-scale process of re-territorialisation that reshaped multilayered patchwork urbanisation. In this process, non-indigenous villages were evicted to give way to new development, leading to various forms of resistance. On the other hand, the large areas occupied by indigenous villages have been generally filled with different forms of illegal houses.

Multilayered patchwork urbanisation in the New Territories is not simply a result of spillover effects of urban development from the city centre to the periphery. Rather, the urban space of the New Territories has been reconfigured and re-territorialised by several rounds of urban strategies that the colonial and the SAR government implemented in a period during which geopolitical dynamics with China were in flux. At the same time, the pathway of urbanisation was also determined by continual negotiations between the Hong Kong government and the indigenous villagers who maintained their stronghold over the land. Urbanisation was further shaped by interactions between different social forces and actors, including investors and developers who promoted and championed their own urban strategies. The case of the New Territories shows that multilayered patchwork urbanisation is an emergent process that is constantly being transformed by various conflicting forces and logics. Under those conditions, the outcome is uncertain and unpredictable.

# PATTCHIWA-KU, TOKYO

A similar situation to that of Los Angeles can be found in Tokyo, where we identified both processes, laminar and multilayered patchwork urbanisation.[1] While large parts of the territory of the Tokyo metropolitan complex are dominated by laminar urbanisation (the two urban configurations of Tōkaidō and Yamanote, see Chapter 5), a heterogeneous urban configuration evolved in the adjacent northern part of the region, which we call pattchiwa-ku urbanisation. It extends from the edge of the core city towards Japan's central mountains in the north and gradually transitions to the peripheral configuration of Kôhaichi, dominated by agricultural production, in the east. The term pattchiwa-ku is an adapted translation of the English term 'patchwork' into Japanese. This configuration is shaped by the simultaneity of contrasting logics, rhythms and urban dynamics; it comprises agricultural territories, forests, housing areas, industrial plants, logistic hubs, airports, transport infrastructures and large-scale military zones.

Terry McGee's (1991) concept of *desakota* comes close to describing the urbanisation processes in pattchiwa-ku. He refers to the Japanese term *konjûka* to characterise a particular type of desakota landscape. Desakota describes a densely populated, smallholder agricultural territory close to a large city with a well-developed infrastructure. It offers cheap and flexible labour and generally high mobility for people and goods and slowly urbanises along existing transport axes. Pattchiwa-ku urbanisation, however, diverges from McGee's definition, because it is located inside the metropolitan region and is the result of a longer and more complex pathway of urbanisation than a desakota.

As an example, we point to a description of Tokyo's northern edge by Andre Sorensen, who has researched urban sprawl and city planning in Japan: 'Why, in a country that has practiced land use zoning since 1919, is there such a great intermixture of residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses? [...] Why are there so few of the exclusive residential developments for the affluent that have recently become common in other similarly wealthy nations? Why does intensive agriculture persist as small patches of vegetables or rice paddy in areas that are otherwise mostly built up while at the same time small clumps of houses are scattered throughout areas that are still mostly agricultural?' (Sorensen 2001a: 247). This perplexing situation can only be understood if we look at the genesis of this specific type of multilayered patchwork urbanisation that developed in Tokyo.

During the Edo period (1603–1868), this area consisted of small farms and villages scattered over extended landscapes consisting of rice fields, a pattern that can still be observed today in rice-based cultures in East and South-East Asia. The practice of intensive rice farming can sustain a large population on a comparatively small piece of land. In Japan, these settlements were connected with the Tōkaidō road network, which linked Edo, the historical city that preceded Tokyo, with the main centralities at the time, and thus generated a continuous stream of goods and people along its axes. This network gave farmers access to markets and the villages located along the roads could generate income by hosting and catering to travellers. Due to the imposition of alternating residences for feudal lords and their retainers and households between Edo and their respective homelands, a significant part of the population was continuously travelling along these routes on their way to Edo or back home (see Chapter 5).

Tokyo; peripheral centrality. Ōmiya Station, Saitama Prefecture, 2012

Tokyo; detached houses, paddy field and public housing estate. Kitamoto, Saitama Prefecture, 2013

After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, which opened up the country to the West when modern Tokyo began, Japan developed a modern transport system connecting the centres of Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto. The first to be built were the railroads that crossed the country in the 1870s, providing efficient means of transportation for agricultural products and securing access to remote villages (Ericson 1996; Noguchi 1990). However, in the favoured residential areas in the west and south, railway electrification as well as urban development were prioritised and both were much slower in the area of pattchiwa-ku.

Subsequently, the area offered the space for siting the large-scale military infrastructure that became crucial for Japan's increasing military engagement in the region at the beginning of the 20th century. The first airbase was established in 1911 in Tokorozawa and in 1922 the Tachikawa Airfield opened further south-west, soon becoming the centre of an aircraft industry. The concentration of war-related industries raised the concern of local authorities, who demanded they should be relocated beyond a 30 km radius from the city centre (Allinson 1979: 56). Outside this circle, military out-posts and aircraft stations were developed along the newly expanded transport routes.

After the Second World War, land reform carried out under US occupation contributed to the further fragmentation of agricultural land, as landholdings larger than 2 ha had to be subdivided to prevent the establishment of powerful conglomerates. This fragmentation and the relatively small amount of land under public ownership made a comprehensive development of the area challenging (Sorensen 2001a: 251; Teruoka 1989). The National Capital Region Development Law introduced in 1951 to regulate urbanisation restricted the construction of industrial plants and universities within Tokyo's core area, and thus pushed industrial and infrastructural development out towards more peripheral areas. Since the western part of the Tokyo region was already largely developed, many of these of urban functions settled on the northern edge of Tokyo along already established infrastructural connections. This gave rise to the industrial layer in the pattchiwa-ku configuration.

The National Capital Region Development Plan released in 1958 then proposed an extensive green belt around Tokyo as a cordon sanitaire, which was intended to be framed by various satellite cities serving the centre (Sorensen 2001b: 16). However, this plan was only partly implemented and the designated greenbelt area was soon overrun by a fast-growing population seeking housing opportunities in the metropolitan region. The designated greenbelt area, consequently, became an area of urban growth during the course of the 1960s and 1970s with detached houses and new towns progressively pushing the frontier of the built-up area further and further outwards. Just as in the western side of Tokyo, these developments expanded along the railway lines, which were gradually extended. New types of urban housing were built in-between traditional estates while open spaces and agricultural activities receded.

In 1968 the revised city planning law introduced a new urban development control system called the *senbiki* system ('drawing a line'). It provided two new planning tools: the Urban Control Area plan that restricted urban development to prevent the uncoordinated conversion of land and, in contrast, the Urban Promotion Area plan that promoted new developments. This differentiation was of great significance on the urban fringe where large areas of agricultural land and forestry still existed. Based on these regulations and a new land taxation system it became more lucrative for farmers to convert their agricultural land to buildings than to farm. Various loopholes in the senbiki system and the traditional political weight attached to farmers' interests in Japan (Hohn 2000; Sorensen 2001a: 253; Yamamura 1992: 47) led to the failure of this system and thus urban sprawl continued (Saizen et al. 2006).

In 1965 the core area of Tokyo reached a peak of close to 9 million inhabitants and subsequently the city lost about 900,000 inhabitants in the following decade, while the total population in the prefecture of Tokyo as well as in the adjacent prefectures continued to grow (Japanese Statistics Bureau 2010). One cause of this demographic shift was the increasing environmental pollution from industrial sites in the core area which led to deteriorating living conditions. This trend is reflected

in what is called the J-turn migration. Young people who had migrated to Tokyo from different parts of the country when the economy started to boom after the Second World War became disenchanted with the reality of urban life. Rising costs, limited living space and increasing environmental pollution reduced the quality of life on a daily basis. They thus moved to areas that were in commuting distance to the centre and where property prices were lower, but which were still in reach of urban amenities (Nakamura and White 1988: 126).

In order to accommodate the population influx in the area and to alleviate pressure from the centre, new satellite cities have been constructed since the 1960s. Upon completion, each of them had a population of more than half a million people and usually its own employment centre. Concurrently, new policies that restricted the number of centrally located industrial sites propelled their relocation to the urban periphery in the 1970s and intensified the industrial layer of the patchwork. Economist Kazuji Nagasu calls this general trend towards the periphery in the 1970s *Chihô no jidai*, the 'era of the extended urban region'—in contrast to the previous 'era of central power' (Nagasu 1978). This trend was also intensified under the Third National Regional Development Plan using the slogan 'from the centre to the provinces'. Consequently, political decision-making processes were gradually decentralised and private investment was drawn towards new facilities and infrastructure in the periphery, which then gained a new political role within the metropolitan complex. Today, the pattchiwa-ku configuration spreads over the prefectures of Saitama and Chiba and extends into Gunma and Tochigi, with an overall population of about 7 million. Its daytime population is about one-third lower than its night-time population, as many people still commute daily to the central area. Nevertheless, the patchwork of industrial zones, agricultural areas and housing clusters has contributed to the formation of local centres that offer commercial activities, services and employment.

The configuration is today greatly affected by economic stagnation, demographic change and the territorial effects of neoliberal policies. Since the 2000s, investment has again focused on the metropolitan core area, where a new appreciation of urban quality is increasing the demand for housing in the centre and urban facilities. Young people are being drawn back to a metropolitan centre that offers better connectivity and amenities. At the same time, the consequences of a rapidly ageing society have left a population of elderly people behind in the outskirts. There are numerous areas where more than 25% of the inhabitants are over 65 years old. This poses new challenges to the municipal welfare budget as well as to communal cohesion and integration (Ochiai 2013). At the same time, the restructuring of the labour market has proved difficult for local industries, which in many places have fled the metropolitan periphery and moved their labour-intensive factories to other locations in South-East Asia.

The fact that patchy urban development continued is partly to blame for the weak City Planning Act from 1968, which failed to channel the population influx and economic growth (Saizen et al. 2006). The revised City Planning Act of 2000 did not bring about any significant change. Given the powerful actors that were involved in making each urban layer, the different layers have never merged. Instead, they have produced a landscape consisting of largely discrete morphologies and practices. From the vantage point of the core area, the area of pattchiwa-ku is still often pejoratively referred to as the *inaka* (or 'countryside'). However, with its diverse identities and dynamics that are tied to regional as well as global flows, the area offers greater flexibility than other, more coherent and consolidated areas in the region. This presents a point of departure for much needed socio-spatial adaptation in the context of an ongoing regional restructuring.

# COMPARISON

These four case studies illustrate very clearly the focus and the extent of the concept of multilayered patchwork urbanisation. Firstly, as we have seen, the identification of this process requires us to analyse the wider territory from a relational perspective. It becomes visible only if set in relation to other urbanisation processes shaping the territory. Secondly, to understand the superimposition and imbrication of different territorial logics requires us to analyse the pathways of urbanisation over time and thus take a historical perspective. Thirdly, the outcomes of the simultaneity of these different logics have to be analysed. What effect does the confrontation of these different logics have on the ground and what are the main lines of conflict?

In Paris, the first layer of multilayered patchwork urbanisation was constituted by the traces of the hinterland of the capital that developed in the 16th to 18th centuries. With the beginning of urbanisation and Haussmann's radical transformation of the city of Paris, a main contradiction was introduced: the relationship between the city of Paris and its periphery, the banlieue outside the city wall. The areas closer to Paris developed into dense working-class neighbourhoods and became the couronne rouge. The more remote parts of the banlieue, the grande couronne, developed through the erection of small, sometimes self-built working-class or lower middle-class houses stretching out into the surrounding periurban areas mainly along train lines, forming the second layer. This urban development changed radically during the period of French Fordism, when mass housing urbanisation and the production of grands ensembles led to the rapid transformation of the grand couronne. This urban strategy constituted a territorial compromise between Gaullist top-down politics and local initiatives based on municipal socialism. As a result, the grands ensembles were built pragmatically in places where there was the least resistance to them and where land prices were the lowest. Thus, the interstices and grids of the urban fabric were filled in with grands ensembles, as well as shopping malls and all sorts of infrastructure. This third layer thus led to the peripheralisation of parts of the population. In the 1970s a new phase began with the construction of five villes nouvelles, state-planned new towns with their own urban centres, which were designed to restructure and redefine the huge urban periphery of Paris. However, as a result of urban densification outside the planning perimeters and the further fragmentation of the urban pattern, a huge zone emerged in which the villes nouvelles merged together with their surroundings and became just one additional layer of the emerging encompassing urban patchwork. This was the moment when multilayered patchwork urbanisation became a social reality.

In Los Angeles, a very different situation unfolded. At first sight, the development of Orange County appears disturbing or even chaotic. As has become obvious, it is not possible to identify clear historical layers of urban development. Orange County is best understood as a collection of different urban fragments; it is determined by numerous logics, none of which holds overall sway, yet all of which give the area a heterogeneous, variegated texture which defies easy categorisation. The history of Orange County is a collection of local pathways of urbanisation that developed sometimes over decades, filling up the landscape, effacing the traces of agriculture and finally leading to a dense conglomeration that is full of surprises. Despite the difficulty of tracing the layers of urbanisation in this region there are nevertheless certain overarching tendencies that guided this urbanisation process. At the beginning there was a dominant agricultural production with mixed crops, from citrus plantations to beans and dairy products. This first layer lives on in the name but has slowly faded away, eaten up by industrialisation and urbanisation, until it has been completely consumed. A second layer developed after the Second World War as a result of the massive influx of relatively affluent middle-class families spilling over from southern Los Angeles County who were attracted by the location, the good connectivity, the beaches and the climate. This process has continually moved south over half a century. A third layer was formed by the oil economy, which laid the foundation for further industrialisation and led in the 1960s and 1970s to a fully developed industrial complex, which in turn generated more new business and technology centres. In itself this urbanisation process is not very spectacular. What makes it special is the development, step by step, of a huge variety of centralities that were based on local and often also private initiatives. Some of these centralities developed over a long period of time and led to a multicentric territory. At what moment can we call this configuration multilayered patchwork urbanisation? There is no clear event, no defining development that would mark a specific point in time in which this urban configuration emerged. It was a gradual process in which the density and diversity of the urban pattern reached a certain degree of saturation. Sometime during the 1980s the full dimensions of multilayered patchwork urbanisation became visible and tangible, and that was the moment when Soja made his journey through Orange County and declared it the paradigmatic example of postmodern urban development. In hindsight it is not difficult to see the time-dependency of this interpretation. Orange County is not a postmodern phenomenon. In the longue durée we see that it is the result of a long-lasting, complex and differentiated pathway of urbanisation that continues to this day.

The New Territories in Hong Kong show another variant of multilayered patchwork urbanisation. The urban development of this zone is marked by a double problematic: on the one hand it forms a border zone between Hong Kong and China, and it is therefore influenced by the development of both Hong Kong and China and their mutual relationship. On the other hand, the basic conditions for the New Territories was the establishment of the lease contract that gave the indigenous villages a strong and lasting influence on the further development of the territory. Furthermore, this lease determined the fate of the entire colony, as it stipulated that Hong Kong would be handed over to China after a century. The New Territories were thus the linchpin of the further development of Hong Kong. In this area, urbanisation took place according to both colonial and customary laws. Thus, the 'rural' element heavily influenced the whole urbanisation process and imposed on Hong Kong the direction of patchwork urbanisation from the very beginning (see also Tang 2014). During the first phase until the Second World War, this area was a typical periphery; a border zone between Hong Kong and rural and peripheral China, dominated by villages and traditional market towns. This began to change in 1949 with the rise of the Chinese Community Party, first of all by generating a huge wave of refugees that turned the New Territories into a political frontier zone. As Hong Kong started to accommodate the immigrant people, a second layer of mass housing urbanisation and new town development evolved. The New Territories became the home of the industrial working class, very similar to the situation in Paris. In the 1980s, with the new economic strategy of the People's Republic of China, a further radical change occurred. Soon, there was no longer a rural periphery on the other side of the border: it was the world's fastest growing industrial metropolis. The tactics of the Chinese government to dock Shenzhen directly onto Hong Kong and to locate the main centralities immediately at the border meant that the New Territories were no longer on the edge: they were in the geographical centre of two thriving global metropolises. Thus, the area of the New Territories that once formed an edge of Hong Kong was suddenly located in between the two main metropolitan centres on the eastern Pearl River Delta, leading to a fundamental re-territorialisation. This was the very moment when the configuration of multilayered patchwork urbanisation came into being. The last defining change arrived when the colony was handed over to China, which led to cross-border territorial strategies of metropolisation and regional integration.

In comparison with these spectacular developments, the pattchiwa-ku configuration in Tokyo underwent a slow and gradual transformation. As in Orange County, it started as a peripheral agricultural area, a quiet backwater of the growing metropolis. In contrast to Orange County however, this layer is still present, as the rice fields subsist to this day. A second layer was established when large-scale infrastructure and military industries started to move in during the 1920s and 1930s. This prepared the ground for the third layer that has been developing since the Second World War: the industrial layer. This area functioned as a kind of spillover basin to accommodate industrial plants and infrastructure that had been relocated from the central part of Tokyo. A fourth and defining layer emerged when wave after wave of detached houses and satellite towns were built in the area. In this respect, pattchiwa-ku has clear similarities with Los Angeles. However, the lack of strong centralities gives this area a very different character. Today, with its ageing population, residential areas are slowly emptying out and the number of commuters from pattchiwa-ku to the core area of Tokyo is rapidly declining. This has laid bare the lack of local amenities and services necessary for daily life in this area, while new services catering for the requirements of the ageing population are urgently needed. Simultaneously, people are spending more time in the area and have begun to invest in building communal activities and networks. This shows certain similarities with the grande couronne in Paris, which is also developing a more local orientation of daily life.

## POLYCENTRALITY

Looking at these four case studies together, we detect some clear commonalities: All of these territories have agricultural origins, which are still visible as traces inscribed into the terrain, from farm houses to ancient village cores and windy street patterns; though in Orange County, these traces have been almost completely effaced. All four territories have also become arenas of industrialisation and the mass construction of housing units, which are oriented to the middle class in Los Angeles and Tokyo, and a social mix in Hong Kong and Paris. However, such characteristics are not unusual for urban peripheries—so what makes multilayered patchwork urbanisation a distinct process, and what are its consequences?

Firstly, all of these territories have been fundamentally reorganised in recent decades by the production of new centralities. These centralities are either planned (as in the cases of the villes nouvelles in Paris and the new towns in Hong Kong and Tokyo) or emergent, especially when circumambient to infrastructural nodes (as in Los Angeles and in Tokyo). Often, pre-existing centres are integrated into the urbanisation process. Furthermore, these territories are strongly influenced by both entrenched and newly produced centralities in the wider territory, as becomes visible in the maps at the beginning of this chapter. Overall, this gives these territories a strong polycentric and even ex-centric orientation.

Polycentrality as such is both a problem and a potential: on the one hand, the dispersion of centrality leads to the formation of partial centralities and reduces the power of attraction. It also makes access to centrality more difficult by generating logistical problems. Thus, transport infrastructures (trains, motorways, airports) become an important part of the patchwork structure of these areas, as they create material divisions and ruptures, which may lead to territorial enclaves and logistic peripheralisation. On the other hand, polycentrality results in multi-functional spaces: all these territories include not only housing, but residential uses combined with industrial, commercial and cultural production as well as recreational functions. As a result, these erstwhile peripheries are not peripheral anymore: over decades, they have been integrated into vast urban regions, comprising significant areas of Paris, Hong Kong, Los Angeles and Tokyo. By developing their own centralities these territories assemble all elements of urban core areas, which give them a relative autonomy and a certain form of urbanity.

Secondly, these territories are dominated by multiple, diverging and changing political agendas, and reflect the inscription of different regimes of territorial regulation during several rounds of urban transformation. The New Territories and the grande couronne are to a certain degree the results of specific territorial compromises between state strategies and local initiatives and struggles. Similarly, the pattchiwa-ku area is marked by the exploitation of certain grey zones in planning law by local landowners. In Orange County, various initiatives and projects of individual actors and local power constellations in the municipalities have created a patchwork of centralities. In recent years, Hong Kong's New Territories have been integrated into the overall planning of the Pearl River Delta by the Chinese central state at the provincial level, resulting in conflicting agendas and struggles between non-indigenous villages and the governments of Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

Thirdly, as a result, all these territories are marked by the superimposition of several logics of urbanisation and a multiplicity of spatial orientations and temporal rhythms. The co-presence of very different patches or enclaves often leads to a disorienting daily experience. However, there are still various degrees of interaction and interrelationship between these patches: while they sometimes strongly interfere with each other, they may also develop into complementary poles. These varied dynamics contribute to the unpredictability of this particular urbanisation process.

All of these territories have undergone a certain kind of consolidation in recent years. In Los Angeles and Paris, we observe an intensification and densification of the urban fabric. As a result, 'edges' and 'holes' in this fabric (such as agricultural land, terrains vagues, or industrial brownfield sites) have been filled in by new development. In Paris and Tokyo, a re-territorialisation of everyday activities can be observed, which is strengthening local centralities. And the New Territories have developed into a strategic in-between space that faces an uncertain future.

In this way, the strong centre–periphery relation that originally dominated all four territories has given way to a complex polycentric patchwork integrating various urban functions. Multilayered patchwork urbanisation has thus become a key process in metropolitan areas, revealing a variety of urban potentials and specific urban qualities. From a broader perspective, these territories could demonstrate the potential to nurture a new form of urban intensity identified by Nüssli and Schmid (2016) and Keil and Addie (2015), and to develop some of the new forms of centrality called for by Henri Lefebvre (2003 [1970]: 119–120), who imagined the introduction and invention of new urban forms, polycentric cities, and differentiated, renewed, even mobile or floating centralities. In this sense, such territories not only illustrate the obsolescence of the conceptual distinction between 'urban' and 'suburban' areas but also may serve as examples for the urban potentials of polycentric territories.

1 This section is largely based on the section entitled Pattchiwa-ku urbanization in Hanakata 2020: 159–173.

Mexico City; first mega conjunto San Buenaventura built in 1998. Ixtapaluca, 2013

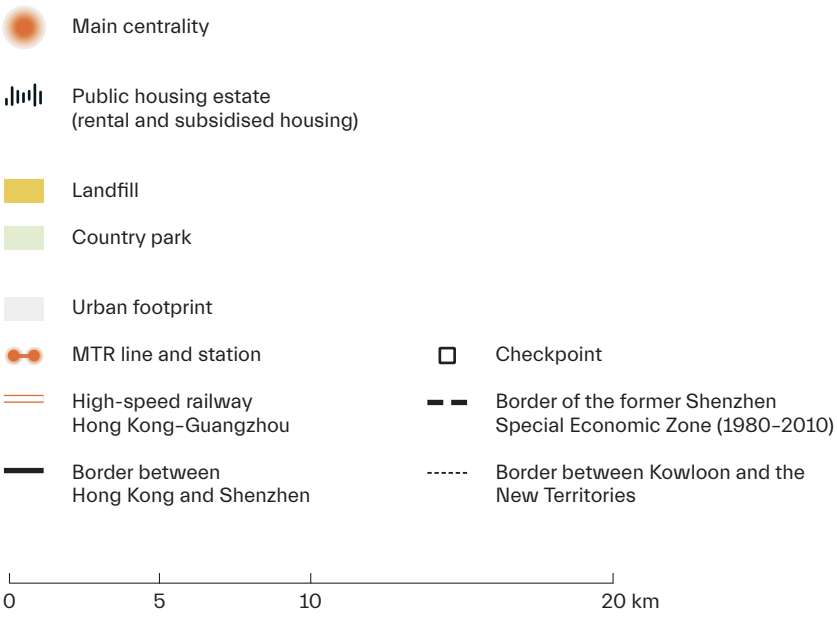
Paris; commercial centre in Sarcelles, built in 1955. Val d'Oise, 2011

# MASS HOUSING URBANISATION

# STATE STRATEGIES AND PERIPHERALISATION

Hong Kong; neighbourhood centre in a new town. Tin Shui Wai, 2012

# MASS HOUSING URBANISATION



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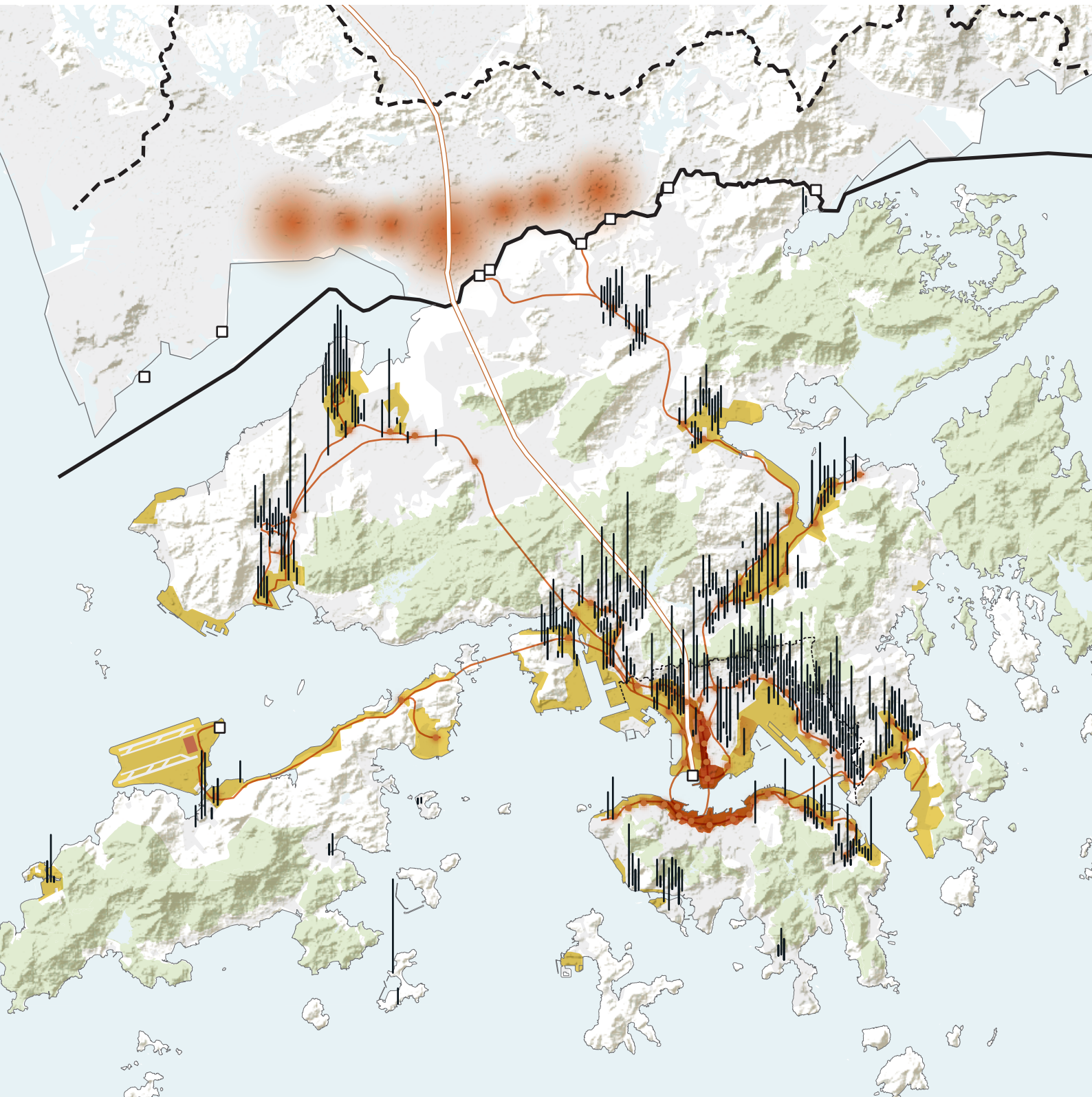

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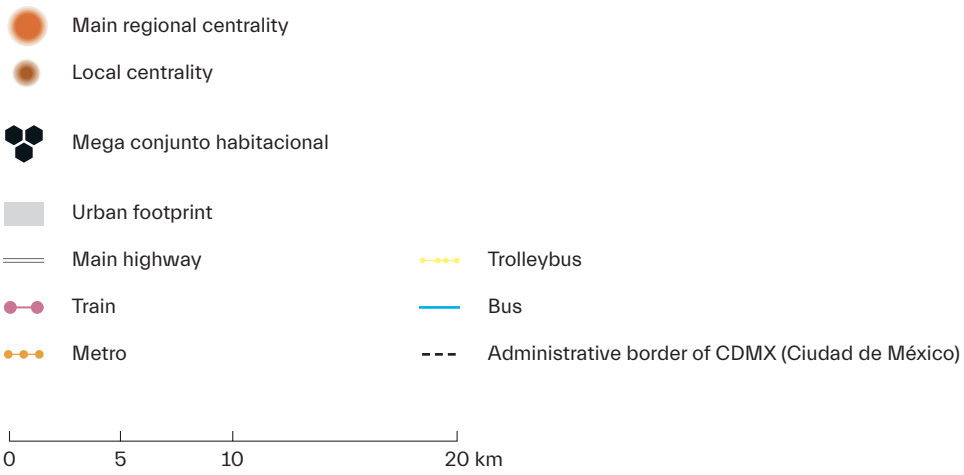

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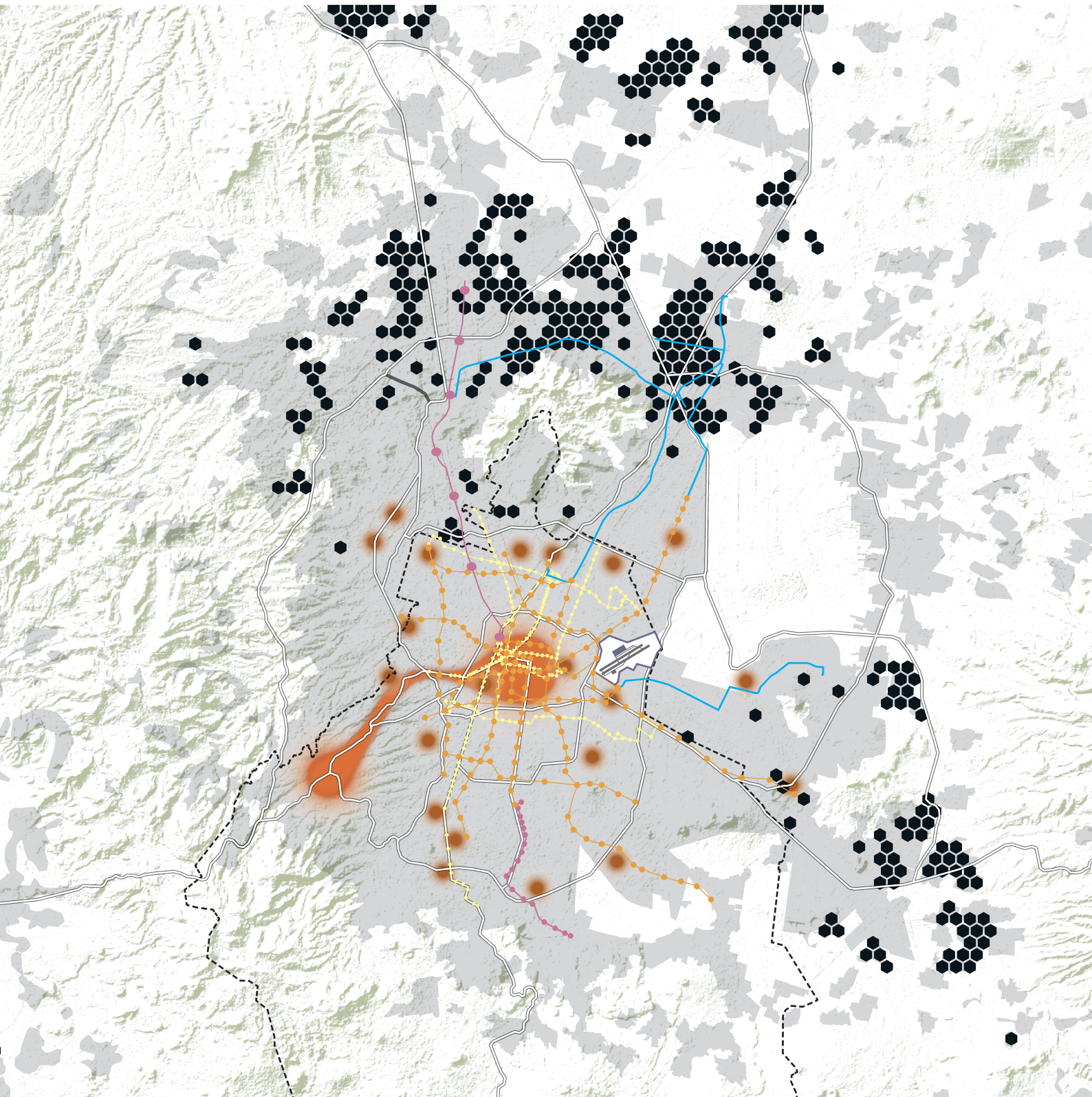
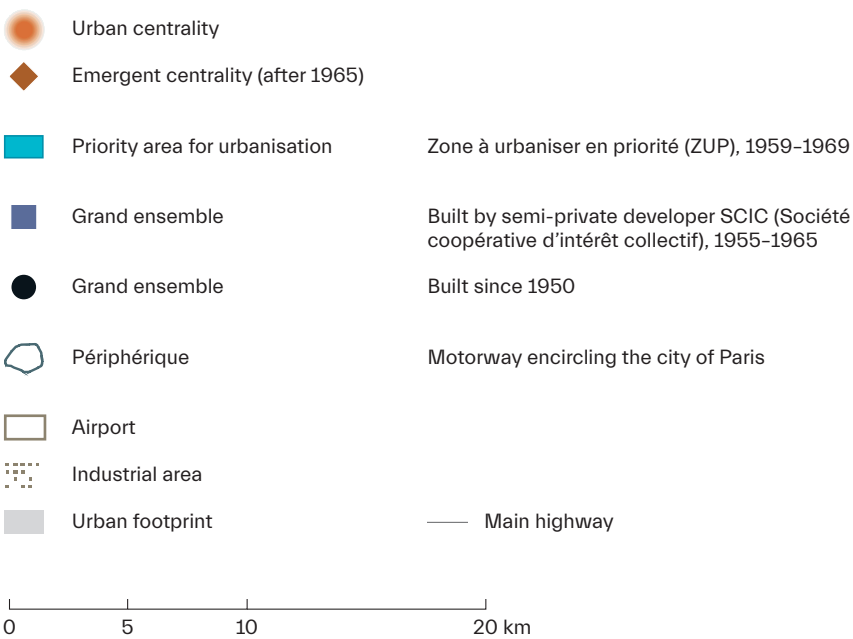
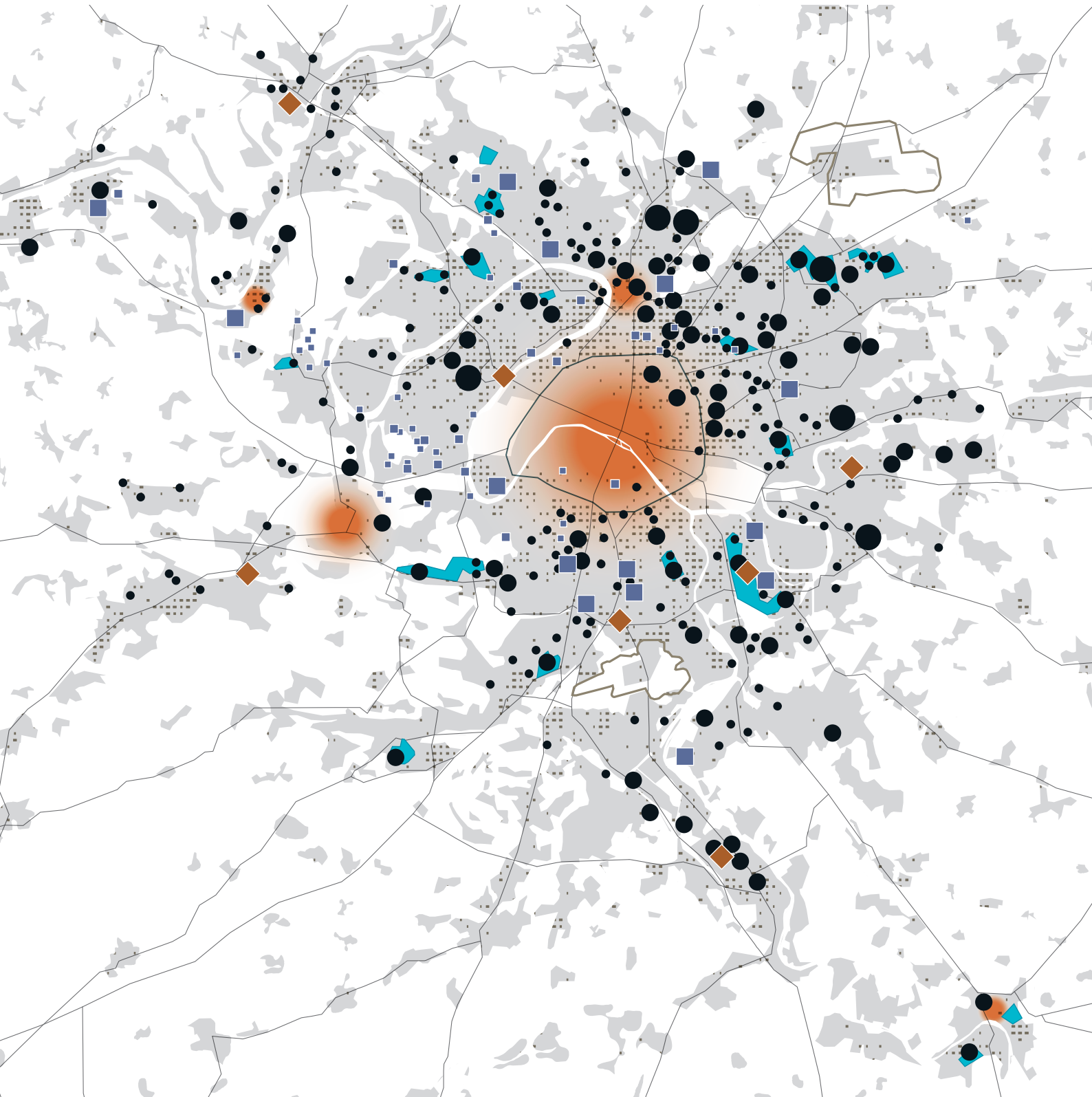


# MASS HOUSING URBANISATION



# PARIS



Anne Kockelkorn
Christian Schmid
Monika Streule
Kit Ping Wong

# A COMPARISON ACROSS SPACE AND TIME

In this chapter we compare the contribution by state-initiated mass housing urbanisation to peripheralisation in three very different historical and geopolitical settings: Paris from the 1950s to the 1990s, Hong Kong from the 1950s to 2010s and Mexico City from the 1990s to the 2010s. We understand mass housing urbanisation as the industrial production of large-scale housing that leads to the strategic reorganisation of entire urban territories. This urbanisation process is implemented by state actors, often as a response to fast urban growth, and implies a combined intervention into the housing market, the housing industry and the territorial development of the entire urban region. In Hong Kong and Paris this process unfolded during the post-war economic boom and in both cases, it was provoked by a severe and politically threatening housing crisis, which made the economic, technical and organisational efforts demanded for fast housing construction politically necessary and economically welcome. A different version of mass housing urbanisation evolved around the beginning of this century in Mexico City under the influence of a financialised housing market, where it served to relocate lower-income groups from urban regeneration and renewal sites in central areas.

During this study we found that in all three cases strong processes of peripheralisation occurred. In this comparison across space and time we focus on how, when and to what degree this urbanisation process has led to the peripheralisation of settlements and entire neighbourhoods over the course of several decades. This long-term perspective allows us to evaluate the decisive turns and ruptures in the strategies governments have used over time, as well as the continuities and contradictions of their territorial effect. Finally, we develop a taxonomy of different modalities of peripheralisation that may serve as a conceptual tool for further urban research.

## MASS HOUSING URBANISATION

In contrast to other types of social housing, which includes a wide variety of material forms, scales and kinds of organisation, mass housing urbanisation is a large-scale process and therefore involves the transformation of the entire urban territory: including both the urban periphery, where mass housing urbanisation usually takes place, as well as the urban centres, where it may have marked repercussions. A key aspect of this process is the direct intervention of state actors in housing production and the urban planning and territorial development that create the necessary conditions for this all-embracing urban process to take place. In this way mass housing urbanisation is different from other kinds of large-scale urbanisation, such as the privately organised and market-oriented production of single-family homes and condominiums or the various forms of self-build and popular urbanisation in southern metropolises (see Chapter 12).

Comparative historical analyses of mass housing urbanisation across the world are relatively rare. Studies of mass housing analyse the relation between state regulations and housing production and highlight the variety of pathways, actors, housing markets and the urban forms this involves (Power 1993; Dufaux and Fourcaut 2004; Urban 2012; Glendinning 2021). However, they do not conceptualise mass housing production as an urbanisation process and they do not analyse its territorial dimension; especially not the relationships between centres and peripheries and the related resettlement and relocation of people. Similarly, recent analyses of financialised housing production describe the effects of privatisation and enclosure but neglect the territorial restructuring that occurs and its consequences for the entire urban region (Aalbers 2016; Jacobs 2019; Rolnik 2019).

We define mass housing urbanisation as a specific process of urbanisation that has four main characteristics. The first of these is the large-scale construction of housing units using standardised industrial forms of production. Because of its organisational complexity, this process is often implemented at the scale of the nation-state. The standardisation of the production process and of the housing typologies and floor plans all play a part in imposing normative lifestyles and consumption patterns on the residents.

Secondly, mass housing urbanisation is usually designed to meet the needs of lower-income groups (working and middle classes) and therefore receives financial support from public authorities. This includes direct and indirect subsidies, such as regulative interventions into the housing market and social and mortgage benefits for tenants. Furthermore, these interventions may be approved for social housing intended for rent as well as for home ownership. In both cases, the state intervenes directly into the process of social reproduction.

The third characteristic of mass housing urbanisation is the intervention of state actors into this process. Only they have the legal power and the organisational capacity to control the large-scale production of housing and the related relocation of people. Most important, states hold the power to transfer ownership of public land, as well as the right to expropriation together with access to other planning and financial tools.

The fourth defining characteristic of mass housing urbanisation is that it results in the strategic reorganisation of entire urban territories. This entails rearranging the social composition of urban areas and it often also includes the resettlement of mostly lower-income groups from central (inner-city) locations to peripheries, thus transforming both the periphery and the urban centre.

The large-scale production of housing requires large tracts of land to be available. This can be provided by the thoroughgoing demolition of inner-city neighbourhoods using urban renewal strategies or by the urbanisation of hitherto sparsely settled areas on the outskirts. Territorial restructuring is thus a defining feature of mass housing urbanisation and it may result in specific forms of peripheralisation. However, peripheralisation itself is not a defining characteristic of this form of urbanisation. Even though the newly built settlements are usually located at the urban periphery, they do not necessarily experience spatial isolation and the lack of centrality. The planning of public transport infrastructure and new centralities may provide its residents with at least some urban qualities together with fast access to the main centres. Mass housing urbanisation and new town developments in both capitalist and socialist countries during the post-war period have sometimes resulted in inclusive urban neighbourhoods that do not display deep socioeconomic segregation (Beyer 2017; Clapson 2004). However, the case studies presented in this chapter show marked processes of peripheralisation, despite their different geographical and historical settings. Identifying and comparing the pathways of mass housing urbanisation that have led to peripheralisation is one of the main goals of this chapter. It thus also makes a contribution to a relatively recent comparative global housing studies project (Aalbers 2022).

## PERIPHERALISATION

The term peripheralisation denotes a territorial process that generates and reinforces relations of dominance and dependency. It is a relational concept for identifying the polarisation of power, wealth and access to economic and social resources among central and peripheral areas. This definition

moves away from a static conceptualisation of a periphery as a geographical location to analysing a dynamic and contradictory economic, political and social process. Increasing socio-spatial inequalities have led to a revival of the term 'peripheralisation' in urban and regional research in recent years, particularly in analysing declining industrial regions in Europe and North America and sparsely populated areas in eastern and southern Europe. Peripheralisation is also closely related to processes of stigmatisation, marginalisation and exclusion and often associated with population decline and urban shrinkage (for a theoretical and empirical discussion see e.g. Fischer-Tahir and Naumann 2013; Kühn 2015, 2016; Kühn and Bernt 2013).

In the early 1970s, Henri Lefebvre claimed a pivotal role for the centre–periphery relationship in his theory of the production of space. He understood centrality as a dialectical concept: the centre does not exist without the periphery (or numerous peripheries). He applied this conceptualisation in his analysis of the restructuring of the Paris region in the 1950s and 1960s, describing the relocation of the working class from central neighbourhoods to the new housing estates in the urban periphery, which led to them suffering severe losses in their access to everyday amenities, opportunities and possibilities. Lefebvre's understanding of the importance of centre–periphery relations also allowed him to make links among the processes of peripheralisation in metropolitan and in remote and sparsely settled territories. He defines centrality as a spatial form: it describes the simultaneity of people, things and events that can be brought together around a point. Centrality creates a situation in which they no longer exist separately, but interact and become productive. The centre is thus a crucial resource: it is a privileged place of encounter, assembly and communication; a place for the exchange of goods, information and affect; a place in which constraints and normalities dissolve. The question of whether people have access to or are excluded from centrality is at the very core of Lefebvre's understanding of the 'right to the city', which he defines as a 'right to centrality'. It includes the right not to be excluded from centrality and its movement and the right not to be forced out of society and culture into a space produced for the purpose of discrimination (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 109–10, 150; see also Schmid 2022).

Saskia Sassen was among the first to conceptualise processes of peripheralisation in global cities in the 1990s (Sassen 1994). She argued that the increasing concentration of corporate power and economic activities relying on highly qualified individuals depends on large numbers of people, often migrants, who work in precarious low-income jobs such as cleaning, caring and logistics. The existence of such processes of peripheralisation in urban centres challenges the classic idea of a centre–periphery dichotomy, as the areas undergoing peripheralisation can be found sometimes adjacent to centralities but they are nevertheless cut off from urban life. Loïc Wacquant calls the polarity between affluent and impoverished neighbourhoods 'advanced marginality' (Wacquant 2008). In her analysis of the spatiality of poverty in the extended region of Johannesburg, Lindsay Howe (2021) examines the intersection of peripherality and poverty and explains that state-subsidised affordable housing often reinforces existing socio-spatial inequalities, while emerging popular centralities produced through the agency of people may help to reduce the peripherality of their settlements.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In the following, we compare the patterns and pathways of three variations of mass housing urbanisation: a Fordist one in Paris; a colonial one in Hong Kong and a financialised one in Mexico City, together with the related processes of peripheralisation over the course of several decades. We thus draw on very different cases situated across distinct geopolitical and historical settings to explore the types of centre–periphery relations and territorial effects that may emerge and unfold in the context of mass housing urbanisation. Our analytical angle places the difference between owners and tenants —so central to Friedrich Engels' analysis of housing in late 19th century Europe (Engels 1975 [1845])— in the background. Even if the concrete form that tenure takes remains critical to each variation of mass housing, the differences between the modalities of tenure are not the focus of this chapter. Moreover, our goal is not simply to find similarities and differences between the cases we discuss. Rather, we seek to bring the three variants of mass housing urbanisation into conversation with each other in order to arrive at an empirically grounded conceptualisation of this specific urbanisation process (see Chapter 2). Adopting a transductive approach, we take the relationship between theory and empirical research to be dialectically intertwined, as 'an incessant feed-back between the conceptual framework used and empirical observations' (Lefebvre 1996 [1968]: 151).

In addition, we adopt a long-term perspective to explain the crucial turns and ruptures in the strategies that governments have used over time to understand the continuities and contradictions of their territorial effect. This entailed, for instance, reading the Paris case through the lens of the colonial territorial regime in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 1960s and analysing global city formation and financialisation in Hong Kong and Mexico City after 1980 and 1990. Thinking the urban through its 'multiple elsewheres,' to use Jennifer Robinson's (2016) phrase, allows us to revisit and provincialise inherited terms and ways of understanding mass housing urbanisation. This is

exemplified by concepts that are key to understanding mass housing urbanisation in the Paris case, such as 'neoliberal restructuring' and 'the welfare state', that help to understand urbanisation processes in the West, but do not help to grasp the specificity of the two other cases. Using a comparative analysis of the different territorial settings across global divides was therefore crucial for developing a novel and globally relevant understanding of mass housing urbanisation. Decentring western Europe and its canonical narratives of housing histories permitted a thorough repositing of the role of the nation-state. This procedure allowed us to understand the inherent logic of this urbanisation process precisely because of—and not despite—the diversity of the case studies analysed. The stark contrast of Fordist, colonial and financialised settings helped us to identify the fundamental features of mass housing urbanisation and its ensuing peripheralisation and work towards a definition that may be relevant in other contexts.

## A TAXONOMY OF PERIPHERALISATION

In its most general sense, peripheralisation denotes a territorial process that generates and reinforces relations of dominance and dependency. It leads to the loss or lack of access to all sorts of functions, jobs, infrastructures, uses, facilities, venues, meeting places and public spaces. As a result of our comparison, we identified three modalities of peripheralisation induced by mass housing urbanisation: logistical, everyday and socioeconomic peripheralisation.

Logistical peripheralisation focuses on processes that restrict access to amenities, functions and infrastructures. It entails the physical and social disconnection of a territory from urban centralities and networks—that is, its isolation from the surrounding urban fabric. This is shown by the long journeys people need to make to meet their daily needs, but also by the lack of efficient and affordable public transport. It thus imposes unaffordable or time-consuming commutes to workplaces and main regional centralities. The peripheralisation of the everyday is the counterpart to logistical peripheralisation as it entails the absence or poor quality of local and regional centralities and corresponding amenities. It includes the lack of opportunities for education, cultural and political participation, social encounters, leisure and enjoyment. Additionally, peripheralisation of the everyday restricts inhabitants' capacities to create their own modalities of everyday life. This often goes hand in hand with economic prosperity, particularly when homogenisation and commodification reduce the possibilities for residents to appropriate and self-organise economic, socio-political and cultural spaces. The third process we observed in our case studies is socioeconomic peripheralisation, occurring in our cases only after the 1970s. It is characterised by processes of impoverishment, social exclusion and stigmatisation and captures a situation in which people cannot afford access to basic goods and services even when they are available. Socioeconomic peripheralisation almost inevitably includes features of a peripheralisation of the everyday —such as exclusion from social networks and decision-making processes—whereas peripheralisation of the everyday may occur without marked socioeconomic peripheralisation.

In the following three sections, one for each case study, we first investigate the agencies and administrative tools of the main actors who initiated mass housing urbanisation. Secondly, we analyse land regimes, housing markets, the government's rationales and territorial strategies and the experiences of the inhabitants in the different political and socioeconomic contexts of these urban territories. Based on these insights, we then analyse the specific territorial characteristics and the varying processes of peripheralisation in each. The order of the case studies in the text follows the history of peripheralisation through mass housing urbanisation: Paris (1950s–1990s), Hong Kong (1950s–2010s) and Mexico City (1990s–2010s). The concluding section directly compares the three cases, details our taxonomy of peripheralisation and discusses the role of the state and its colonising strategies in the production of urban territories.

# PARIS, 1950s–1990s

The extended Paris region (Île-de-France) faced unprecedented urban growth during the post-war boom period, growing from 4.5 million inhabitants in 1954 to 7.6 million in 1975. Much of this growth was absorbed by modernist high-rise estates called grands ensembles. In 1962, 110 *grands ensembles* in the urban periphery of Paris housed around 2 million people, almost as many as the City of Paris itself. As a result, the life routines of the upper-working and lower-middle classes underwent radical changes from the 19th to the 20th century, providing the grounds for the formation of a consumer and leisure society. However, by the mid-1980s the grands ensembles had turned into zones of socio-economic decline, deprivation and stigmatisation. This inversion of socioeconomic fortune and symbolic meaning was a result of the liberalisation of urban politics in the French system of centralised interventionism from the mid-1960s onwards, as well as the economic crisis of the mid-1970s and the neoliberal restructuring that occurred after 1978. All these processes increased socio-spatial segregation and resulted in a fragmented and heterogenous territorial pattern.

## THE URBAN MODEL OF THE GRANDS ENSEMBLES AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF PARIS

The term 'grand ensemble' first appeared in public discourse at the end of the 1950s. It is a colloquial term that designates a large-scale modernist housing complex usually comprising more than 500 apartments composed of high-rise towers and low-rise slabs *(tours et bars)*, set in large open spaces and equipped with some urban amenities (Lacoste 1963). A precondition for this urbanisation model was the prefabrication building industry created for reconstructing war-damaged cities after the Second World War. Mass housing urbanisation started to be built in the mid-1950s. At the time, the Paris region faced a severe housing crisis that posed a threat to the stability of the government; caused by the comparatively low amount of construction activity and the dilapidation of the existing housing stock at a time when the region was experiencing great economic and demographic growth. In the Département de la Seine that surrounds the City of Paris, 240,000 families were classified as poorly housed *(mal logés)* in 1954, and thousands of people were living in squatter settlements. In the City of Paris only one in every two apartments was equipped with a toilet, only one in four had central heating and only one in five a bathtub or a shower (Bertrand 1964). To accelerate the pace of housing production, the French state offered the construction industry several financial and political incentives. In 1953 it facilitated access to credit financing and granted public authorities expropriation rights for housing production (Effosse 2003). It also created an employers' tax system that promoted the growth of semi-public providers of social housing for employees (Driant 2009; Glendinning 2021). In 1954 the public investment bank Caisse des dépôt et consignations (CDC) founded the subsidiary construction firm Société centrale immobilière de la Caisse des dépôts (SCIC) as an intermediate agency between the state and the municipalities. The SCIC soon became the main investor in housing in Île-de-France, where it financed and built 60,000 housing units up to 1964, including the new town of Sarcelles (Landauer 2010).

Paris; Cité de l'Abreuvoir, built between 1954–1958. Bobigny, 2022

Paris; housing slab in the Cité des 4000, before its demolition. La Courneuve, 2011

The expropriation laws and the creation of the SCIC constituted a decisive shift from locally rooted housing provision towards the strategic intervention of the national state into urbanisation processes. The creation of the SCIC linked civil engineering, market interventions and military strategies; a strategic combination of legal tools and disciplinary knowledge that was developed and applied in the French colonies (Kipfer 2019; Fredenucci 2003; Henni 2017). The strategy of combined urban intervention was strengthened with the advent of the Fifth Republic, established by General Charles de Gaulle in 1958 a few months after a military coup in Algeria had dismantled the Fourth Republic (1945–1958). De Gaulle installed a political system that granted the president and the prime minister special executive powers, and in the following years French urban planning introduced comprehensive territorial projects through top-down procedures (Vadelorge 2014; Effosse 2005). In 1958 the Gaullist government created priority urbanisation areas called ZUP *(zone à urbaniser par priorité)*, an administrative tool allowing land acquisition for the construction of 500-unit settlements equipped with public facilities. The 22 ZUPs launched in the Paris region from 1959 to 1969 comprised 140,000 housing units and covered a territory of nearly 6,000 ha—half the size of the City of Paris itself (Jamois 1968: 235–236). However, mass housing urbanisation in the Paris region during the post-war boom was a diverse and finely grained process. Fewer than half of the approximately 150 grands ensembles built until 1976 were ZUPs or developed by the SCIC.

The others were constructed using a variety of small-scale public or parastatal housing providers acting at a local scale, as exemplified by the high-quality social housing projects in the communist municipalities of Ivry-sur-Seine and Saint-Denis (Glendinning 2021; Fourcaut 2006). Local empowerment could also be achieved when a ZUP was based on the initiative and leadership of a mayor, such as the ZUP of Créteil, which included a new university. The coexistence of authoritarian strategies and local empowerment characterised the production of the grands ensembles until the mid-1960s.

Two contrasting tendencies determined the social composition of the grands ensembles. On the one hand, social housing remained socially segregated until the mid-1960s, since access to social rental contracts required a defined minimal income and thus excluded the poorest strata of the population as well as refugees and people without French citizenship. On the other hand, the grands ensembles also housed people displaced by the urban renewal of working-class neighbourhoods in the City of Paris. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, large parts of the City of Paris were transformed into a centre for global finance and a headquarter and knowledge economy, which was accompanied by a fundamental change in the social composition of its population. From 1954 to 1975 the share of workers living in the City of Paris dropped from 30 to 22 per cent, whereas the share of inhabitants older than 65 increased from 11 to 18 per cent (Nivet 2000). From 1962 to 1975, 1.7 million of its population of 2.8 million people left the City of Paris, while only 800,000 new inhabitants arrived to live in Paris; in the same time span, its population shrank by 500,000, while the urban region grew by 1.9 million (Annuaire statistique de la France).

The Paris administration promoted this transformation of the city through a series of urban renewal projects that extended over 3.8 km$^2$, or 3.6 per cent of the area of the city in 1970 (Godard et al. 1973; Coing 1966). The social housing companies owned or co-owned by the City of Paris[1] also facilitated the relocation of working-class inhabitants to the inner *banlieue* by building large-scale housing estates for the inhabitants of urban renewal sites, such as the Cité des 4000 in La Courneuve (1959) and Les Courtillières in Pantin (1955–1961) (Pouvreau 2010; Landauer and Pouvreau 2007). However, most of the indigent residents who were expelled from the City of Paris were relocated to new substandard housing estates that were often situated in ZUPs. These relocation efforts initiated a process of socioeconomic peripheralisation (Tricart 1977). Astonishingly, the communist press took little notice of this renovation and deportation *(rénovation-déportation)*, as critics called it at the time (Groupe de sociologie urbaine de Nanterre 1970). This silence can be

interpreted as a tacit territorial compromise between the conservative administration of the City of Paris and the communist municipalities of the Département de la Seine. The former sought to enhance and upgrade the City of Paris, while the latter hoped to strengthen their constituency by the arrival of more working-class people.

## LOGISTICAL PERIPHERALISATION AND PERIPHERALISATION OF THE EVERYDAY

In the first phase of mass housing urbanisation, the grands ensembles functioned as enclaves of accelerated modernisation for the white and native French part of the population, offering a modern but peripheralised mass consumer environment. In the outer banlieue they started urbanising the agricultural land that had been protected from construction between the wars by urban planners. In the inner banlieue, by contrast, buildings were located on the interstices of the dense 19th century urban apartment blocks, patches of single-family homes and industrial sites. In both cases, many grands ensembles were constructed on territorial enclaves, cut off from local centralities and placed adjacent to motorways, rail lines and industrial sites. This logistical peripheralisation of the grands ensembles was due not least to the sharply rising land prices in the Paris region (24 per cent per year from 1958 to 1964) because private and state-owned developers aimed at making homes affordable (Vadelorge 2014: 106, 116). While public bus connections were usually available, it could easily exceed 90 minutes to travel to the centre of Paris. Additionally, buses often did not run in the evenings and bus stops could be reached only after long walks (Clerc 1967, Huguet 1971). Territorial isolation and inadequate public transport resulted in the creation of a double periphery: many grands ensembles were peripheral to the centre of Paris and cut off from easy access to local centralities and the essential amenities of daily life.

Despite the various forms of logistical peripheralisation, living in a grand ensemble in the early 1960s was considered a privilege by many working-class households. The apartments provided comfort, light and space; private bathrooms and central heating were accompanied by a new consumer lifestyle and new domestic appliances; and, despite the standardised production methods used, the buildings and apartments were often of a high architectural quality. However, this modernisation went hand in hand with a peripheralisation of the everyday. Social spaces for meeting and interaction, such as restaurants, bars and entertainment venues, were largely absent, while televisions, refrigerators and the availability of cheap domestic washing machines shifted collective routines from the neighbourhood to the domestic interior. The economic viability of small retail stores was diminished by the state-driven erection of large-scale shopping malls in the banlieue (Cupers 2014). At the same time, having to pay higher rents for these modernist apartments and the cost of new consumer goods imposed economic discipline on households. The interplay of these processes with the functionalist apartment plan and the urban setting reinforced the Fordist production of new subjectivities through individualisation and hierarchical gender roles, promoting a modern

Paris; grandes ensembles, seen from the parc Georges-Valbon, 2022

middle-class identity of white French culture, as investigated by Ross (1995) and vividly illustrated by Christiane Rochefort's novel *Children of Heaven* (1962). This homogenisation of urban space became particularly apparent when contrasted with the tight mesh of small retail stores, launderettes, bars, cinemas and entertainment venues that made up everyday routines in the working-class neighbourhoods of the City of Paris (Coing, 1966). The morphological rupture between the hermetic, monotonous universe of the grands ensembles and the surrounding urban fabric aggravated residents' feelings of alienation. Sociological surveys revealed there was a widely shared unease about everyday life in the grands ensembles and in 1965 82 per cent of French citizens said they would prefer living in a detached house to having an apartment in a grand ensemble (Raymond et al. 1966: 29).

## RACIALISED SOCIOECONOMIC PERIPHERALISATION

During the 1970s the grands ensembles became the arena of a political paradigm shift in migration politics and the politics of housing finance, which consolidated the socioeconomic peripheralisation of residents and initiated a new form of racialised peripheralisation. Thus, social problems were transformed into the urban problem of a territorially, socially and ethnically segregated society. Starting in 1965, public authorities began to withdraw funding for social rental housing, while offering large financial incentives to high-income groups to leave the social rental housing sector. Access to home ownership was facilitated through the launch of public mortgage schemes and direct housing subsidies (Kleinman 1996; Lefebvre et al. 1991). This process was institutionalised and accelerated after the neoliberal reform programme of 1977 named after Prime Minister Raymond Barre. This programme made it harder for social housing companies to get a loan and encouraged lower income groups to become homeowners by launching a mortgage scheme for households that had no equity (Bourdieu and Christin 1990). These changes introduced a new governmental rationality: the shift from residents having the right to housing to their having a duty to participate in the housing market (Kockelkorn 2020).

In parallel with these changes in the politics of housing finance, the poorest French citizens and the immigrant population gradually gained access to the regular social rental housing from which they had previously been excluded (Tricart 1977; Gastaut 2004). In 1968 the regional administration began to impose annual admission rates in the regular social housing sector (habitation à loyer modéré; HLM) for households from squatter settlements and urban renewal areas. Squatter settlements had been growing since the end of the colonial war in Algeria in 1962, and in 1966 alone 119 squatter settlements in the Paris region gave shelter to about 47,000 people from North Africa and southern Europe, as well as poor white native French people (Gastaut 2004: 2). Most immigrants, however, lived in private rental housing in dilapidated working-class neighbourhoods in the City of Paris—neighbourhoods that were often targeted for urban renewal (Tricart 1977; Viet 1999). In both cases, Algerian residents were rehoused through specialised housing companies and the use of special funds and legal instruments: their hostels and provisional settlements materialised a state of exception and stigmatised their inhabitants as incapable of leading a normalised modern everyday life (Gastaut 2004; Tricart 1977). This situation changed in 1970, when a new rehabilitation law gave immigrants and the poorest native French citizens access to the HLM housing (Tanter and Toubon 2002). This was a clear political victory for racialised and immigrant people. However, their numbers rose only through struggle and contestation, since housing companies and municipalities, no matter their political preference, strongly rejected and circumvented the rules about integrating such people despite the annual admission rates for households from squatter settlements and redevelopment areas that had been imposed by the authorities in 1968, and that were fixed at 15 per cent in 1970 (Tellier 2012; David 2010; Blanc-Chaléard 2015). By 1979 the proportion of immigrants in the HLM sector had risen to 26 per cent. In general, however, they were often located in sites that have suffered more from peripheralisation, as such sites had vacancies more frequently. At the same time, the arrival of people with a low income and those of minority ethnic groups contributed to the symbolic devaluation of the grands ensembles in public discourse that would later lead to racist discrimination against its residents, especially in specific sites that were affected by marked processes of peripheralisation.

These new population politics, together with the introduction of the financial incentives described above, fundamentally altered the social composition of the social housing sector. In 1973 a large portion of social housing residents in France were middle class, while only 12 per cent came from the lowest income quartile of households entitled to social housing (Lévy-Vroelant et al. 2014: 136). By 1984 the share of the lowest income quartile had risen to 26 per cent and by 2006 to 40 per cent.[2] This change in the social composition of social housing estates led to uneven urban development. Poor households with a migrant background were likely to be placed in already disadvantaged grands ensembles in the outer periphery. The second wave of deindustrialisation and the continual rise of unemployment from the mid-1970s reinforced this socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation. It was most severely felt in grands ensembles located close to industrial plants that had either been shut

down or had greatly reduced their workforce, such as the La Rose-des-Vents ZUP in Aulnay-sous-Bois. Similar processes of peripheralisation occurred in housing estates that had served to relocate people after slum clearance and urban renewal projects, such as the Cité des 4000 in La Courneuve and La Grande Borne in Grigny. The lived experience of these residents as they faced constant racial discrimination laid the ground for the projection of an imaginary of state violence on buildings that had originally been the outcome of a Fordist compromise based on the idea of a society where all citizens were equally entitled to social goods. Many grands ensembles of the post-war boom years thus became territorial enclaves housing a stigmatised population whose entitlement to political participation, economic redistribution and territorial justice had been pulverised. Throughout the 1990s there were urban uprisings almost every year in the Parisian banlieues, tying the urban model of the grands ensembles to the imaginary of racialised socioeconomic precarity and violence.

The beginnings of this form of peripheralisation in the grands ensembles occurred at the same time that five *villes nouvelles* (new towns) started being built in the outskirts of Paris. This large-scale territorial project was planned in the 1960s and exemplified the authoritarian, top-down mode of Gaullist governing. The realisation of the plan, however, was greatly impeded, firstly by the change in public strategies that relocated the development initiative into the hands of private investors in 1969 and then by the economic crisis of the 1970s. As a result, the five new towns attracted only a fraction of the inhabitants they had been planned for, and in the early 1980s they were additionally struck by the subprime mortgage crisis triggered by the neoliberal reforms of 1978. In the 1990s most new town centres experienced processes of racialised socioeconomic peripheralisation similar to those in the grands ensembles—even though regional metro lines (RER) and shopping malls had somewhat ameliorated the effects of logistical peripheralisation (Kockelkorn 2017).

By the 1980s the concentration of poverty in territorial enclaves and marked territorial fragmentation were key features of the Paris region. Throughout the 1970s, these features developed within an overarching socioeconomic pattern that set in stark contrast the poor north-eastern and the wealthy south-western parts of the banlieue that had characterised the region since the mid-19th century. This large-scale socioeconomic polarisation was reinforced in 1968 by the dissolution of the Département de la Seine that had surrounded the City of Paris. Its replacement by three new départements—Hauts de Seine, Val de Marne and Seine-Saint-Denis—greatly weakened the dominance of communist officials in regional governments and thus also their more distributive policies. The north-eastern territory, which mainly corresponds to the Département Seine-Saint-Denis, was characterised by a long history of industrialisation and working-class immigration dating from the mid-19th century. To this day, it contains a high number of precarious urban zones classified as 'sensitive urban zones' (Zone urbaine sensible, ZUS), which often consist of grands ensembles and are characterised by high rates of unemployment, high levels of poverty, the disproportionate presence of immigrants and young people, as well as large families and lower rates of education and health than in the overall population. By contrast, the entire south-western part of the Paris region—extending over the départements of Hauts-de-Seine, Yvelines and Essonne—largely escaped industrialisation. This region was much less affected by relocation processes, immigration, deindustrialisation and unemployment; and today it includes less than 10 per cent of the regional ZUS.

The answer of the French government to this triple process of peripheralisation was a complete change of urban strategy. In 2004 it allocated € 24 billion (through 2030) for the demolition (in part or in whole) and reconstruction of grands ensembles across the nation. In the Paris region, 119 sites were transformed by raising € 100 billion of private sector investment.[3] Because of its gentrifying tendencies, scholars and activists alike were initially very critical of this strategy, which is often combined with infrastructural measures and an increase in home ownership. However, the strategy put a preliminary halt to the ongoing peripheralisation of many urban enclaves while more or less maintaining the share of social housing. In 2006 the share of social housing in the Paris region was at 23 per cent of the total housing stock. It rose to 25 per cent in 2015 and shrank to 22 per cent in 2019.

## CONCLUSION

From the 1950s to the 1970s, mass housing urbanisation in the Paris region was put in place by a great diversity of developers, urban forms and territorial settings, and the histories of individual grands ensembles were as unique as their locations. Firstly, they were constructed by a great variety of municipal, regional, national, public and semi-public actors. Secondly, they were implemented through contradictory modes of governing: on the one hand, the state's authoritarian interventionism, deriving from its experience in the French colonies, promoted the relocation of working-class populations to the urban periphery; on the other hand, municipal actions aimed for local empowerment. Thirdly, they were territorialised in the finely grained mosaic of the more than 1,300 municipalities of the Paris region, each having a specific relation to the City of Paris and a specific territorial position in the complex centre–periphery system of the region.

Despite these differences, most of the grands ensembles provided a shared collective experience of modernity for many residents until the mid-1960s. At the same time, they were affected by logistical peripheralisation and the peripheralisation of the everyday. However, with the neoliberal restructuring of the 1970s, the destiny of the grands ensembles changed radically. They no longer served as a normalising step in a middle-class housing career but contributed to the containment of an increasingly marginalised and stigmatised population. Many territorially separated and enclaved sites suffered from racialised socioeconomic peripheralisation which was aggravated by the rise of unemployment and the pre-existing effect of logistical peripheralisation. Under those conditions, the high architectural and landscape quality of many grands ensembles were unable to counter social stigmatisation and territorial segregation. This demonstrates that urban form alone cannot counter the effects of such peripheralisation.

## HONG KONG, 1950s–2010s

The colony of Hong Kong developed in the contradictory interplay of British colonialism and free-trade capitalism. Founded in 1841 at the end of the first Opium War between the British Empire and China, the original raison d'être of this colony was its entrepôt economy. Until the Second World War this free trade port served as an outpost for trade between the British Empire and China. It was based on the principle of non-intervention into economy and society, small government, no tariffs and low tax. The main source of income and the main instrument of government domination was its leasehold of the Crown land that made up the original territory of the colony; namely, Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon peninsula. In 1898 the colony expanded through a 99-year lease of the New Territories north of Kowloon, which a century later would lead to the handover of the entire colony to the People's Republic of China.

After the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, Hong Kong was restored as a British colony. In the radically changed geopolitical situation of the Cold War and the rise of communist China, it became a frontier territory between the Western and Eastern blocs (Mark 2004). The turmoil in China provoked the immigration to Hong Kong of hundreds of thousands of refugees during the decade after 1945, who soon made up most of the population of the colony. In this situation the political and economic doctrine of non-interventionism proved to be

Hong Kong: rooftop housing in Kowloon. Tai Kok Tsui, 2012

dysfunctional. The colonial government had to take charge of the production of housing and the urban infrastructure and embarked on a new pathway of urbanisation in which mass housing urbanisation became the main technique for managing the large number of immigrants and to restore social order, which in turn also gave rise to rapid export-led industrialisation. This mode of space production was again reshaped during the radically changed political and economic conditions of the 1980s, when China opened itself up to the world economy and Hong Kong became a global city.

## COLONIAL STRATEGIES OF SPATIAL CONTAINMENT

In the early 1950s, mass housing urbanisation became the key element of the government's territorial strategy, with the aim of controlling the numerous economic, demographic and geopolitical crises that the colony faced. Firstly, in the context of waves of decolonisation in Asia and Africa, British rule in Hong Kong was questioned at the international level. Secondly, the trades embargo imposed by the UN and the USA on China (1950–1972) severely affected Hong Kong's entrepôt economy. Thirdly, the civil war and the rise of the Communist regime in China led to a continual flow of refugees to Hong Kong. From 1945 to 1959 its population quadrupled from 600,000 to 2.36 million people, which aggravated the already severe housing crisis and triggered a sprawl of squatter communities living on rooftops, along hill slopes and at the urban fringes. The government initially refused to resettle the illegal squatters but the squatter communities grew rapidly from 30,000 inhabitants in 1947 to 300,000 in 1950. More importantly, the growth of these communities led to an eruption of social unrest that immediately assumed geopolitical dimensions. A series of fires in the squatter settlements in the early 1950s sparked waves of social unrest and anti-colonial activity that confronted the colony with a potential existential threat (Smart 2006). The Shek Kip Mei fire of December 1953 finally prompted the launch of an official resettlement policy.

As a temporary solution to these interrelated crises the government started to build resettlement housing. To maximise the number of rehoused people, the government opted for a very dense form of mass housing using minimal land areas where land costs were lowest. During the 1950s, 26 resettlement estates were established in the New Territories north of Kowloon. Similar to the 'chawls', a form of tenement housing for workers in India (Home 1997), the six to seven-storey H-shaped blocks had no elevators. In them five people squeezed into each 11 $m^2$ room and only shared latrines and washing facilities—a water standpipe, basins and showers—were provided on each floor. Because its goal was to restore colonial control and spatial order, resettlement was conceived as spatial containment, not welfare provision, and emphasised efficiency and quantity, not quality. The Public Works Department was responsible for the construction work, while the newly established Resettlement Department oversaw estate management, squatter control, slum clearance and rehousing. By 1972, 234,059 of the new resettlement units housed around 1 million people (Yeung and Wong 2003); about a quarter of Hong Kong's entire population. Additionally, various government agencies built low-cost and middle-class housing for rent, and government loans were offered to independent voluntary organisations to build affordable housing.

Before the Second World War, while imposing residential segregation between the European and the Chinese population and controlling the building and sanitation of the settlements, the government allowed the Chinese immigrants to attend to their own social and educational needs: schools, health and social welfare (Carroll 2007). In contrast to this laissez-faire policy, the post-war resettlement estates functioned as a disciplining instrument and marked the beginning of direct rule of the Chinese subjects, whose presumed loyalty to communist China posed a threat to the colony (Mizuoka 2018). All blocks and rooms were numbered, tenants paid monthly rents through standard administrative protocols and the spatial organisation of the settlements and buildings made it easy to control the inhabitants. For the government, this new type of housing was instrumental in transforming the post-war immigrants into good citizens: 'if they were to remain and become good citizens, they had to be weaned away from their discontent and transformed by some social alchemy from the mentality of the farmer to that of the industrial worker' (Hong Kong Annual Report 1956: 9). Mass housing urbanisation, which began as an emergency response to an immediate social crisis, thus evolved into a governmental strategy for the territorial containment and colonial control of the immigrant population.

## COLLECTIVE CONSUMPTION AND EXPORT-LED INDUSTRIALISATION

In addition to containing the immigrant population, the resettlement strategy had another effect, which soon became decisive for the further development of Hong Kong. The government constructed public housing and also multistorey industrial buildings to relocate cottage industries from squatter areas (Castells et al. 1990; Mizuoka 2018). In the mid-1950s the government started to develop entire industrial towns on reclaimed land in Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan to relocate families and allow Chinese industrialists to set up new

factories. These industrial towns housed large concentrations of factories and low-wage workers, thus securing the growth of labour-intense industries —and they provided an effective solution through the production of space.

A key aspect of this territorial development model was the availability of land. As the government owned all Crown land, it could use it for state-built public housing while also offering land for sale in prime locations to private companies via public auctions. In the following decades the sale of land became the most important source of income for the government (Ho 2004; Mizuoka 2018). However, land was scarce, both because of the hilly topography and because indigenous villagers held most of the land in the New Territories and resisted the resumption (reacquisition) of their farmland by the government. Therefore, the government began a process of large-scale land reclamation to make the rapid expansion of mass housing in the New Territories possible and financially viable.

Although the government did not provide direct support to industries like other fast-industrialising South-East Asian countries due to the opposition of British business groups (Chiu 1994), it can be argued that mass housing was a form of collective consumption organised by the government that constituted a kind of wage subsidy to industries by lowering costs of the reproduction of labour power (Castells et al. 1990). It contributed to the development of an export-oriented manufacturing sector that was closely linked to the long-established port centre and to related businesses in finance, commerce, insurance and shipping. Industrial take-off in turn stimulated commercial and banking activities, which turned Hong Kong into a regional financial centre by the 1970s (Jao 1979).

In various ways, mass housing urbanisation thus marked a turning point for the development of Hong Kong. By this strategy the government assumed an interventionist role in the economy and society and re-established its own domination over the production of urban space, land supply and population management in a new territorial order (Ma 2007). At the same time, mass housing urbanisation became the motor of post-war industrial development and territorial expansion. By the 1970s Hong Kong had become one of the four Asian Tigers in the new international division of labour.

## THE PRODUCTION OF CIVIC PRIDE

In the 1970s mass housing urbanisation began to fulfil an additional function: it became a tool for creating a sense of civic pride and identity. This strategic change was a reaction to two riots that constituted a real threat to the social order and the legitimacy of the colony and increased geopolitical tensions with China. In 1966, in response to an increase in fares, the Star Ferry protests erupted. They were the culmination of earlier protests demanding that the government address pressing social needs, indicating a rise in local political consciousness. The following year saw a political riot inspired by the Chinese Cultural Revolution, as local communists turned a workers' dispute into a series of violent actions challenging colonial rule and imperialism (Lui and Smart 2009). These riots made it clear that the early form of resettlement housing had not transformed immigrants into good citizens but instead had concentrated an unruly working class. In response, the government launched a series of social reforms to re-establish the people's confidence in the government's legitimacy.

In 1972 the new governor, Sir Murray MacLehose, started a 10-year public housing scheme and a new town programme, with the aim of producing decent housing for 1.8 million people. His main idea was to develop the already planned new towns of Shatin and Tuen Mun into full cities with their own centralities, access to local employment, better public housing and an improved urban environment providing leisure and public facilities. The goal was to enhance the government's legitimacy and to create a new political subject: that of the 'Hong Kong people', distinguishing them from their Chinese identity (Faure 1997). By this action MacLehose hoped to strengthen the position of the colony in upcoming negotiations with China about the status of Hong Kong after 1997 (Yep and Lui 2010).

Mass housing urbanisation and new town development thus became a strategic political instrument to develop a sense of civic pride. This strategy aimed to solve the contradictions of colonialism through urbanisation: instead of giving people democratic rights, it offered them a sense of belonging. Thus, in public discourse the 1970s symbolised a period of successful governorship, modernisation, prosperity and social stability. And yet the ideological framing of this kind of production of space used the spatial fetishisation of 'home' and 'prosperity' to conceal the contradictions of colonial domination.

## COLONIAL POLITICS OF PERIPHERALISATION

During the three decades of post-war boom, mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong initially evolved from being a short-term response to social unrest into a spatial strategy to contain immigration and illegal squatting. It then became a motor of industrialisation and finally a form of socio-spatial engineering of civic identity under colonial rule. This development also included processes of peripheralisation of the working class. This is how it happened.

Firstly, mass housing urbanisation intervened in the regional territorial development, orchestrated flows of investments and established a new territorial order for the colony. While Hong Kong's centre was reserved for commercial and financial activities and British capitalists, the incoming Chinese industrialists and the working class were relegated to the peripheries. This territorial organisation involved great logistical peripheralisation. This would have severe consequences in the following decades.

Secondly, an increasing number of people and activities were relocated by government from squatter areas, tenement buildings and streets or roadsides to the new, high-density peripheral areas and thus brought them into a new technocratic spatial order. This new territory was defined by power and led to a peripheralisation of working-class families' daily life, unlike the mixed inner-city neighbourhoods in Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. The government managed these high-density communities through town planning and land-use zoning: public facilities were allocated according to population thresholds and considerations of economic efficiency. Thus, these spaces were also increasingly controlled and homogenised and everyday life was increasingly regulated. Low-income families were moved into rental flats, cottage factories into multistorey industrial buildings, street hawkers were relocated to stalls in roofed food markets and schools and social activities were moved from rooftops into proper buildings and community centres. Squatters became tenants and were institutionalised and managed by the Housing Authority, which became the largest provider of housing in Hong Kong (Smart 2006) and developed into a huge technocratic and managerial colonial institution. Mass housing urbanisation thus became a device of control and discipline. It changed everyday routines, shaped social activities and interactions, affected social networks and social organisation, reduced people's capacities for self-organisation and contributed to the taming of social movements. This led to a paradox: the production of space offered the people a better quality of life and a sense of belonging and pride; at the same time, it served as an instrument for securing the submission of people to British colonial rule.

## GOVERNMENT-LED FINANCIALISATION OF REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

In the 1980s, mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong entered a new phase. Hong Kong became an international financial centre and site of multinational corporations and gradually developed into a global city. At the same time, with the opening up of China to global markets, manufacturing industries in Hong Kong were relocated across the border, predominantly to Shenzhen, Dongguan and Guangzhou. Additionally, Sino–British negotiations gradually defined key projects and regulations for the future of Hong Kong.

With Hong Kong's rise to a global city, strategic territorial planning became a decisive instrument for the promotion of economic growth and led to the fundamental restructuring of the city (Ho 2018). This included, for example, the extension of the metro system, the expansion of the central business district through harbour reclamation, the redevelopment of large dockyards at the harbour front, various urban renewal projects in inner-city neighbourhoods, the construction of an international container port in Kwai Chung and the relocation of the airport from a central area to Lantau Island. These developments also contributed to a boom in financial markets and the real estate sector. In this way, mass housing urbanisation was reshaped by new territorial logics and integrated into an all-encompassing metropolisation strategy. Instead of focusing on developing civic pride, the political discourse now regarded housing as a resource and emphasised that it should be efficiently allocated using market forces. In its long-term housing policy programme launched in 1987, the government shifted its attention from public rental housing to the subsidised sale of housing and introduced new incentives to boost homeownership (La Grange 2007).

In this new round of territorial development, mass housing urbanisation was coupled with the expansion and financialisation of the private housing

sector. This process had begun during the real estate boom of the late 1970s, when developers raised capital by listing their companies on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange (Tang 2008). At the time, the real estate and construction sector accounted for 40–50 per cent of the capitalisation of the Hong Kong stock market (Tse and Ganesan 1999). As a result of the massive influx of local and global capital, private developers bought cheap farmland from villagers to keep it in their land banks for speculative use and they started to build large-scale condominium towers and malls for the growing middle classes; first in the 1980s in the new towns of Shatin and Tsuen Wan and, a decade later, in Tin Shui Wai and Tseung Kwan.

This coupling of mass housing urbanisation with highly speculative real estate development was gradually institutionalised through the direct collaboration of government actors and private developers in the new town development. While the government still played a central role in controlling and orchestrating urban development through the planning system and as the only land-owner, a finance-led and property-based growth regime emerged that linked the government, private developers, financial institutions and households (Smart and Lee 2003). Financialisation also characterised the strategy of the government-owned Hong Kong metro company MTR, which was established in 1975 and gradually developed an innovative financial arrangement; raising funds from international financial markets and receiving injections of equity from the government and eventually starting to develop the space above the metro stations into shopping malls and condominium towers through joint ventures with private developers (Yeung 2008). In 2000 the government partially privatised the MTR and listed it in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

Hong Kong; public rental housing in the New Territories. Tin Shui Wai, 2012

## SOCIOECONOMIC PERIPHERALISATION OF THE METROPOLITAN WORKING CLASS

During the 1980s, mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong changed considerably. With ongoing deindustrialisation and metropolisation, the real estate sector and the MTR became the motors of economic and territorial development, while the coupling of public housing and industrial production lost its importance. Tin Shui Wai and Tseung Kwan O developed into dormitory towns and Ma On Shan (an extension of Shatin) and Tung Chung (an airport-related new town) followed suit. These mass housing peripheries thus came to be fully integrated into the growing metropolitan territory thanks to the railway and highway systems, which also facilitated the large-scale production of condominium towers for the middle classes in the new towns.

These developments generated a parallel process of socioeconomic peripheralisation, as many low-income families from the metropolitan centre had to relocate to the new areas. The loss of industrial jobs forced working class people into low-end service sectors, while the real estate boom led to a massive surge in property prices and rents. The living conditions of working-class families became harsh in the 1990s. While on the waiting lists for public housing for years, they had to live in expensive but intolerable subdivided or cubicle rooms in inner-city areas. The only way to obtain affordable housing at the time was in places like Tin Shui Wai, a new town without local jobs and thus long commutes to work. This had a particularly severe impact on young, nuclear families as parents struggled to obtain or keep a job and had to cope with gender and family issues if, for example, only the wife could get a (low-paying) job. In 1995, Tin Shui Wai appeared in a newspaper story under the headline ‘Nightmare in a Dormitory Town’ (South China Morning Post 1995), and in the early 2000s it was dubbed the City of Sorrow (Lee 2007). Tin Shui Wai was not the only example of this form of deep socioeconomic peripheralisation, but by virtue its sheer scale it symbolised how a considerable portion of the metropolitan working class had become trapped in the periphery.

## THE PARADOX OF PHYSICAL UPGRADING AND SOCIAL DISCIPLINE

One striking paradox of this kind of mass housing urbanisation is that the quality of the urban environment improved while it reproduced the state's disciplinary power. Architectural and landscape design turned the extremely high housing densities into a rational but also punitive form of community space. This space was closely controlled by the Housing Authority, which introduced standard security measures for all buildings and hired low-waged subcontracted security guards to patrol the buildings. In 2003 to 'ensure public hygiene and effective management', it imposed a 'marking scheme' with a code of conduct for public housing tenants, who could be found guilty of any of 28 'misdeeds' (e.g. littering, smoking, drying clothes in corridors, allowing water to drip from their air-conditioner) and assigned penalty points as a result (Hong Kong Housing Authority 2021).

In 2005, after the Housing Authority won a legal challenge at the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal, it launched the large-scale privatisation of commercial properties in all public housing estates (Chen and Pun 2007). The privatisation of about 180 shopping centres and food markets dramatically increased the value and the rents of retail in the housing estates, which in turn increased general household expenditures, as small retail stores and family enterprises selling goods at low prices had to relocate or give up their businesses. Since many shops and restaurants were dominated by the big retail chains owned by a handful of real estate tycoons, this had yet another negative impact on the everyday consumption of ordinary families. The paradox of physical upgrading and social discipline made this socioeconomic segregation invisible and turned each domestic unit into a clean, well-planned and efficiently managed space, which drove people into passivity. It also reduced the possibilities for grassroots initiatives and social movements, which had played an active role in public housing estates ever since the 1970s.

## CONCLUSIONS

Mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong began as a colonial strategy of the spatial containment and control of a growing immigrant population. It then turned into an instrument to produce and reproduce an industrial working class. It became a force of production that transformed Hong Kong's entrepôt economy into an export-oriented manufacturing economy closely linked to the long-established harbour economy. However, this development also led to logistical peripheralisation as well as to the large-scale peripheralisation of the working class. Mass housing urbanisation produced a new territorial order by which Hong Kong Island and the central parts of Kowloon developed into an international commercial and financial centre under the lead of British capitalists, while Chinese industrialists and the working class were relegated to peripheral areas.

In the 1970s, mass housing urbanisation became a political instrument to develop civic pride and a new Hong Kong identity as a way of maintaining colonial rule without granting the people political rights. This strategy aimed to resolve the contradictions of colonialism through urbanisation and particularly through the construction of new towns with their own centres, giving residents access to local employment, better public housing and an improved urban environment. At the same time, mass housing urbanisation became an instrument of control and discipline that led to a peripheralisation of everyday life.

In the 1980s globalisation and metropolisation led to a new model of territorial development. Mass housing urbanisation was coupled with financialisation and the development of private real estate companies, which rearticulated the collaborative relation between the government and private developers in the construction of new towns. As a consequence, everyday life was subject to a contradictory form of the production of space: a highly efficient and profitable territorial organisation that at the same time resulted in the socioeconomic peripheralisation of the metropolitan working class.

Mexico City; serial houses of a mega conjunto. Tecámac, 2012

# MEXICO CITY 1990s–2010s

In the first two decades of the 21st century, the urban peripheries of Mexico City have undergone a striking socio-spatial transformation. From 1999 to 2015 municipalities in the peripheries approved more than 400 *mega conjuntos habitacionales* (mega housing complexes) as part of a radically reformed public housing policy (Villavicencio and Durán 2003; Maya and Cervantes 2005). Subsequently, private developers constructed more than 724,000 housing units, mostly in the poorly accessible outskirts that often lack even basic urban infrastructure. In contrast to the French grands ensembles and Hong Kong's new towns, these mega settlements are not made up of dense housing high-rises but of small, mass-produced single-family houses that form vast carpets of housing over the landscape (Salinas Arreortua 2016). In 2013, less than 15 years after the first mega conjunto was built, the entire Mexican housing programme was thrown into a deep crisis. Major private developers went bankrupt and 5 million houses throughout Mexico were abandoned; a clear indicator that this corporate 'public housing' model had failed (Streule 2018).

## THE TERRITORIAL DIMENSION OF MASS HOUSING PERIPHERALISATION

This apparently quick rise and fall of mass housing urbanisation at the urban fringes of the metropolitan region is closely related to the policy of re-densifying some of the popular central districts of Mexico City. This upgrading policy, which was implemented in the early 2000s by the government of the Distrito Federal (today called Ciudad de México; CDMX), contributed to leap-frogging mass housing urbanisation beyond its borders into the surrounding Estado de México (the provincial state that is home to most of the over 21 million inhabitants of Mexico City).

This process is rooted in the history of Mexico's public housing policies. In the late 1940s public housing was reserved for state employees, while most low-income groups invested in self-built houses in areas of popular urbanisation (Streule 2017a; see also Chapter 12). A profound housing reform in the early 1970s gave rise to a new form of housing estate, the *unidades habitacionales* (housing units), multistorey housing blocks for state and private sector employees mainly built close to industrial areas. After a catastrophic earthquake devastated large parts of the central areas of Mexico City in 1985, many new unidades habitacionales were built in the urban peripheries to relocate people from affected areas.

The most recent round of mass housing urbanisation has been vastly different in scale and scope, as it not only targets public and private workers but also aims to bring broad sections of Mexican society into the housing market by using specific mortgage programmes (Soederberg 2015). It is based on a policy of decentralisation that has been pursued by the national government since 1994, as well as on a series of far-reaching constitutional reforms in the 1990s. The most important of these were land reform and the reform of financial markets and pensions, as we describe in the following paragraphs (Álvarez Villalobos 1999). Political decentralisation has given municipalities much more decision-making power and also more influence on urban development. Many municipalities have promoted the construction of state-planned, market-based mass housing on communal agricultural land, particularly on *ejido* land, which is regulated on the basis of collective land use rights (Isunza and Méndez 2011; Varley and Salazar 2021). The key to this transition was the Land Reform Act of 1992 that allowed local governments to sell ejido land, which previously was not legally saleable. As a result, the ejidos of Mexico City were turned into major urban land reserves, giving rise to marketised, profit-oriented urban development (Fausto 1999). In a broader context, the Mexican government promoted the commodification of the ejidos and changes to the Mexican Constitution in 1992 to prepare for the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Similar to the grands ensembles in Paris, the mega conjuntos were mainly built in remote areas where land was available and cheap. But these places in comparison were more remote, farther from urban infrastructure, detached from the existing urban fabric and with poor public transport. Thus, daily commuting from these settlements to more central areas is both time-consuming and expensive, especially for public transport in the Estado de México. The subsidised metro network is located mainly in the CDMX and only a few lines of rapid bus transport connect central areas with municipalities in the Estado de México.

## THE FINANCIALISATION OF HOUSING

An important precondition for the construction of the mega conjuntos was the renewed politics of financialisation introduced by the Mexican government and promoted by major international development organisations such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (Boils 2004). The pension reform of 1995 changed the pension scheme from a general fund to a personally managed account and made parts of the pension fund available for mortgage lending. Only two state-led housing funds manage the entire mortgage market for low-income housing in Mexico: INFONAVIT (Instituto del Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda para los Trabajadores), the institution that grants housing loans to private sector employees and FOVISSSTE (Fondo de la Vivienda del Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado), the corresponding institution for state employees (UN-Habitat 2011). Employees and workers in these categories who have saved the required amount can, depending on their income, ask for a loan to buy a particular housing type. This housing policy, which has individualised lending, is also reflected in the changing discourse of the national government, which since the 2000s has promoted the 'right to access credit' and given little weight to people's constitutional right to decent housing (Sánchez Casanova 2013). As a result, the processes and formalities of the credit business have been rigorously simplified since 2000 by the two consecutive conservative federal governments of the Christian-Democratic PAN (Partido Acción Nacional) that supported deregulation and privatisation. Mortgage loans were made more accessible and the eligibility for a mortgage was expanded to include other social groups. At the same time, like a variable mortgage, the mortgages are adjusted daily for inflation, which constitutes a massive financial risk for new homeowners (Valenzuela and Tsenkova 2019; Rolnik 2014). People living in the mega conjuntos thus struggle with the peripheral location of their houses and also with the burden of rising mortgage repayments, which over time can exceed the budget of many.

The increasing level of debt as a result of this mortgage scheme and the massively reduced access to the job market caused by logistical peripheralisation have greatly aggravated socio-economic peripheralisation. As jobs and services are rare in these neighbourhoods, most of the population works or studies outside the municipality, mainly in the CDMX, which generates massive additional commuting and thus also costs more to get to work. To increase their income, some inhabitants began to open businesses in their own homes, starting restaurants, hair salons and workshops in their living rooms (Hastings 2008). Furthermore, the mega conjuntos provide only minimal educational facilities, which are mostly limited to childcare provision and primary schools.

## THE FAILURE OF THE CORPORATE MODEL FOR PUBLIC HOUSING

Since the late 1990s the Mexican public housing market has been dominated by a handful of private developers (Puebla 2002) who acquired large tracts of land on former ejido or communal land to achieve economies of scale (Valenzuela and Tsenkova 2019; see also Isunza and Méndez 2011).

Mexico City; construction site in section IV of Las Américas. Ecatepec, 2013

These developers are responsible for the design of the housing types and the planning, construction and management of the mega conjuntos. When construction is complete they hand over the administration of the settlements to the local government, which is not obliged to make any planning or construction provision until this transfer has been made—and it can even refuse to hand over the administration if the developers do not fully comply with the contract. Furthermore, the developers' responsibilities are often unspecified. Although they are contractually committed to constructing the necessary residential infrastructure, they provide only basic services and infrastructure, and this is often late, insufficient and particularly short in water supply (Maya and Cervantes 2008).

The financial risks in this corporate model of public housing are borne by the state via the Sociedad Hipotecaria Federal (Federal Mortgage Company), which provides the loan guarantee, and by INFONAVIT and FOVISSSTE, which manage the credit funds and collect interest payments. Falling demand for new houses in the mega conjuntos, an exodus of residents and the subsequent cessation of their interest payments, and above all the developers' aggressive financial policies, plunged the developers into a crisis in 2013. Having speculated on profits that they anticipated but did not materialise, by this time they owed the banks over two billion US dollars. Two of the largest developers became insolvent in mid-2013 and suspended their debt payments. Su Casita, Mexico's second-largest private lending institution went bankrupt in the same year. Despite the state's attempts to rescue it, the model of the mega conjuntos seems to have come to an inglorious end.

Mexico City; adapted houses in section I of Las Américas. Ecatepec, 2013

## CONCLUSIONS

The state played a fundamental role in the financialisation of mass housing urbanisation in Mexico City by directing public resources to the private building sector and promoting public–private partnerships to provide public housing. Yet the crisis of the corporate model for public housing in 2013 has already led to a shift in Mexico's housing policy towards more integrated urban development, where developers are incentivised to build high-density housing near densely built-up areas close to industrial and business zones (Valenzuela and Tsenkova 2019: 496). Furthermore, the current government, which was elected in 2018, has prioritised granting credit schemes for purchasing land for self-build housing and for repairing existing housing stock rather than building new homes. Despite this policy shift, based on deals they have made in the last two decades, developers are still building about half a million houses in new mega conjuntos every year on large peripheral tracts of land.

Today, the failure to provide adequate and affordable housing in Mexico City has resulted in increased vandalism, together with abandoned and vacant houses in many settlements. The 2013 developer crisis had a profound territorial impact, as it created zones of insecurity in which residents were susceptible to organised crime (Valenzuela 2017). The residents' exclusion from social networks and thus the peripheralisation of the everyday is particularly obvious in the mega conjuntos.

Newcomers are usually disconnected from their existing social networks elsewhere in the city. The lack of social cohesion is aggravated by the high levels of insecurity in these urban areas, which are notorious for gender-based violence.

In the broad perspective, mass housing urbanisation in Mexico City has played a less important role than in Paris or Hong Kong in providing affordable housing. Regardless of any claims of the universal benefits of mortgage securitisation and its ability to make markets more efficient and allow lenders to increase credit to more borrowers, Mexico continues to be characterised by an extreme shortage of affordable housing for the poor (Soederberg 2015: 483). For most low-income families this means they have no access to public housing and thus more incentive to continue the long-standing and well-established process of popular urbanisation.

# COLONIAL STRATEGIES AND THE DEVALUATION OF SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

An analysis of the pathways of mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong, Mexico City and Paris reveals a broad spectrum of territorial processes that are depicted in the three maps, although the map of Mexico City is an exception insofar as it depicts only one phase of mass housing urbanisation that includes all three types of peripheralisation from the outset. This map highlights the existence of radical logistical peripheralisation and the peripheralisation of the everyday in almost diagrammatic simplicity that visualises the inherent neocolonial logics of financialised mass housing urbanisation. Interpreted in combination with the socioeconomic peripheralisation revealed by our analysis—which this type of map cannot show—the entire territorial pattern of Mexico City can be read as a diagram of the inherent violence of this process.

The maps of Hong Kong and Paris offer a simultaneous snapshot of two distinct phases of mass housing urbanisation that have led to different and sometimes contradictory types of peripheralisation. These maps become decipherable only if we consider territorial disposition, governmental rationales and historical pathways in one broad picture. In the following, we compare the way that mass housing urbanisation came into existence in these three urban regions, what goals motivated its realisation and how different peripheralisation processes unfolded over time.

## THE STATE AND THE LAND QUESTION

The most important precondition for mass housing urbanisation is landownership or, more precisely, the capacity of state actors to control, repurpose and reallocate large swathes of land. The instruments we identified in the three cases are government landownership, expropriation, financial incentives, privatisation and various forms of public–private collaboration. The most striking case is Hong Kong, where the ownership of Crown land and the tactics of land reclamation and acquisition gave the colonial regime a monopoly of the land market. With these instruments, it became the dominant agent of urban development and used them to compensate for its failure to deal with massive illegal squatting that occurred after the Second World War. This power relation remained unaltered in the following decades although the governmental approach and planning strategy changed several times and it persisted after the end of British rule and the handover of the colony to the People's Republic of China. In Paris under

Fordism, the interventionist welfare state used its existing range of tools and strategies to control and redistribute privately owned land, both directly by strengthening its expropriation rights and indirectly by zoning regulations and giving financial incentives for housing developers. In Mexico in the 1990s the central state imposed a new legal framework that allowed municipalities to privatise and urbanise land that had been communal and collectively owned, and to enter direct collaboration with private developers to urbanise it.

State control of available land is thus a necessary condition for mass housing urbanisation, which can be achieved by regulating the land and housing markets in combination with planning strategies and the imposition of various forms of land tenure. Investigating how the interplay of land regimes, planning strategies and housing policies profoundly transform and reshape urban territories requires a transdisciplinary research approach that has rarely been undertaken in academic housing studies. Our analysis thus highlights how the large-scale territorial development strategy of mass housing urbanisation leads to the rearrangement and relocation of people, jobs, livelihoods, social networks, urban services and infrastructure, thereby profoundly changing the everyday life of the inhabitants.

## COLONIAL AND FORDIST RATIONALITIES

The simultaneous launch of mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong and Paris after the Second World War highlights strong parallels among them. Firstly, it was used as a tool to stabilise political and social crises. Secondly, it implemented a governmental strategy of collective consumption through which the state secured long-term economic growth by providing the necessary infrastructure for social reproduction. In Hong Kong mass housing urbanisation helped colonialism to survive during periods of social unrest and allowed the government to manage large numbers of refugees at a time of geopolitical turbulence. It also contributed to decades of high economic growth and relative stability. In Paris it helped to appease social unrest and political conflict during the transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Republic. It also enabled a Fordist growth model and addressed the severe housing crisis that had resulted from long-standing neglect of the housing stock and massive population growth in the post-war years.

Closer investigation, however, shows the differences between the Fordist and a colonial mode of governing. In Hong Kong mass housing urbanisation was achieved directly by the government through urban planning and the construction of housing and infrastructure to become a key element in the development of a new industrial working class. Relocating large parts of the immigrant population into large-scale high-rise settlements and new towns became a primary tool to form, regulate and control the everyday life of the labour force. The ensuing formation of an industrial workforce provided the necessary precondition for Hong Kong's industrialisation and initiated its fundamental change from an entrepôt economy to one of the world's leading industrial export economies. Granting political rights to residents was never part of this economic, administrative and territorial restructuring programme. Instead, mass housing urbanisation was used to re-establish and legitimatise the government's dominance in post-war society. Although the government improved and diversified architectural forms, the homogenising logic of mass housing urbanisation characterises the entire territorial process from the first settlements in Kowloon to the most recent production of urban peripheries in the New Territories.

In Paris, the conditions for mass housing urbanisation were set through a Fordist, tripartite institutionalised compromise between organised labour, entrepreneurial organisations and the state. This compromise offered the working class a range of benefits, such as rising wages, full employment, a welfare state and social stability; it also included both the working and the middle class within the same social project of housing provision. Mass housing urbanisation as such was implemented through a territorial strategy that shows certain parallels to Hong Kong. It included the centralisation of decision-making and territorial control, close collaboration between the government and the construction industry and the rapid, top-down implementation of new settlements through new planning instruments. In contrast to Hong Kong, however, this centralised and authoritarian form of territorial regulation was implemented in parallel to extant local forms of housing provision that allowed for self-empowerment through social welfare. In particular, the possibility of self-empowerment happened when projects were realised by powerful local actors or in the context of a territorial compromise between the Gaullist government and communist municipalities. The coexistence of authoritarian strategies and local empowerment has led to the great diversity of territorial situations, architectonic forms and urban infrastructures that characterise the grands ensembles. In subsequent decades, this heterogenous constellation would lead to marked territorial fragmentation and various processes of peripheralisation.

Comparing the two models of mass housing urbanisation, we can identify two paradigms of urbanisation. Hong Kong was developing a homogenising type of territorial regulation that was stabilising and strengthening a colonial type of governance. The Paris case shows a different type of territorial regulation, one based on a territorial

compromise that also involved local governments. It offered the possibility of self-empowerment and social welfare, operating either on tacit agreements or as an alternative to the overarching colonising features of the process. Both paradigms operated as social projects intended to create a supposedly homogenous group of either colonial or colonising subjects: a colonial working class with a Hong Kong identity and a Fordist middle class of white French culture in Paris (Ross 1995).

## LOGISTICAL AND EVERYDAY PERIPHERALISATION IN HONG KONG AND PARIS

Both in Hong Kong and in Paris, the colonial and Fordist rationales of mass housing urbanisation entailed various processes of peripheralisation. Dominant in this first phase was logistical peripheralisation, as the new settlements were located at remote locations in the urban peripheries. In the large-scale settlements of Paris's outer banlieues and in the interstices of the inner banlieues, this created double peripheries: the settlements were far from the City of Paris and also cut off from local centralities. In Hong Kong, the immigrants were relocated to new settlements at the urban fringes and later in the New Territories at a considerable distance from the main urban centres on Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. Via this urbanising strategy the government was able to re-establish social order and preserve its power to govern the land and the people. As the housing estates were strategically built together with new industrial zones, mass housing urbanisation not only provided industrial workplaces in the vicinity of workers' homes but also became a driver in the rapid industrialisation of Hong Kong. At the same time, it led to a large-scale territorial divide: while Hong Kong's centre continued to be dominated by commercial and financial activities and British capitalists, the incoming Chinese industrialists and the working class were relegated to the periphery. Mass housing urbanisation thus established a new territorial order for the entire colony.

In this first phase, both cases also display different forms of the peripheralisation of the everyday. In Paris the loss and destruction of the small-scale networks of shops and social and cultural facilities in the City of Paris could not be reproduced in the grands ensembles. In Hong Kong the peripheralisation of the everyday resulted from the production of a standardised and manageable habitat that subjected their residents to colonial authority. In Paris similar techniques of colonial governance, discipline and control were applied to the poorest segments of the population, in particular Algerian immigrants who were excluded from regular social housing rental contracts until the mid-1960s. This form of exclusion did not apply, however, to the white French working class and the rising middle class living in the grands ensembles.

Initially, this combination of logistical and everyday peripheralisation was not necessarily tied to the other processes of peripheralisation. On the contrary, one of the initial purposes of Fordist and colonial mass housing urbanisation was to counter socioeconomic peripheralisation and to resolve governmental contradictions. Until the early 1960s in Paris and the late 1970s in Hong Kong, a social rental apartment in a modernist housing estate signified social promotion. In Paris the opportunity to live within socially homogenous grands ensembles largely composed of young, white middle-class and upper-working-class families also facilitated their access to a modern lifestyle and integration into social networks and community organisations. In Hong Kong housing production was strategically used to create a productive labour force and it was also coupled with the production of new amenities and sub-centres for the working class in the new towns. The aim was to create an identity—the people of Hong Kong—and a sense of pride in that identity to enhance the government's legitimacy and strengthen its negotiations with China. These examples show that social promotion and welfare can go hand in hand with a severe lack of social and urban integration and self-determination, and thus with everyday peripheralisation. Hong Kong did not grant full political and civil rights to its people and most of the residents of the grands ensembles in Paris were denied the right to the city and to centrality.

## PATHWAYS TO SOCIOECONOMIC PERIPHERALISATION

During the planetary shift towards global capitalism that occurred from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s, the situation of inhabitants of mass housing estates in both Paris and Hong Kong changed dramatically as socioeconomic peripheralisation emerged. At this time it became less urgent to secure political stability through housing production and the creation of collective identities. Simultaneously, the new economic and political conditions led to radical changes in the role of the working class. As industrial jobs were rationalised and relocated, they were replaced by low-paid and often precarious jobs in the service sector of the metropolitan economy. Accordingly, the housing policies changed in the direction of marketising and financialising social housing and incorporating individuals into the housing market. Taken together, these factors led to the paradox of urban fragmentation and territorial inequality caused by state-initiated housing provision. In Paris the transition towards the socioeconomic peripheralisation of the post-war grands ensembles began with the liberalisation

of the housing market in the mid-1960s and the inclusion of immigrants and indigent French citizens in the social housing sector in the 1970s. While members of the middle class received large economic incentives to leave the social housing sector, new legal tools facilitating inner-city urban renewal and squatter clearance fostered the relocation of racialised and poor people to the grands ensembles in the urban periphery. This change in the social composition of the grands ensembles was reinforced in the mid-1970s by the economic crisis, deindustrialisation and growing unemployment. In 1978 the introduction of a new neoliberal governmental rationality and its corresponding reform programme radically altered the status of the labour force: the reforms replaced the valorisation of full employment and a society of entitled citizens with that of a 'liminal population' to be held at the minimal status of employability if the market demanded (Foucault 2008). In the field of housing, neoliberal reforms aggressively promoted state-subsidised subprime mortgages to residents, initiating the shift from having the right to housing to having the duty to participate in the housing market.

The combination of these measures greatly reinforced the socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation of the grands ensembles and aggravated their already existing logistical and everyday peripheralisation. These former engines of modernisation thus became sites of social and urban relegation, creating a deeply fragmented urban territory with contradictory urban imaginaries and spatial practices; that is, emancipatory hopes of working-class emancipation and neocolonial strategies of socio-spatial segregation often coexisted on the same site.

A similar process of socioeconomic peripheralisation and territorial fragmentation began in the 1980s in Hong Kong. The unprecedented industrialisation of the Pearl River delta led to the fundamental economic and territorial restructuring of the entire region. While large parts of Hong Kong's manufacturing industry moved across the Chinese border, its urban development was marked by deindustrialisation and the massive growth of the financial, real estate and service sectors. The government then changed its territorial strategy towards metropolisation, rail-based urban development and the implementation of urban renewal programmes. The rapidly increasing rents and poor living conditions in subdivided housing and urban renewal projects drove low-income families out of the inner-city areas to the new towns. In some peripheral areas, railway stations were transformed into new urban centralities directly coupled with condominium towers built to house the growing middle classes. In this new model, public housing policies were directly linked to the development and financialisation of the real estate sector. Social housing, which became the only type of housing they could afford, was produced to house the new working class of a low-income service economy in a polarised global city rather than the industrial proletariat. Similar to Paris, these processes changed the nature of the labour force and led to dramatic socioeconomic peripheralisation through precarisation, isolation and loss of social capital. Low-income families had to relocate to the new, fast-growing housing estates in new towns that lacked local job opportunities, which made their everyday life precarious and social reproduction arduous, even though improvements in public transport later allowed those with higher incomes to commute to the centre.

The everyday lives of both groups were thus affected either by long daily commutes or by controlled routines and social isolation in a monotonous and extremely dense environment where they were kept under strong surveillance. Rather than overcoming social contradictions, mass housing urbanisation during this period produced new contradictions: social housing estates developed into containers of poverty and despair.

Financialised mass housing urbanisation is illustrated most clearly in the case of Mexico City. Here, financialisation itself was the underlying raison d'être for mass housing urbanisation through the model of the mega conjuntos which surrendered the provision of housing to market mechanisms. The socioeconomic peripheralisation of low-income groups in the mega conjuntos was an integral part of the government's strategy. From the beginning the new neighbourhoods were characterised by exclusion and stigmatisation, resulting in severe reductions to their inhabitants' quality of life, increasing their burden of rising mortgage payments, reducing their health prospects and increasing gender-specific violence. This socioeconomic peripheralisation was aggravated by strong logistical peripheralisation and was interconnected to the peripheralisation of everyday life. Together, these processes produced the great territorial inequality that still characterises the entire urban region.

Reading the territorial logic of Mexico City's mass housing urbanisation through the Hong Kong case, we can clearly discern the pivotal role of the state in dominating territorial relations. Even if the geographical and historical contexts of the two cases are profoundly different, the processes of mass housing urbanisation follow similar neocolonial dynamics of state rule over territory. While in Mexico City this process promoted national and transnational corporate interests, in Hong Kong it strengthened the agenda of the government. A centrepiece of the territorial logic in the Mexico City case is the privatisation of the ejidos preceding, yet closely connected to, the implementation of the NAFTA agreements in the mid-1990s. The neocolonial element of this model is based on re-establishing and protecting private land tenure and prioritising shareholders' interests. The financialising of mass housing urbanisation can thus be

understood as a neocolonial restructuring of urban territories that serves to entrench values of social segregation and spatial fragmentation.

Revisiting the Paris case with this insight in mind reveals that its territorial pattern in the 1980s is not an example of a financialised version of mass housing urbanisation. Rather, it shows how the initial Fordist model of mass housing urbanisation underwent a process of socioeconomic peripheralisation initiated by a neoliberal approach to governing. The first phase of the Paris case also highlights an emancipatory form of the Fordist model of mass housing urbanisation; that is, one that promises to emancipate and serve the well-being of working-class residents by providing state-initiated housing. This variant of the Fordist model was reserved for a comparatively small minority of working-class citizens and occurred only during two decades.

These research results show the relevance of comparisons across very different socio-economic and urban contexts, confronting colonial social rental housing in high-rises and two-story terraced houses obtained by paying for a mortgage. Conventional accounts of housing histories usually avoid comparing this diversity of urban forms and modes of tenure. However, our triangulation across examples drawn from various parts of the world helps to reveal the inherent colonial logic of the territorial process as well as the specificities of each case.

## TERRITORIAL PROCESS AND URBAN FORM

What lessons does this comparison hold for architecture and urbanism? Our comparison of the maps in combination with our analyses of the respective urbanisation processes lays bare the relationships between material urban forms and the governmental rationales and modes of territorial regulation that produce them. These relations include contradictions and disconnections that give us relevant clues on how to read the power relations at work in the built environment; clues that cannot be deciphered through an analysis of the built form alone. In Paris the Fordist state that had initiated and erected the grands ensembles faded away during the 1970s and the strategies of the neoliberal state that replaced it fundamentally contradicted the social and economic model for which this housing model had initially been developed. The typological variety and architectural quality of the grands ensembles could not stand up against the ensuing processes of logistical, everyday and socioeconomic peripheralisation. The finding that peripheralisation takes primacy over urban form is consistent with observations from Mexico City, where the two-storey terrace house of the mega conjuntos resulted in processes of peripheralisation that closely resemble those created in the high-rise estates in Paris and Hong Kong, despite their radically different urban type and urban density.

Finally, the social housing estates in the new towns built in the 1990s in Hong Kong had a much better material and aesthetic quality than the first resettlement estates of the 1950s, but the residents of the new estates experienced much greater effects of everyday and socioeconomic peripheralisation. We conclude that the processes of peripheralisation have such a strong impact on the trajectory of mass housing urbanisation that they override planning concepts or types of housing that seek to counter peripheralisation. However, architectural design and urban form do play an integral role in the process: in combination with the respective governance regime, material form can reinforce peripheralisation and resistance to peripheralisation, though material form can occur only if local actors, both private and public, are equipped with strong political leverage. In Hong Kong, urban forms of maximum density managed by the Hong Kong Housing Authority became tools for the surveillance and discipline of its colonial subjects and thus reinforced processes of peripheralisation. In Mexico, the poor material quality of the houses and the interdiction of altering them inhibited the appropriation of urban space and thus contributed to peripheralisation. In select cases in the Parisian banlieue rouge, however, the urban design qualities of social rental housing helped to enhance residents' wellbeing and contributed to the production of local centralities. To understand how the architecture of housing mediates power relations we need to take into account the territorial process and governmental rationales. Only a combined analysis of territorial processes, urban forms and governmental strategies will reveal the underlying forces that determine how a specific urban space mediates the power relations and dependencies between a globalised centrality and its urban periphery.

1 Régie immobilière de la Ville de Paris, Société anonyme de gestion immobilière, office public HLM de Paris.
2 Housing inquiries by INSEE (Institut nationale de la statistique et des études économiques) and Mission économique de l'Union Nationale des Fédérations d'Organisme d'HLM.
3 For key data on the Agence Nationale de Rénovation Urbaine, see https://www.anru.fr/les-chiffres-cles-de-lanru, accessed 7 February 2021.

Istanbul; a barricade during the Gezi park protests. Taksim, Beyoğlu, 2013

Mexico City; a diablero carrying merchandise through the streets. Centro Historico, 2023

Los Angeles; Bunker Hill with Walt Disney Concert Hall designed by Frank Gehry. Downtown LA, 2023

# INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

## THE COMMODIFICATION OF URBAN VALUE

Tokyo, Shimokitazawa South. Setagaya Ward, 2013

Naomi Hanakata
Christian Schmid
Monika Streule
Ozan Karaman

Differences endure or arise on the margins of the homogenised realm, either in the form of resistances or in the form of externalities. [...] Sooner or later, however, the existing centre and the forces of homogenisation must seek to absorb all such differences.

Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* 1991 [1975]

# URBAN DIFFERENCES

Reinvestment and intensification are common processes in many urban areas across the world. These transformations are often analysed using concepts such as urban regeneration, urban renaissance and gentrification. However, when we were analysing Shimokitazawa (Tokyo), Wan Chai (Hong Kong), Beyoğlu (Istanbul), the City of Paris, Centro Histórico (Mexico City) and Downtown LA we realised that these concepts do not fully grasp the qualitative changes to everyday life and the contradictory character of the urbanisation processes that we observed. While existing concepts focus on the upgrading of urban areas and often also highlight the resulting relocation and displacement of residents and users, they do not take into consideration the far-reaching effects of these processes and they do not address questions about the production of urban value and people's access to centrality and thus the issue of the social wealth of a society.

Therefore, we have chosen a different analytical entry point by focusing on the production, reproduction and incorporation of the intrinsic qualities of the urban. We found Henri Lefebvre's concept of urban differences and Raymond Williams' concept of incorporation particularly useful for analysing our empirical results. In this chapter, we compare the incorporation of urban differences in Tokyo, Paris, Los Angeles and Istanbul and offer this concept for further discussion and application. For reasons of length we do not present the case studies on Hong Kong and Paris here (see Chapter 4).

This chapter starts with a theoretical discussion of urban differences and gives a first outline of the concept of incorporation of differences. Using the examples of Shimokitazawa, Centro Histórico, Downtown LA and Beyoğlu we then analyse the dynamics of this process over the long term and develop a periodisation for each case study. The last section of this chapter presents a detailed comparison of the four case studies and positions the concept of incorporation of differences within the larger context of urban theory, particularly in relation to the concept of gentrification.

## THE PRODUCTION AND INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

The question of social differences has played a salient role in urban studies for several decades. It has been used in various ways; sometimes to discuss diversity or multiculturalism and sometimes to describe the simultaneous presence of various social realities in urban spaces. Poststructuralist and postmodern approaches, as well as feminist, queer and psychoanalytic discussions made the concept of difference a key category in urban studies as well as a valuable lens through which to focus on urban space. (Bondi and Rose 2003; McKittrick and Peake 2005; Valentine 2008).

In *Cities of Difference,* one of the key works on this topic, Fincher and Jacobs (1998: 2) ask: 'What happens to studies of housing, suburbia, the inner city, ghettos, gentrification, social polarisation and urban social movements when framed not by a theory of the "city", but by theories of difference?' In a poststructuralist context, the term 'difference' is usually taken to be similar to terms like diversity, heterogeneity and cosmopolitanism (Fincher et al. 2014). In Anglo-American discourse in particular, the term difference is closely linked to the concept of identity (and identity politics), and both concepts are understood to be constituted, constructed and contextualised in processes and discursive practices related to dominant frameworks of power. Typical aspects of difference discussed in these studies are ethnicity, race, gender, class, sexuality and sometimes also age and disability, all of which are seen as fluid and multifaceted. In this understanding, different subjectivities can be privileged or marginalised, included or excluded, which raises questions of their rights and their access to resources (Fincher and Jacobs 1998: 3–7). Scholars have examined how difference is constituted and negotiated in various contexts, focusing primarily on socio-spatial differentiation, segregation and place-making in urban areas. This leads directly to the question of an emancipatory potential for a politics of difference that could help forge alliances among actors in diverse urban social movements (Keith and Pile 1993).

Difference also became an important concept in the postmodernist strand of the Los Angeles School of Urbanism, which examined the differentiation of socio-spatial structures as a result of uneven development and urban restructuring (Dear 2000; Nicholls 2011). Los Angeles, which around the turn of the century had developed into a polycentric urban patchwork formed by various processes of immigration and by the initiatives and struggles of residents, appeared to be the ideal place for studying Foucauldian heterotopias (Soja 1996a).

These contributions focus on the constitution of difference in various urban contexts and its consequences on urban restructuring and everyday life. Scholars usually conceptualise urban space as an arena in which differences unfold. They analyse the conflicts that arise from the constitution of differences and explore political strategies for forming alliances between different actors and social groups in urban contexts. They do not, however, understand difference as an active social practice shaping urbanisation itself. As Goonewardena and Kipfer (2005) note, certain culturalist conceptualisations of difference uncritically promote cultural diversity and a 'food-and-festivals' brand of aestheticised difference, leading to a commodified 'bourgeois urbanism' that absorbs subcultural practices and popular milieus.

## A THEORY OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

There is also another strand of theorisation; one that considers the production of differences as being central to and constitutive of the urban process itself. This perspective was theorised by Lefebvre. His theory of differences is a key element of his theory of the production of (urban) space (Goonewardena et al. 2008; Schmid 2022). Here, differences are rooted in active social relationships and 'differential space' is the horizon, the concrete utopia of urbanisation. As Buckley and Strauss state, Lefebvre's conceptualisation may also offer 'a productive opening for feminist, queer and other urban scholarship on the socio-spatial processes producing difference' (2016: 633). While Lefebvre remains vague about the concrete specification of differences, he uses the concept in a very productive way to analyse the dialectical relationship between urban space and the interplay of different social realities in everyday life.

In Lefebvre's view, difference is a relational and dialectical concept: differences are socially produced and relate to each other. They are multidimensional and dynamic. Differences arise from particularities, which relate to biological and physiological characteristics and to kinship and origin. Such particularities remain isolated yet confront each other in all sorts of struggles that traverse history. These struggles, however, may create awareness and a consciousness of others. Thus, differences emerges as enacted practice and ultimately as mental acts: differences connect with actions, situations, discourses and contexts; they relate to multifarious networks of interaction that overlap, interfere with and change as a result of the influence they have on each other. In this way, a movement is set in motion that ultimately may change the totality of social relations (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 64, 126, 129; 2008 [1981]: 111).

In contrast to poststructuralist approaches, Lefebvre distinguishes between difference and 'diversity', 'heterogeneity' and 'distinction', because he understands differences to be enacted contradictions that may also involve conflict and struggle (Lefebvre 1970, 66–68). In other words, the point is not that a variety of people are in the same space

at the same time, but that there are relations and interactions among them. Note that this concept is not intended to romanticise or legitimise social disparities, poverty and precarious living conditions. On the contrary, in Lefebvre's understanding, difference includes processes of emancipation and presupposes recognition and equal rights (Lefebvre 2008: 88). This conceptualisation has many similarities to Iris Marion Young's call for an 'egalitarian politics of difference' (1990).

## DIFFERENCE AND CENTRALITY

Urban life strives for differentiation, as Simmel demonstrated in his seminal text *The Metropolis and Mental Life* (1950). He observes that the concentration of people in large metropolises not only leads to an increased level of social interaction but also makes the money economy much more significant and hence also exchange values and the market. This in turn forces individuals to specialise in order to make a living. The agglomeration of a large number of people with different interests leads to an increase in the division of labour, which is not limited to the economic differentiation of products and services but also leads to a differentiation of livelihoods and personalities. Thus, urban differences emerge based on immigration or the residents' different origins but they also result from the social division of labour and the related production of cultural, economic and social inventions in large metropolises. Along this line of argument, we emphasise that urban centres have a crucial effect on societies: they both attract differences and they themselves become sites where differences are produced.

Lefebvre sees the productive aspect of difference in a similar way but goes one step further: differences become productive in that they generate a new quality of social interaction and transcend the existing boundaries of daily life (1991: 372–375, 295, 372–375). Therefore, the specific quality of urban space results from the simultaneous presence of people from different historical, social and economic backgrounds, from their activities and functions and from the ideas that meet in an urban space, interact and generate all sorts of social inventions. Urban space opens up the possibility of bringing the differences of a society together and making them dynamic: this space becomes a productive force, continuously destabilising existing modes of coexistence and creating new ones (Schmid 2015). Accordingly, we can understand differences as productive instabilities within the urban condition (Hanakata 2020).

Difference implies encountering and meeting and is thus directly linked to centrality. Lefebvre notes: 'Centrality as a form implies simultaneity and it is a result thereof: the simultaneity of "everything" that is susceptible of coming together—and thus of accumulating—in an act of thinking or in a social act, at a point or around that point' (1991: 332). Centrality is a precondition for differences to unfold because they can emerge only when people come together, meet and encounter each other. It is illuminating to see that Lefebvre's famous call for the 'right to the city' (in *The Right to the City*) evolved into the 'right to centrality' (in *The Urban Revolution*) and then into the 'right to difference' (in the *Production of Space*), which attests to the intrinsic relationship between these key aspects of the urban.

We need to note that Lefebvre developed centrality and difference as formal concepts: centrality means that a variety of different elements in a society come together and interact with each other. In the same way, he does not specify the concrete qualities and modalities of difference. The identification of the specific characteristics of centrality and difference in a particular urban space always requires concrete empirical analysis. Using this Lefebvrian understanding, the concept of difference became a key element of the territorial approach of ETH Studio Basel, which integrated it into a theoretical framework to analyse the specificity of urbanised territories (Diener et al. 2006, 2015; Schmid 2014, 2015).

## HEGEMONY AND INCORPORATION

The production of differences is contradictory because it has the potential to transform existing social relations. It is therefore always confronted with and challenged by dominant political and social forces which try to contain, tame and reduce these differences. This inevitably leads, in Lefebvre's words, to a 'titanic' confrontation between homogenising powers and differentiating capacities (Lefebvre 1970: 49). This confrontation may become apparent in uprisings or remain implicit in the 'interstices of everyday life' (Kipfer 2008: 203). Lefebvre further distinguishes between minimal and maximal difference and between induced and produced differences. This is less an empirical than an analytical distinction: while minimal differences are integrated into a system and are constitutive of that system, maximal differences have the capacity to generate all sorts of surprises: they are unpredictable, potentially explosive and question the existing system (Lefebvre 1991, 372–375, 395–396). Referring to Gramsci, Stefan Kipfer (2008) links the question of difference to the question of hegemony, which tries to reduce maximal differences and incorporate minimal differences.

Departing from this interpretation, Andrew Shmuely (2008) regards Lefebvre's concept of minimal difference as analogous to the process Williams refers to as incorporation. In 1977 Williams developed a dynamic and open interpretation of Gramsci's concept of hegemony that has striking parallels with Lefebvre's conceptualisation of

political processes. In Williams's understanding, 'a lived hegemony is always a process. It is not, except analytically, a system or a structure' (1977: 112). He defines hegemony as a realised complex of experiences, relationships and activities, and therefore it does not just passively exist as a form of dominance, but it has to be continually 'renewed, recreated, defended, and modified' (Williams 1977: 112). It is also continuously being challenged by the active presence of resistances and various forms of alternative or directly oppositional politics and practices. Therefore, any hegemonic power must be especially alert and responsive to alternatives and oppositions that question or threaten its dominance. It must strive to control, transform and incorporate the efforts and contributions of those who are at the edge of the established hegemony. Much of this incorporation is not directly enforced but may look like recognition, acknowledgment or acceptance (Williams 1977: 113, 125).

## URBAN VALUE AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE URBAN

Incorporation is related to the commodification of urban space. Differences constitute assets that can be drawn into market mechanisms and thus be transformed into a commodity (Gibson 1998). In this process, urban life as such is tied into the commodification process. As Lefebvre noted, urban space itself becomes a commodity to be bought and sold (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 154). This includes both the sale of parcels of land and the commodification of the entire social space—including the people living in it—as well as the social resources and the economic effects they produce (Schmid 2012). Thus, it is a process that turns the use value of urban space into exchange value. The use value of the urban, and thus the urban value, is produced by people; by the residents, workers, visitors and users who create it through their activities and interactions. It is based on a wide variety of social, economic, cultural and political networks anchored in specific urban places.

Urban value, understood as the use value of the urban, is potentially open to everybody and thus is related to the urban commons (see e.g. Harvey 2011; Stavrides 2016). It includes both material assets and potentials, and also immaterial values and imaginations. However, as a result of commodification processes, most of these lively urban areas full of different people with their practices and uses, which are often but not exclusively located in central areas, are turned into spaces for consumption for privileged residents and users, and are thereby incorporated into the logic of the market. At this moment, the exchange value of urban space is realised and extracted (see Theurillat 2015).[1]

On a general level, Lefebvre (1991) understood the commodification of space as a process of abstraction that leads to abstract space, while the creation of maximal difference tends towards differential space (see Schmid 2022).

## CONCEPTUALISING INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES

With the concept of the incorporation of urban differences we try to bring together several contradictory aspects of urban transformation. First of all, the production of differences is a key aspect of the generation of urban value: encounters and interactions of people become productive because they have the potential to generate all sorts of social inventions. In this way, differences constitute the social wealth of an urban society. A central question is whether these differences are allowed to flourish and to whom they are accessible. This refers directly to the use value of urban space and thus to the creation of places that are accessible to all social groups, open for all sorts of experiments and extend society's capacity to produce new differences through meetings, encounters and exchange. An urban space can thus be defined as a place where differences emerge, recognise each other, respect each other and enter into productive exchange. These differences are dynamic: they are not something a place has, they are something that it constantly produces and reproduces. It is crucial that all people have the opportunity to live these differences and generate new differences (Schmid 2015; Meili 2015). We understand these differences as relative and variable; they are constituted by various processes and always imply power relations. Because of its potentially emancipatory character, the production of differences is subject to political interventions. While differences may be seen to be a desirable urban quality by political authorities, they are also often defined as a problem and as leading to conflicts and social unrest, therefore calling for appropriate measures. As Fincher et al. (2014) show, political strategies addressing difference often oscillate between celebrating diversity and regulating or even repressing difference.

The incorporation of differences has thus a double nature: homogenisation and commodification. State actors often play key roles in incorporating differences: they may push for homogenisation by controlling and policing public spaces and support commodification processes using all sorts of policies and strategies in the name of upgrading neighbourhoods. The dialectics between the production of differences and their incorporation sets a process in motion that may result in phases of closures and openings, with alternating moments of deep incorporation and those where differences flourish. In the following we explore this dynamic of the production and incorporation of differences using the examples of Shimokitazawa, Centro Histórico, Downtown LA and Beyoğlu.

# SHIMOKITAZAWA: THE PRODUCTION OF AN ALTERNATIVE CENTRALITY FOR TOKYO

Shimokitazawa is a neighbourhood in the south-west of Tokyo with a population of approximately 18,000. It is situated at the intersection of the Odakyu and Keio Inokashira railway lines, putting it at the centre of one of the low-rise housing commuter belts stretching out from the central area into the region. It is located just outside Tokyo's central Yamanote railway line, which marks the limits of the central district of the metropolitan region, including Shibuya, a major centre for commerce, creative industries and fashion, and Shinjuku, the seat of the city's government and a commercial, entertainment and business centrality. Over the past three decades Shimokitazawa has transformed from being an intimate local neighbourhood, known for its music and theatre scene, into a destination for people from all over the region who are seeking an urban experience they can no longer find in any other centre of Tokyo (Hanakata 2020: 261).

## THE ROOTS OF AN ALTERNATIVE ENTERTAINMENT CENTRALITY

Until the end of the feudal system in Japan in 1868, the area where Shimokitazawa is today was mainly agricultural land. Its gradual urbanisation began with the industrialisation and modernisation of the country in the late 19th century. In 1878 the Komaba School of Agriculture was founded (today it is the Komaba Campus of Tokyo University), followed in 1917 by the Seijo Academy (which is today Seijo University). In 1932 the Tokyo Takarazuka Theater Company, today known as Toho Company, opened nearby and together, these institutions attracted many young and creative people to the area. With the rapid expansion of the metropolitan railway network in the 1920s and 1930s, connecting Tokyo's core with the constantly moving edges of the metropolis, Shimokitazawa became a well-connected town.

Shimokitazawa was spared from the devastating air raids of the Second World War, which ended with the almost total destruction of Tokyo. With its basic infrastructure still intact, the town began to flourish after the war: a commercial centre emerged around the railway station selling imported goods from the USA and with cheap restaurants and drinking places (Hanakata 2020: 263).

One of those places was run by Kazuo Honda, a former Toho Studio actor, who recalls: 'Back then, Shimokitazawa was not that bustling. There were no neon lights and at night it was rather a bizarre atmosphere' (Okashima et al. 2001). With the beginning of the Japanese post-war 'economic miracle', Shimokitazawa became increasingly popular among young people who discovered the area as an alternative to Shinjuku, Tokyo's famous main entertainment centre, which faced intense redevelopment at the time including the demolition of many popular gathering places, open spaces

Tokyo, Shimokitazawa. Setagaya Ward, 2013

and restaurants. The first bars performing rock and jazz music opened in Shimokitazawa in the early 1970s and attracted a new generation of fashion-conscious young people in a booming economy.

Youth magazines named Shimokitazawa as one of the trendy new places in the city (*Magazine World* 2020). In the summer of 1979 owners of music clubs organised the first Shimokitazawa Music Festival, which contributed to the regional fame of the neighbourhood as a place for music clubs and record stores. Shimokitazawa became a flourishing centre for young people, yet it remained out of reach of the centripetal forces of the much larger centralities of Shinjuku and Shibuya that were shaped by mainstream culture and mass consumption.

## IN SEARCH OF THE NON-COMMODIFIABLE

Its increasing popularity changed Shimokitazawa's commercial landscape, attracting a wide, leisure-seeking audience from the entire Tokyo region. This trend coincided with the collapse of the economic bubble in 1990, which ended Japan's long-standing economic boom and marked the beginning of its lasting economic stagnation. At the same time, consumer culture changed. Just because everything had been turned into a commodity during the economic boom, the increasing search for the non-commodified made places like Shimokitazawa with its vibrant, locally embedded community, its original shops that had not yet been replaced by chain stores and its narrow alleys that were not overshadowed by skyscrapers an attractive and desirable place (Hanakata 2020: 265).

The neighbourhood responded to nostalgia; to the dream of a space seemingly untroubled by economic crises and untouched by 'modernisation'. As the historian Sand notes: 'Yet although the objects of late twentieth century Japanese nostalgia were various, they reflected a certain consistent sensibility that valued notions of rootedness and community, preferred low-tech, small and intimate spaces and sought to mark out territory outside the dominance of the state, capitalism, or global culture centred in the West' (Sand 2006: 86). However, because it attracted growing public attention and through its representation in the media as an additional 'feature' in a diversified 'city portfolio', the unique local atmosphere of Shimokitazawa itself became a commodity to be consumed in the same way as the famous illuminated streetscape of Shibuya. The distinct urban qualities that had been produced by local people were incorporated into leisure, shopping and tourist itineraries complementing the comprehensive 'urban offer' by Tokyo for residents and visitors.

## MOMENTS OF INCORPORATION OF DIFFERENCES

In the early 2000s Shimokitazawa became famous as the 'Greenwich Village of Tokyo'. Simultaneously, spaces of consumption encroached further into quiet residential zones. Homeowners converted parts of their detached houses into small commercial spaces accommodating shops, boutiques or cafes which celebrated a 'slow' and 'alternative' lifestyle, offering an atmosphere that people sought out but could not find in the bigger centralities. Formerly distinct urban qualities were thus being reproduced to be sold. Waley describes this as the process by which urban histories are being 'wrapped up, bottled, translated into images and sold in a myriad of products appearing in shops all over the city' (2011: 60).

A resident who grew up in the area is now the owner of the Toyo Department Store, a car park converted into a bazaar-like collection of stores, or what he calls a 'retail incubator' that provides small spaces for young entrepreneurs to rent cheaply to test new product ideas and reproduce successful sales concepts. He highlights the challenge Shimokitazawa is facing today: 'Today, Shimokitazawa really is a brand' but 'what we are struggling with right now in this shopping area is, that there are too many second-hand shops. [...] Many of the second-hand stores today are in fact run by large companies' (Koshimizu 2013). His comment reveals the residents' awareness of Shimokitazawa's growing popularity, which large companies are exploiting to their advantage.

This popularity leads to growing consumerism and has resulted in a rise of commodification: urban values are turned into exchange values, depriving Shimokitazawa of its initial character as an alternative space. In this change in the use of spaces, popular ideas and venues are copied and repeated with only minor differences among them. The result is a homogenised landscape that accommodates mainstream demand and deprives local people of crucial conditions for everyday life within the area. Small corner shops that provide daily necessities, and which constitute a central element of the internal community network, are slowly disappearing. A traditional sweet shop, which opened after the Second World War, was shut down by its second-generation owners after they retired in 2014; now they are renting it out to yet another second-hand shop.

A corner shop established in 1927 on the ground floor of a two-storey building, selling vegetables, fruit and tobacco and forming a daily meeting point in the neighbourhood, was redeveloped by the owner, who had run the shop for many years, into a seven-storey building with three commercial floors and apartments on top. The owner moved into the top floor of her redeveloped building. Like so many other property owners in the area, she has capitalised on the increased value of her land and

realised the rent gap by creating new commercial spaces while remaining as a resident in the place. This shows that the local property owners are directly involved in this process of commodification. However, the transformation of the neighbourhood was largely limited to changes in its commercial landscape, while tenure structures remained unaffected. This was possible because of the powerful legal protection of property ownership rights, which prevented large-scale acquisitions from being made by private companies.

## THE COMMODIFICATION OF THE URBAN

The state was not completely absent during the urban development of Shimokitazawa. By 1986, in response to the oil crisis a decade earlier, the national government had launched an urban renaissance policy for the central area by relaxing zoning regulations there. More planning measures followed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, in an attempt to revitalise the stagnating economy after the economic crisis of 1991. The Urban Renaissance Agency (known as the Housing and Development Corporation until 1999 and the Urban Development Corporation until 2004) deregulated the housing market and offered the construction sector various incentives to increase the supply of central housing (Douglass 1988: 440). This deregulation led to a temporary increase of rental prices for commercial spaces in Shimokitazawa during the late 2000s. But, as most of the housing was owner occupied, most residents were not really affected (Sonobe 2001). As a result, however, more and more large retail chains relocated to the neighbourhood, particularly in the area of the South Exit. Small shops nevertheless kept emerging and continued to reproduce the unique atmosphere of the neighbourhood.

Today, all these new places, venues and events are accessible to visitors through numerous channels: local merchant associations introduce new members, announce events and give an overview of their various shopping streets on self-administered websites. Commercial web platforms such as 'I love Shimokitazawa', 'Shimokitazawa Broiler' or 'Burari Shimokitazawa' as well as various mainstream print magazines like *Popeye*, *Anan*, *Tokyo Jin* and *Setagaya Raifu* list commercial novelties to ensure that they may be discovered by people hunting for new urban adventures. Alternative and free events produced by local residents and shop owners are incorporated into these promotion schemes and absorbed by the mainstream. A curry dish, for example, initially served by a few out-of-date diners, became personified in the Curry Man, who became an ambassador for the town and its annual curry festival, first held in 2011.

## CONCLUSION

Shimokitazawa is an example of the commodification and incorporation in the mainstream of 'something that lies outside the mainstream'. These differences emerged in and through everyday life, having been created by the complex interplay of individual local shop owners and the theatre and music communities, transgressing cultural sectors and producing a different culture. The incorporation of these differences was initiated and promoted by the same actors, as well as by the larger metropolitan audience—creating a kind of 'new metropolitan mainstream' (see Schmid and Weiss 2004). This kind of urban transformation is fundamentally different from situations in which high-income groups enter a neighbourhood and displace former residents and users: in Shimokitazawa, it was the long-established residents and shop owners themselves who drove this process of urban transformation. This illustrates the contradictory dynamics of the production of urban differences. In this case it was produced as an alternative to mainstream culture but became incorporated into the commercial entertainment apparatus of the metropolitan region.

# CENTRO HISTÓRICO: THE STRUGGLE FOR A POPULAR CENTRE FOR MEXICO CITY

Despite many attempts to turn Mexico City's Centro Histórico into a mainstream space of consumption, a major change was achieved only recently. What used to be a vibrant and busy popular centre full of people is today in large parts a domesticised shopping zone closely monitored by hundreds of surveillance cameras. At the same time, a fundamental change of the urban imaginary could be observed: Centro Histórico, that for a long time had been portrayed and stigmatised as run down, unruly and unsafe, is now seen as a desirable symbolic and cultural centrality; and after many years of population loss new residents and users are moving in (Streule 2006, 2008; Díaz Parra and Salinas Arreortua 2016; Delgadillo 2016). How could such a profound urban transformation come about?

## THE EMERGENCE OF A POPULAR CENTRALITY

Only a few years ago, thousands of street vendors installed their booths every morning on the pavements to sell everything from household articles and clothes to DVDs and cheap electronic devices made in China. Around one million people, known as a floating population *(población flotante)*, came every day to purchase a wide variety of goods (Silva Londoño 2010; Alba Vega and Braig 2013). This specific urban quality of the central area of Mexico City known as Centro was deeply rooted in its changing history. After Mexico's independence in 1821, the Centro with its large colonial residential buildings became the favourite place for the criollo elite. In the late 19th century Mexico City expanded beyond its colonial core and in the 1920s, in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, the Centro slowly changed from being a bourgeois city centre into a *barrio popular,* notorious for its dancing halls, cantinas and *vecindades*[2] (Monnet 1995). The urban elites found new residential areas to the west of the Centro, close to the central axis of the Paseo de la Reforma and the newly built tramway lines (Ward 1991) and the Centro became the principal space used to integrate immigrants, poor residents and refugees from the civil war into urban society (Davis 2004; Hiernaux 2013: 380).

In the following decades the housing stock in the Centro gradually deteriorated, mainly because landlords stopped investing in it as a response to the rent control that was introduced in 1942 in central areas to mollify heavy social protests against the housing crisis (Urbina Martínez 2009). Moreover, as part of a comprehensive modernist restructuring plan for Mexico City, the city government relocated numerous factories from the Centro into new industrial parks, constructed a new campus for the national university UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) in the south of the city and a number of market halls in order to concentrate former commercial activities scattered throughout

Mexico City, warehouse and shops. Centro Historico, 2023

the Centro in a fruitless attempt to remove street vendors from operating in public spaces (Streule 2018). At the same time, many working-class people left the vecindades in the Centro and moved to self-built houses in the urban periphery (see Chapter 12). All these developments opened up space, which soon was taken over by shops and other commercial uses. As a result, the Centro turned into a popular meeting place for the entire region.

In 1985 a devastating earthquake hit the Centro. Large parts of the central areas of Mexico City were affected, thousands of residents killed and many of the poorly maintained old colonial buildings were severely damaged. Many residents, businesses and institutions left the Centro, including major parts of the financial sector and of the government administration. However, many shops and venues for low-income groups remained and by organising widespread social protest, the residents successfully fought for their right to centrality and resisted being relocated to newly built state housing in remote areas (Massolo 1986). They even eventually succeeded in making the government rehabilitate and reconstruct buildings in the area (Esquivel Hernández 2016). Thus, in the late 1980s, the Centro consolidated its role as a popular centrality for low-income groups of mainly mestizo and indigenous people, and as a place to live and work (Oehmichen 2007).

## CULTURAL HERITAGE AND INCORPORATION

In the 1990s the urban imaginary of the Centro changed and a process of incorporation slowly unfolded. A decisive starting point had been the establishment in 1980 of the conservation zone of the 'Centro Histórico' by the city government, which covered only a fraction of the entire central area. UNESCO supported this strategy by declaring the Centro Histórico a World Heritage site in 1987, thereby also imposing traditional conservation strategies that forbade street markets or the alteration of façades. Soon thereafter, the city government launched a large-scale urban regeneration programme called '¡Échame una manita!' ('Lend a hand', 1991–1994) (Delgadillo 2016: 1166). A programme to address the damage from the earthquake was widely seen as necessary but the proposed programme, and particularly with the production of heritage as its main goal, was disputed (Mantecón 2005; Melé 2006; for a similar case in Puebla, see Jones and Varley 1999). Furthermore, in the wake of a neoliberal turn in Mexico the city government deregulated rents in 1992 and established a public–private Historic Center Trust Fund to attract private investment. Another attempt to relocate street vendors failed. Despite all these efforts to attract investors, only a few real estate projects were built and these were mainly in the Alameda corridor in the western part of Centro Histórico (Streule 2006; see also Parnreiter 2015).

## FROM INTEGRAL REGENERATION TO SELECTIVE INVESTMENT AND FESTIVALISATION

In the wake of the rise of a strong urban social movement in Mexico City, which had also been very active in the Centro ever since the successful struggles for housing in the mid-1980s, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas became the first elected mayor of Mexico City in

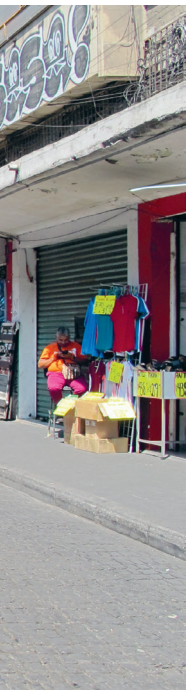
Mexico City; food stall. Centro Histórico, 2013

1997 (previously, the city mayors had been appointed by the President of Mexico). Cárdenas succeeded in involving activist groups and tenant organisations, which had mobilised for political change for many years, into the campaign for an inclusive city agenda. Many of the leaders of these social movements—like Superbarrio *Gómez*, the charismatic activist fighting for affordable housing in the Centro—even accepted positions in government. Cárdenas envisioned an integrated regeneration of the Centro, which sought to avoid social exclusion and prevent the displacement of local residents (Coulomb 2004: 75).

However, in 2000 the election of Andrés Manuel López Obrador (who was elected president of Mexico in 2018) as city mayor resulted in another decisive turn for the Centro. While pretending to continue Cárdenas' strategy to create an inclusive city, he introduced a neoliberal agenda and forged a close collaboration with Carlos Slim, one of Mexico's most powerful entrepreneurs. Together, they created an Executive Consulting Council to restore the Centro Histórico. This body claimed to represent civil society but was headed by Slim and included other conservative celebrities of the political, scientific, religious and media establishment, such as the cardinal of Mexico City (Walker 2013: 177).

To complement this development, the city government launched a new 'revitalisation' programme, which also established a cultural and tourist corridor in the south-western part of the Centro Histórico, in the same area where Slim had purchased 63 buildings between 2002 and 2004 (Delgadillo 2016: 1167). Slim also created two foundations that worked closely together to manage his investments: the Fundación del Centro Histórico, a non-profit organisation aimed at enhancing living conditions through social, artistic and cultural programmes and the Inmobiliaria Vivir en el Centro, a for-profit corporation that bought and renovated buildings for housing and commerce, with the goal of reactivating the real estate market in the area (Leal Martínez 2007: 29; Streule 2006). By sponsoring novel tourist and artistic venues and providing art scholarships, both foundations attracted young people from all over the world. Additionally, microcredit was made available for small entrepreneurial activities to promote the local production of popular and artisanal products, which had so far not been introduced into the tourist market in the Centro Histórico.

Meanwhile, the government launched a strategy of festivalisation (Streule 2008) by organising enormous free events in public spaces that 'sought to foster a collective identity' (Coulomb 2004: 82). This was complemented by a zero tolerance security strategy (Davis and Luna Reyes 2007) that included a formidable police presence on the street and the installation of CCTVs. A beautification programme further promoted the cleaning of streets, the refurbishing of parks and an illumination plan for the Centro. Many of these projects, e.g. the new police station, were financed by Slim (Streule 2006).



Mexico City; street market. Centro Histórico, 2023

## MAINSTREAMING CENTRO HISTÓRICO

All these vast urban regeneration efforts were accomplished in parallel with a fundamental change in the real estate market. Landlords started to offer lofts in renovated buildings for rent and transformed the upper floors of former warehouses into apartments. While low-income residents generally aim to own their homes, this new rental market explicitly focused on a new type of resident: well-off young couples or singles who were not (yet) interested in buying property and who wanted to live in an attractive urban environment. They would tolerate certain inconveniences in exchange for the 'lifestyle offered by the centrality' (Coulomb 2004: 80; see also Hiernaux 2003). The revitalisation strategy and the change in the real estate market had far-reaching effects: after decades of population loss a new urban milieu entered the Centro Histórico. Fancy cafés, bars and galleries opened and new cultural and tourist corridors on recently pedestrianised streets were created, often triggering conflicts between established and new residents or visitors (Leal Martínez 2007). As a result of this process, the privileged south-western area of the Centro Histórico turned into a trendy neighbourhood in the mid-2000s, while other parts were able to escape the vast public–private investments as tenants and street vendors challenged the official restoration programmes.

In 2007, with the creation of an 'Authority of the Centro Histórico' under the Mayor and former police chief Marcelo Ebrard, urban regeneration

policies became more widespread: as reinvestments had affected less than 10 per cent of the Centro Histórico by that time (Delgadillo 2016: 1167), the new programme targeted the northern and eastern neighbourhoods that had escaped renovation. For the first time, street vending was effectively banned from the Centro Histórico (Crossa 2009; Silva Londoño 2010). At Plaza Garibaldi, which was famous for its Mariachi bands, a Tequila museum opened in 2010 and homeless street kids and prostitutes were displaced (Becker and Müller 2011; Moctezuma Mendoza 2016). In contrast, regeneration plans for the huge public market La Merced have been delayed by protests since 2013 (Delgadillo 2018; Lara-Hernandez et al. 2020).

## CONCLUSION

Mexico City's Centro Histórico is an example of the constant struggle to maintain a popular centrality in a situation in which the globalisation and metropolisation of the urban region creates a conflict between the existing low-income residents and users and the ambitions of the government and investors to create a commodified centrality for tourists and visitors. These long-standing attempts to incorporate the historical centre of Mexico City proved to be deeply ambivalent. On the one hand, they have clearly diminished the vitality and openness of large parts of the Centro. As in many other Latin American cities, such as Lima, La Habana and Bogotá, this recuperation of historic colonial centres has been closely linked to an urban heritage discourse, which is then instrumentalised for comprehensive urban transformation.

On the other hand, despite all these attempts by private and state actors, through various forms of everyday struggles the Centro has to this day remained an important economic, social, cultural and symbolic centrality on the metropolitan scale. It is one of the few urban spaces in the increasingly socially segregated metropolis of Mexico City that is still visited by a remarkably wide range of different users and enables encounters and meetings. Centro Histórico remains a highly contested urban space, in which access to centrality is at stake (Streule 2008, 2018).

# DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES: A METROPOLIS IN SEARCH OF A CENTRE

After more than a century, Los Angeles finally seems to have a real downtown. A place that has embodied the definition of placelessness and has been the very symbol of a core without content (Bogart 2006: 13; Banham 1971: 208; Lynch 1960, 35; Mollenkopf 1983: 31) has come roaring into a state of urban transformation. A significant marker of this change may be the relocation of high-tech companies from Silicon Beach (Santa Monica, Venice, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach) to Downtown LA in the mid-2010s. Their explanation for this move was that the rents were cheaper, cool and creative spaces abounded and their employees wanted an urban experience (Chang 2015). How can this significant urban change be explained?

## A HORIZONTAL METROPOLIS

The struggle for metropolitan vibrancy, and its corollary, the displacement of those left out of the vibrancy equation, is not something new to Los Angeles. For over a century, civic leaders and urban planners have been grappling with the scattered urban form of the metropolis. Los Angeles's

Los Angeles; arc of gentrifying neighbourhoods. Boyle Heights, 2014
Los Angeles; Fashion District. Downtown LA, 2023

polycentric structure was primarily a consequence of the construction of electric urban and interurban railways connecting the dispersed settlements in the vast plane between the San Gabriel Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, which opened up vast tracts of land for real estate—yielding huge profits for the railway owners (Fogelson 1967: 86).
This decentralised urbanisation model had vast implications for the development of Downtown: by following a horizontal rather than a vertical urbanisation pattern, Los Angeles developed many cores instead of one. However, in the first three decades of the 20th century efforts to build a viable city centre proved to be at least partly successful, as is testified by a range of representational buildings and dense neighbourhoods: the City Hall with its Art Deco tower from 1928, which replaced the old central business district; the financial district at Spring Street with its high-rise buildings; and Broadway Street, which developed into a district with vibrant shopping, nightlife and entertainment facilities and where a whole range of movie palaces attracted thousands of people. But by the 1920s Downtown LA showed its first signs of decline: new department stores opened along Wilshire Boulevard west of Downtown and over the following decades Wilshire Boulevard developed into a new horizontal downtown (Keil 1998: 145). Hollywood Boulevard became the new movie district and tourist attraction and more new downtowns developed in Pasadena, Beverly Hills, Westwood, Santa Monica and Santa Ana (Fogelson 1967: 147; Garvin 2019: 28).



Los Angeles's decentralised growth pattern was reinforced after the Second World War, when the railways were replaced by boulevards and freeways and the Los Angeles model of car-oriented urban sprawl fully unfolded. This decentralised model was not only promoted by powerful landowners and developers but was also the result of a Fordist-Keynesian compromise in which the predominantly white trade unions supported suburban housing and metropolitan freeways (Parson 1982: 406). Soon afterwards, businesses and retailers followed white middle-income families to the growing suburbs scattered all over the metropolitan region and shopping malls mushroomed. The new freeways pushed further decentralisation and hemmed in and suffocated Downtown, which was turned into a kind of lost island in between the main traffic arteries. It experienced a slow but steady decline for several decades, resulting in underused and vacant buildings. But at the same time it also developed into a centrality for a wide variety of low-income groups (Sambale 2007). At Broadway Street many of the movie palaces became venues for Spanish-language movies and variety shows, and the neighbourhood developed into a lively area for Latino Americans (Roseman and Vigil 1993).
Skid Row, the adjacent neighbourhood north-east of Downtown and close to the terminus stations of the transcontinental railroads, became a point of entry for migrants with its low-price hotels, apartments and retail stores and it developed into

the main place for homeless people in Los Angeles. These central areas were surrounded by several labour-intensive, low-waged industrial clusters, such as the fashion, toy, flower, warehouse and central industrial districts. They formed specific agglomeration economies connected to global markets and also to a local network of firms and shops (Sims 2016: 35). Thus, Downtown may not have developed into a metropolitan centrality but it became a popular centrality for a broad mix of middle- and low-income groups.

## CITADEL AND GHETTO

The slow but steady decline of Downtown did not remain unchecked. The Central City Association of Los Angeles, founded in 1924, became a key player in the efforts to recentre the rapidly suburbanising region in the 1960s (Davis 1990: 72). They initiated the redevelopment of Bunker Hill, a once wealthy residential area in the north-west of Downtown, which had developed into a vibrant mixed neighbourhood. In what was a classic modernist urban renewal project the newly founded Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) began to acquire property, and by the late 1960s Bunker Hill had been cleared of more than 7000 low-income homes and a large number of small businesses, while in their place rose an 'acropolis of corporate headquarters and culture complexes' (Parson 1993: 235). But this business satellite with skyscrapers directly linked to parking structures and freeways did not generate any form of 'vibrancy'. The opening of the postmodern Bonaventure Hotel in 1976, highly debated for its iconic architecture by urban thinkers and postmodern theorists (Davis 1990; Soja 1989, 1996; Jameson 1991; Baudrillard 1996; Joseph-Lester 2008) also did little to create the sense of a viable downtown but resulted in what Soja called 'Citadel LA': an pure spectacle of business, commerce and power. As he argues, '[M]any residents of the City of Los Angeles have never been downtown and experience it only vicariously, on television and film' (Soja 1996a: 297).

The Citadel remained architecturally separated from the adjacent Hispanic district on Broadway Street, and guarded from the homeless in Skid Row (Parson 1993: 236). The epic battle for Skid Row cannot be told here in detail (Reese et al. 2010; Gibbons 2018). During the 1980s the relatively small group of mixed, but mainly white homeless men at Skid Row grew to a much larger number of predominantly African American men as a consequence of the massive wave of deindustrialisation after the crisis of Fordism and the 'collapse of affordable housing' following neoliberal changes in Los Angeles (Wolch 1996). Plans to bulldoze parts of Skid Row were prevented by advocates of homeless people, support groups and community organisations as well as by neighbouring communities fearing they would become the 'new' Skid Row. Instead, the city government applied a dual containment strategy: on the one hand, the LA Police Department launched aggressive sweeps to remove homeless people from public sidewalks and open spaces, while on the other, activists successfully campaigned for improvements to provide support structures, services and shelter (Deener et al. 2013). The shocking contrast between the ascending towers on Bunker Hill and the depressing reality in Skid Row is well expressed by the metaphor of 'Citadel and Ghetto' so powerfully evoked by Friedmann and Wolff (1982) in their seminal paper on the world city hypothesis.

## THE 'SUCCESS STORY'

The situation of Downtown changed gradually during the 1990s, during which the proverbial non-urbanity of Los Angeles slowly gave way to an increased interest in urbanity. A range of new cultural venues and flagship projects, such as Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall on Bunker Hill (1997), the Staples Center, a multipurpose sports and event arena at the western edge of Downtown (1999) and the adjacent entertainment complex L.A. Live (2009) gave the entire Downtown a new feeling of centrality. Trendy bars, restaurants and hotels opened, while urban parks were built to produce an impression of 'urbanity'.

Meanwhile, art galleries moved into the former financial district of South Spring Street, which soon became known as Gallery Row. Broadway Street also underwent great changes and the mix of stores for Latino Americans came under serious pressure. In the 1990s Downtown became a centre for the evictions and displacements of homeless people and merchants selling cheap goods (Sims 2016: 37). A decisive turning point was reached when the city passed the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in 1999, permitting developers to convert vacant office and commercial space into residential use. In the following years many former bank, storage and factory buildings, as well as cheap single room apartment hotels were converted into expensive lofts and luxury residences (Deener et al. 2013). A critical moment seemed to have been reached when *Los Angeles Magazine* ran a front-page story in 2011 on the glories of Downtown living (Sullivan 2014: 87).

Coordinated planning efforts led by the CRA, which brought together government actors, planners, developers, property and business owners in various projects, played a key role in this 'urban renaissance'. The main instrument for urban upgrading became the creation of business improvement districts (BID), a model imported from other cities in North America (Garvin 2019: 99–101). The first BID in Downtown was Miracle on

Broadway, founded in 1987. On the east side of Downtown, in the former Warehouse district, an Arts district BID was installed in the mid-1990s. In this area a lively art scene had developed as early as the 1970s, epitomised by the legendary punk venue in the American Hotel. As the art scene got established, artists became developers and started to rehabilitate industrial buildings and the city launched an artist-in-residence programme. Since the 2000s more and more expensive residential and mixed-use projects have fundamentally changed and streamlined the district (Darchen 2017). Today, Downtown LA forms a patchwork of nine officially recognised BIDs, each with their own private security guards, refuse collection, marketing and beautification efforts. Partially funded by public subsidies, they offer advice and support to commerce and real-estate developers, advertising a safe and clean space with a unique 'edgy urban atmosphere' (Marquardt and Füller 2012: 156–157). Their efforts include placing constant pressure on small businesses selling cheap goods and on anyone who disturbs the idealised picture. Many of those pushed out of Downtown end up in the streets, emergency shelters and transitional housing of Skid Row.

## RECENTRALISING LOS ANGELES

In about two decades Downtown LA has been transformed into a new magnet for the urban middle classes. Between 2000 and 2018 the number of residents almost tripled from about 24,000 to 65,000. In 2018 the median age of these residents was 36 and their median income was almost $ 100,000 (City of Los Angeles 2018). Why did this 'urban renaissance', after so many failed attempts for almost a century, finally take hold? From the perspective of the metropolitan region, the change may be interpreted as a turn towards a denser urbanisation model, as some researchers suggest (Soja 2014). However, this transformation also reflects a paradigm change from a decentralised and polycentric urbanisation model to one that is much more oriented towards the production and commodification of urban value based on the huge interventions and concerted efforts of state and corporate actors. This recentralisation of Los Angeles is thus much more than gentrification in the classic definition of the term: it can be understood as the production of an entirely new urban configuration, serving as the new strategic centre for restructuring the entire region with far-reaching effects. An arc of gentrifying neighbourhoods developed north of Downtown in recent years, stretching from a western outpost in Silver Lake to Echo Park, Cypress Park and Lincoln Heights to an eastern outpost in Boyle Heights (Schmid and Sullivan 2020).[3] As Scott (2018) has argued for the 2000–2015 period, these gentrification processes followed the concentration of white collar jobs in central areas, which in turn reflects a fundamental change in the socioeconomic structure of Los Angeles: the centre of gravity has moved along the central axis of Wilshire Boulevard eastwards towards Downtown.

## CONCLUSION

The example of Downtown LA shows that the contradictory process of creating centrality and urbanity via state strategies not only results in a commodified and domesticated urban space, but also destroys existing forms of popular centrality. The 'urban renaissance' of Downtown LA may be understood as the simultaneous production and incorporation of urban differences as part of a top-down strategy to produce an 'urban experience in a secure and clean urban environment. This is a classical form of 'bourgeois urbanism' that tries to produce urban spaces without contradictions. This strategy deprives many communities of their access to centrality and impedes their efforts to create their own distinct forms of urban value. The remaking of Downtown LA is a striking example of both the incorporation of differences and its opposite, the rejection of differences.

# BEYOĞLU: CONTESTING INCORPORATION IN ISTANBUL

The incorporation of urban differences always targets the collective actions and products of residents and users of space and it is therefore often contested by various urban social movements and advocacy groups. In some cases, the top-down efforts to constrain maximal differences or reduce them into minimal differences may even spark huge backlashes, unexpectedly opening up new spaces for the creation of even more threatening maximal differences that have been unforeseen by the hegemonic powers. This possibility is amply illustrated in the case of the June 2013 revolts in Istanbul, which were directly triggered by the government's decision to intervene in what is arguably the most central public space in Istanbul in the historic Beyoğlu district. Here Taksim Square, together with İstiklal Avenue that feeds into it, constitute a major metropolitan centrality.

## THE CREATION AND DECLINE OF A COSMOPOLITAN CENTRALITY

Beyoğlu emerged as an alternative and largely non-Muslim centrality in the 19th and early 20th century in contrast to the traditional centrality on the southern side of the Golden Horn. Originally inhabited by non-Muslim merchants, bankers and diplomats, İstiklal Avenue (formerly known as Cadde-i Kebir or the Grande Rue de Péra in French) and its immediate surroundings became a salient cultural and economic centre with a European orientation during the final decades of the Ottoman Empire. However, the area entered a long and slow period of decline in the 1920s with the founding of the Turkish Republic, the exodus of non-Muslim groups and the loss of economic vitality. By the 1970s it had become a blighted zone, characterised by congestion and a compromised reputation, and hosting illicit activities and low-profile commerce, while at the same time providing cheap housing for rural immigrants (Ozus and Dokmeci, 2005: 148, 149; Türkün 2021: 178–207).

## HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND PRODUCTION OF DIFFERENCES

As in the three case studies we discussed in detail above, in the 1990s Beyoğlu experienced an upturn based on culture-led revitalisation by public and private initiatives. It was declared a protection zone due to its rich architectural heritage featuring exquisite examples of 19th and early 20th century European art nouveau and art deco. İstiklal Avenue was pedestrianised; bookshops, art and entertainment venues opened, catering to a secular, art-loving, intellectual and politically left-leaning user base. Events such as the Istanbul Film Festival and Istanbul Jazz Festival, organised by Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, raised the profile of the area even further (Türkün 2021: 208–220). After decades of decline, the latter half of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s constituted a new golden age for

Istanbul; Taksim square with recently constructed Taksim Mosque. Beyoğlu, 2023

Beyoğlu, which was marked by a more or less peaceful balance between the production of differences and commodification.

## INCORPORATION THROUGH MAINSTREAMING

Starting in the mid-2000s commodification intensified, manifested by market-led gentrification, investments in commercial real estate (mostly hotels and shopping facilities) and government-led regeneration and redevelopment projects. The then mayor of Beyoğlu, Ahmet Misbah Demircan from the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), underlined the importance of turning Beyoğlu into a respectable destination for tourism and culture, instead of just a place for 'nightlife and young people' (Türkün 2021: 221). Similar to Centro Histórico and Downtown LA, Beyoğlu was then subjected to disciplinary measures, including restrictions on outdoor sitting areas for cafes, bars and restaurants and the prohibition of political demonstrations and art performances in public spaces (Adanali 2011). Taksim Square—marking the north-eastern end of İstiklal Avenue—was the centrepiece of the envisioned tourist-friendly transformation. According to the Taksim Square renovation plan, the public green space known as Gezi Park adjacent to the square was to be transformed into a commercial complex with cafes, shops and a 'city museum'. Various activist groups raised objections to this project, as it would deprive residents and visitors of respite from the busy surroundings of Taksim. These objections were brashly dismissed by the authorities and the then prime minister (and now president), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

Istanbul; main façade of the Ataturk Cultural Centre during the Gezi park protests. Taksim, Beyoğlu, 2013

## URBAN REVOLT AND THE PRODUCTION OF MAXIMAL DIFFERENCES

On the evening of 27 May 2013 a handful of activists gathered in Gezi Park to stop the incursion of construction vehicles into the park. While they managed to stop them uprooting a few trees and occupied the park, the following day they were met with overwhelming police brutality, which in turn sparked widespread public outrage that quickly surpassed the scale of the small circle of activist groups and associations. The security forces' attempts to contain the outburst with more violence proved fruitless. In a few days Gezi Park and Taksim Square had become the centre of nationwide protests against the AKP administration and the increasingly authoritarian rule of Erdoğan. People set up camp in the park and for two weeks 'Gezi commune' became a site for maximal differences, a place for intense exchange between people voicing diverse political demands in opposition to the regime. Even though the revolt transcended its initial cause, one main point of opposition remained the economic growth model based on the provision of debt-financed infrastructure and real estate projects extending from major metropolitan centres to remote valleys in Anatolia. As argued elsewhere (Erensü and Karaman, 2017), the Gezi revolt stood out for articulating social movements across the urban–rural divide and hence could be considered as being an urban revolt of the planetary age (Brenner and Schmid 2011; Merrifield 2014).

## NORMALISATION

The Gezi commune was eventually dispersed by a major assault from the police. Demonstrations across Istanbul and the whole country were repressed and the resulting casualties were severe. Plans for the construction of the museum-commercial complex were eventually withdrawn and today Gezi remains a public park. Yet after a decade the memory of the Gezi revolts remains contested. While the opposition views it as a spontaneous, legitimate and beautiful act of democratic expression, Erdoğan and his supporters have condemned it as an orchestrated attempt at a putsch. Eventually eight people—including prominent figures from associations related to urban planning and architecture—were sentenced and imprisoned for attempts to overthrow the government. During the decade following the protests, Beyoğlu kept losing its customary user base, as well as many of the stores and businesses that are inscribed in collective memory (Adanali 2017).

In this case, the open use of disciplinary measures and the unfolding of highly commodified processes excited in the public the feeling that these moves were unjust and their passions erupted, resulting in an exceptional and unforeseeable political explosion.

# INCORPORATION OF URBAN DIFFERENCES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

The comparison of the four centralities in this chapter reveals that the process of the production and incorporation of urban differences may take very different forms and trajectories. In the 1950s Shimokitazawa was a small regional centre and marketplace located at a node of Tokyo's metropolitan railway system. Differences originally emerged from the presence of a variety of institutions and venues such as university departments, a theatre company and film studios, which attracted a mix of curious and adventurous young people. In contrast, Mexico City's Centro, which constituted the entire city until the late 19th century, developed towards a popular neighbourhood after the Mexican revolution, when bourgeois families relocated to suburban neighbourhoods and increasing numbers of immigrants from rural areas moved in to the Centro. Beyoğlu was an emerging cosmopolitan centrality and a prestigious residential area in the early 20th century but went through a long period of decline and stagnation. Downtown LA was a thriving and mixed North American downtown at the beginning of the 20th century but soon faced a slow but steady loss of importance due to the decentralised urbanisation model of Los Angeles.

During the postwar boom, all four places developed into specific centralities with characteristic differences. In Shimokitazawa these differences were rather subtle: resisting the proliferation of global influences over decades and largely unnoticed by the wide public, venues, shops and meeting places created a new productive ground for differences to emerge and the neighbourhood became an alternative cultural centre for a small, mainly young segment of Tokyo's cultural milieu. At the same time Mexico City's central zone developed into a lively and popular centrality, with all sorts of shops and venues and thousands of street vendors selling a great variety of mainly low-priced goods. These places constituted nodes in various social networks, offered possibilities for encounter and exchange and played important roles in the everyday life of the entire region. As a result of the vast destruction caused by the earthquake of 1985, the Centro became a place where mainly low-income people lived. While many left the Centro, others fought for their right to centrality and resisted being relocated to peripheral neighbourhoods.

Meanwhile, Downtown LA did not turn into a mainstream centrality although many new buildings were constructed by private companies and state actors. Instead, it developed into a centrality for low-income groups and a place for

homeless people. This centre possessed many urban qualities, but they were not recognised by the mainstream discourse. During the same period Beyoğlu lost its significance as a prominent economic and cultural centre, especially with the dispossession and exodus of non-Muslim populations. It nevertheless became a low-profile popular centrality for rural migrants coming to Istanbul to work (Türkün 2021: 178–207; Ozus and Dokmeci, 2005: 149).

Until the 1990s specific urban differences developed in all four centres, and all of them formed accessible and affordable places for encounters and exchange. In collective everyday processes, residents and users generated urban values that formed important resources for various social groups living in these vast metropolitan regions.

## INCORPORATION PROCESSES

In the course of the 1990s, incorporation processes intensified in all four urban centres. Ironically and significantly, one starting point of incorporation was that what appeared to be impossible to be commodified was turned into a cultural heritage asset offering nostalgia and identity as a product to be consumed. In Shimokitazawa this process of incorporation was based on the presence of specific material qualities: its narrow alleys and low-rise buildings evoked an early modern time, and small local shops run by their owners offered unique 'pre-loved' items for sale. Similarly, the Centro Histórico was officially proclaimed to be a cradle of authentic local culture in the wake of the UNESCO declaring the area a World Heritage site. In the following years, several consecutive mayors implemented urban regeneration policies using the classical arguments that by so doing they were rescuing Centro Histórico from decay and conserving its colonial heritage. Beyoğlu's cultural heritage and the nostalgia for its former glory were also used as arguments for official revitalisation efforts, which were quite successful in transforming the district into an attractive area for upscale art and entertainment. This incorporation strategy nevertheless opened up possibilities for the creation of differences and in the early 1990s, Beyoğlu became an attractive place for an alternative, intellectual, politically conscious and predominantly young group of Istanbulites. In contrast, the construction of postmodern icons and flagship projects in Downtown LA did not succeed in creating 'urbanity' and 'vibrancy'. The fact that urban qualities cannot simply be manufactured via urban regeneration schemes and architectural interventions is a lesson that planners and developers in many regions of the world have had to learn time and again. Urban value is generated by the people, by residents, users and various kinds of producers, which together create places of encounter and exchange.

In the 2000s attempts and efforts to incorporate differences intensified in all four places. Shimokitazawa became a brand and attracted affluent people and large retail chains. Local shop owners and residents actively sought to benefit from this increased popularity and participated in the development of entertainment and shopping facilities for a leisure-seeking audience. As a result, Shimokitazawa turned from an underground off-place into a mainstream space for consumption offering a 'different lifestyle' and was gradually deprived of its specific urban values. Nevertheless, displacement of residents has been limited in scope, largely because homeownership is so widespread in the area.

At the same time, after intense struggles, large parts of Centro Histórico were fundamentally transformed: successive city governments, in partnership with private investors, implemented a range of revitalisation, beautification and security measures, leading to the active displacement and eviction of people and—after several earlier attempts—to the banning of street vending. With the conversion of warehouses into lofts, the opening of new cafés, bars and art galleries and the influx of young professionals, entrepreneurs and artists, a part of the Centro Histórico became a mainstreamed centrality, a commodified and heavily policed shopping, leisure and tourist zone. Nevertheless, through various forms of everyday struggle another part of the Centro has to this day remained an important economic, social, cultural and symbolic centrality for the metropolitan region.

Downtown LA finally experienced a kind of a 'take off' after the great economic and financial crisis of 2007. The urban region of Los Angeles experienced great socioeconomic change, which led to a revaluation of its urban qualities by companies and employees in the knowledge economy. Powerful incentives and curatorial efforts by public and private actors aiming at generating an 'urban experience' to attract visitors and investors proved finally to be successful, resulting in the rapidly increasing number of new luxury housing, arts projects, fancy restaurants and venues for affluent residents and visitors, while streets were cleaned up and policed to meet the standards expected of a metropolitan downtown. In Beyoğlu, starting in the mid-2000s commodification intensified as real estate prices increased steeply as a result of major investments in the hospitality and retail sectors. The local municipality was unambiguous about its intention to turn Beyoğlu into a mainstream tourist and shopping area, and implemented measures to discipline its public spaces. However, these efforts ended up triggering an unexpected and massive urban revolt in 2013.

As these examples show, the process of incorporation is marked by unevenness, non-simultaneity and various contradictions. In Shimokitazawa it was characterised by nostalgia

and alternative culture; in Mexico City and Istanbul by heritage, real estate and tourism; and in Los Angeles by a political project to create a 'vibrant downtown', which marked the beginning of the revalorisation and commodification of these places. The main actors in these processes differed considerably from each other. In Shimokitazawa, incorporation was mainly an endogenous process driven by the owners of the houses and shops and who also lived in the neighbourhood, as well as by the visitors and users themselves. In contrast, in the Centro Histórico as well as in Downtown LA, close alliances of local governments and corporate stakeholders implemented strategies to upgrade and commodify them, with remarkable effort and intensity.

There are striking parallels: both places were transformed by an openly declared strategy to control and exploit centrality and to produce a 'new' urban centre as a space of representation that re-presents and re-constructs the urban according to the template of an idealised bourgeois urbanity that is at the same time strongly controlled and safe.

In Beyoğlu, incorporation was in large part driven by the local authorities and there was also major investment by the private sector in the hospitality and retail sectors. The goal here was not to create 'urbanity' but to turn Beyoğlu into a domesticated, tourist friendly and consumer-oriented space. Like Centro Histórico and Downtown LA, it manifested the attempt to install a new metropolitan mainstream that fully exploited urban values for commodification and normalisation (see Schmid 2012).

This incorporation of differences has salient effects, not only for the actual locations themselves but also for the wider urban regions in which they are situated. It has deprived large parts of the metropolitan populations of unique, place-specific urban values, as in Shimokitazawa, Mexico City and Istanbul. Additionally, it often has far-reaching restructuring effects, particularly in leading to urban transformations in surrounding low-income neighbourhoods, as we have shown in the case of Downtown LA. The production of a 'vibrant downtown' thus reveals the full ambitions of incorporation: the reorganisation of the entire urban region.

In this process of incorporation, urban differences are absorbed and commodified, with the result that the places and venues open to the unexpected, to unplanned encounters and interaction for a wide range of different people are transformed and mainstreamed and in doing so maximal differences are reduced to minimal differences. This is not a strategy aimed at the political inclusion of neglected areas or at opening up neighbourhoods to more diverse social groups, as is often pretended by policy-makers and journalists. It is, on the contrary, a process that creates new forms of exclusion and deprives large parts of the population of their centralities. The consequence is not only that existing differences are deprived of their potential revolutionary power, but also that hegemonic alliances define the conditions and modalities of urban life.

## GENTRIFICATION AND THE PRODUCTION OF URBAN VALUE

Do our observations justify the creation of a new concept? Have they not already been explained by other concepts? As has become clear during this discussion, concepts such as urban renaissance, urban regeneration, urban revitalisation and creative city are not analytical concepts that allow us to understand and address the question of urban differences, but they are strategic concepts to promote and implement planning instruments that aim to reduce differences and are thus part of the incorporation process itself (Peck 2005; Porter and Shaw 2009).

It also has become obvious that the incorporation of differences goes beyond the conceptual reach of the term 'gentrification'. We cannot enter here the broad debate on this widely used concept, which is applied in very different contexts and covers a wide range of aspects. In its most general definition it comprises (1) the physical upgrading of the built environment; (2) the change in the social composition of land-users, in which the new users have a higher socioeconomic status than the previous ones; and (3) the related displacement of people and users (Clark 2005; Lees et al. 2016). However, this definition fits so many situations that gentrification becomes almost identical to the generic term 'urban restructuring' and thus loses much of its explanatory and generative power. Originally, the concept of gentrification was developed to address a specific process of socioeconomic urban change: the piecemeal takeover and transformation of working-class neighbourhoods by predominantly white middle-class residents and users in western cities (Glass 1964; Smith 1996; Slater 2009). A considerable part of the earlier literature conceptualised this process explicitly as a form of class struggle. This aspect became blurred in recent years as strong deindustrialisation affected many urban regions, combined with widespread attempts to render the working class and the urban poor invisible (Wacquant 2008).

Economically, the concept of gentrification grasps one important process: the realisation of the rent gap, which measures the difference between the current ground rent and the rent that could be achieved by the most profitable use of the land (Smith 1996, 2002). However, as some scholars note, the concept of the rent gap illuminates only one side of gentrification, while the often powerful interventions of state actors to support and promote gentrification remain understudied (Wacquant 2008; Bernt 2022). This observation raises further

questions: what motivates state actors to support and even initiate gentrification? What makes certain areas desirable to affluent people and businesses? And finally: how is the rent gap produced? A range of answers to these questions has been put forward in gentrification studies so far. One line of argument highlights the importance of the fundamental socioeconomic transformation of urban regions and the concomitant change of middle-class lifestyles towards a type of 'urban gentry' (Zukin 1987; Hamnett 1991). A second line focuses on the growth of the knowledge economy in central urban areas, which leads to 'a major social re-evaluation of inner-city locations as sites of white-collar housing and neighbourhood formation' (Scott 2018: 20). These conceptualisations allow for a more precise definition of gentrification as a specific urbanisation process in which urban middle classes turn certain areas into privileged spaces, thereby displacing lower income groups—a process that has become widespread in many urban regions across the world. We have mentioned the arc of gentrification developing north of Downtown LA and also a range of former working-class neighbourhoods in the central parts of Mexico City that match this definition.

In recent years, however, the concept of gentrification has been extended and applied to processes such as urban renewal, urban megaproject development, the transformation of peri- and ex-urban areas and the upgrading of informal and popular neighbourhoods (Lees 2014; Lees et al. 2016). However, it is questionable how useful it is to stretch the concept of gentrification to the point where it can be applied to all sorts of urban transformations, because this not only reduces its explanatory power but also leaves many related, but nevertheless distinct urbanisation processes unnoticed (see Chapter 4). With reference to experiences in Hong Kong, Tang (2017) and Smart and Smart (2017) argue that the mainly state driven, large-scale process of urban renewal cuts across class distinctions and that framing it as gentrification erases alternative conceptualisations. In a similar way, Shatkin (2017) criticises the application of the concept of gentrification to urban real estate mega-projects in Southern urban peripheries where state actors use the generation and extraction of the rent gap to consolidate and expand their power (see also Chapter 14). Ghertner (2015) mentions that the application of the concept of gentrification to processes of urban upgrading in informal and popular neighbourhoods in mainly Southern urban regions neglects the regulatory and legal changes that underpin the most violent forms of displacement and divert attention away from more fundamental changes in the political economy of land in much of the world. Another process that sometimes is framed under the term 'gentrification' is plotting urbanism; a process that involves physical upgrading and reinvestment. However, in most cases this process does not lead to displacement but creates additional housing for low-income groups (see Chapter 13).

Another example is the French concept of *embourgeoisement*, which is often translated as 'gentrification' in English. Nevertheless, this concept is clearly distinct from gentrification, as some scholars argue (see e.g. Préteceille 2007; Clerval 2016). It highlights the role of centrality as an economic, social and symbolic value that attracts middle- and upper-class groups who aspire to be in the urban centre and to be part of the urban centre. This term was also used by Lefebvre in his famous argument that the bourgeoisie takes over the centre and relegates the proletariat to the peripheries, as exemplified by Haussmann's radical transformation of Paris in the middle of the 19th century (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]: 109–110). Following this argument, Merrifield (2014) sees similar processes unfolding in many contemporary urban regions across the world that he calls 'Neo-Haussmannisation'. However, Lefebvre had insisted on the dialectics of centrality. It is, on the one hand, a productive force that constitutes a crucial resource for the people, but on the other, it may also be monopolised by affluent social groups who turn centralities into privileged spaces from which many people are excluded. In a similar and related way, the 'dialectics of difference' can be understood as a contradiction between the production of urban value and the dispossession of urban value. The incorporation of urban differences, therefore, goes far beyond gentrification, because it affects the production and appropriation of urban value.

All these concepts and the related debates indicate that a range of different processes may generate and realise rent gaps, involving different actor constellations and resulting in quite different urban outcomes. The term 'gentrification' may not be adequate for all these processes. The point, however, is not to give up the concept of gentrification. It remains indispensable for understanding a specific process of urbanisation and it has become a political rallying cry that has for decades mobilised innumerable protests and actions across the world. However, gentrification may be used in a specific sense with a clearly focused definition: as a gradual and piecemeal urbanisation process in which the rent gap is realised and captured by mainly market mechanisms, in which state actors play an important role but are not the main drivers (and beneficiaries) of the process.

## THE REDISCOVERY OF THE URBAN

In a broad historical perspective the question of the incorporation of differences is linked to the long-standing rediscovery of the urban or the 'reinvention of the city as a positive socio-cultural category' (Kipfer et al. 2008: 293). For a long time, modernist

planning has tried to dissolve the urban using a functionalist and rationalist approach to demolish inner-city neighbourhoods and replace them with new city centres, as the example of Bunker Hill in Downtown LA illustrates. Against such attacks to centrality and difference, a wide range of urban social movements have formed in many places, demanding and fighting for urban life, centrality, exchange and encounter. However, the rediscovery of the urban is a contradictory process, as the demands, efforts and struggles for difference are constantly confronted with the double process of homogenisation and commodification. As has become clear in our case studies, especially in the case of Istanbul, it is not only the search for profit that drives this process, even if this may often be a strong motive, but it is also the intention to control and reduce the unpredictable power of the urban. It is a constant battle for access to the urban and also a struggle for the very content of the urban.

The concept of the incorporation of differences focuses on these contradictory processes of the production of urban value and the transformation of use value into exchange value. It thus problematises the extraction of urban value and links it to debates on 'urban extractivism' (Viale 2017; Streule 2023). It also highlights the crucial role of state actors. The cases of the Centro Histórico and Downtown LA show clearly that there is no general force that attracts affluent social groups to places full of difference. Such places are not desirable for urban elites—it needs a huge amount of intervention and the efforts of state and corporate actors to not only turn them into spaces of consumption but to prepare them for the consumption of space, as Lefebvre (1991: 353) notes. This implies the mainstreaming and incorporation of urban spaces that have been open for encounter, exchange and interaction. These spaces are significant to many people who are not only visitors and consumers, but also participants in the production of an urban space that forms a resource, a meeting point, a node of social networks and an urban commons where people can find things, jobs, friends and manifold opportunities. Often, such places are not replaceable; they vanish and with them vanish the social qualities they embody.

With the concept of the production and incorporation of differences, we would like to direct attention to the aspects of urban areas that are so crucial for everyday life: who has access to the main centralities; who has the right to difference? This is a question of social justice, in a broad sense: not only individual houses, streets or even neighbourhoods, but the entire urban region is targeted and affected by strategies of incorporation. With this concept we hope to make a useful contribution to the development of an enriched urban vocabulary to understand processes of urban transformation from a broad perspective.

1 We would like to thank Jennifer Robinson for her very valuable and helpful comments on this question.
2 Vecindades are Mexican tenement houses mostly located in former residential colonial buildings with basic rooms with shared facilities for rent to extended families.
3 See Scott (2018: 16). See also Ahrens (2015), Huante (2019), Kahne (2019) and Roy (2019). Recent gentrification is taking place close to the centrality of Pasadena, in Eagle Rock and Highland Park (in 2019).

# PART IV

# CONCLUSION

# PARADIGMS OF URBANISATION

# THE COMPARATIVE OUTLOOK

Christian Schmid
Monika Streule

In this book we have presented a comparative and empirically grounded analysis of the urbanisation processes that are shaping eight large metropolitan territories across the world.[1] We conclude by taking this analysis one step further and comparing these urban territories themselves. To undertake this kind of overarching comparison raises the question of what exactly to compare. An obvious answer would be to find similarities and differences between the extended urban regions analysed in the case studies. However, following the territorial approach introduced in Part I, we understand urbanisation to be an open process in time and space. We do not therefore aim to compare territories but to address the ensemble of the interrelated urbanisation processes shaping these territories in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of patterns and pathways of urbanisation. This territorial approach to urbanisation has four main epistemological and methodological consequences that we address in this book.

Firstly, we understand urbanisation as a transboundary process that transforms a territory in contradictory and uneven ways. Following the epistemology of planetary urbanisation, we do not conceive of these areas as bounded units and thus we do not examine urbanisation through the analytical lens of any kind of entity, such as an agglomeration, a metropolitan region or any other type of unit that we could have chosen or constructed

de nouveau. Instead, we conceptualise an urban territory as an ensemble of different urbanisation processes. As a consequence, we do not conduct detailed analyses of catchment areas, commuter zones, labour markets or regional economies. Rather, we analyse the extension of specific urbanisation processes on the terrain. We use the open and vague term 'extended urban territory' to characterise the perimeter of our analysis, because usually there is no clear spatial limit to a particular urbanisation process, as they often transition gradually to another type without clear boundaries in time or space. This is indicated in some of the configuration maps presented in Part II by the fading out of the colours used to mark individual urbanisation processes.

Secondly, we employ a postcolonial approach. Our comparison is based on an empirically grounded analysis of very different areas across the various divides that are often uncritically thought to shape the world. We therefore did not follow predetermined and pre-conceptualised divisions, such as North and South or developed and developing territories, because we were aiming to allow whatever differences that existed to emerge from all our case study areas. We therefore tried to avoid all sorts of preconceptions or generalising assumptions about the very nature of agglomeration processes or modalities of urban development. This open epistemological perspective also defined the methodological approach we applied to analyse concrete local and historical urban contexts (see Chapters 2 and 3). This meant that we had to engage empirically with the everyday knowledge of local people that is usually underrepresented in dominant urban theories as well to take into consideration concepts formulated beyond the anglophone canon.

A third important finding of our territorial approach is what we call the principle of specificity (see Chapter 1): every urban territory is necessarily specific, because there are so many determinations influencing urbanisation that it is impossible to identify or develop a clear-cut typology of urban forms. This applies to every scale of an urbanised territory. If we zoom out, we detect very different ways in which urbanisation occurs in the extended urban territory, such as large-scale urban corridors and megaregions, as well as vast territories of extended urbanisation. If we zoom in, we see a multiplicity of entangled urbanisation processes that are interacting within the territory. Even inside a specific urban configuration we were able to identify very diverse urban constellations and situations, as exemplified in Part II. Therefore, the principle of specificity applies to all possible urban outcomes; it provides a crucial analytical lens for all sorts of 'cut-outs' of an urban territory. Thus, every neighbourhood shows a specific set of urban constellations, being embedded in varying centre-periphery relationships and overlapping catchment areas. Whatever the scale of study, we are confronted with multiscalar and multilayered realities that lead to very different urban outcomes, even though certain overarching social, economic and political processes co-determine the overall development of an urban territory.

Finally, as Henri Lefebvre explained, urbanisation is always a 'trial by space': actors involved in the production of space are constantly developing new solutions to various emerging problematics or sets of interrelated questions (Lefebvre 1991 [1975]: 416–418). In this way, urbanisation can also be understood as a process of innovation. A good example of this is the crucial question of how to handle rapid population growth. As our case studies revealed, depending on concrete situations and constellations, very different strategies have been developed to address this issue and they have resulted in a variety of processes such as popular urbanisation, plotting urbanism, mass housing urbanisation or laminar urbanisation (see Part III).

The four consequences described above have guided our analyses of the eight urban territories presented in this book. These territories were not selected according to a systematic application of criteria such as economic structure, demographics, regional characteristics, historical development or territorial typology, such as global city, metropolitan region or megacity. Instead, we decided to include very large urban territories situated across the world, with very different economic, social and political characteristics, territorial regulations and forms of everyday life. By applying this open sampling criterion, we selected the eight cases according to two commonalities: population size and urban dynamics. Thus, all our eight urban territories are very large. The smallest, Paris, consists of about 12 million inhabitants, and the largest, the entire Pearl River Delta, has a population of about 60 million. Our sample represents about one-quarter of all urban territories in this range.

Urban dynamics, the second communality of the selected case studies, is directly related to population size. All eight case studies have experienced massive urban growth in the last six decades, with all the possibilities, troubles and challenges this includes, even if some regions, particularly Paris, Los Angeles and Tokyo, experienced considerably lower growth rates or even stagnation in the last two decades. With these selection criteria, all cases display similar urban dynamics and include marked processes of urban expansion as well as processes of urban intensification and the transformation and reconfiguration of already urbanised areas. At the same time, we also identified processes of peripheralisation, which result in uneven and contradictory urban development.

# FROM URBAN MODELS TO PARADIGMS OF URBANISATION

Analysing paradigms of urbanisation invokes some famous 'urban models' that have played important roles in the history of urban studies and urban design. Interestingly, most of the canonical urban models were greatly influenced by the writers' direct experience of certain cities at a specific time. Manchester, for instance, became the empirical basis for Friedrich Engels's analysis of capitalist urban development in the mid-19th century (1975 [1845]). Berlin was where Georg Simmel at the beginning of the 20th century developed his classic understanding of a Western metropolis marked by urban density and differentiation (Simmel 1950 [1903]; see Chapter 17). In the 1920s, Chicago served as an urban laboratory for applying the social ecology approach of the Chicago School of Sociology. The experience of the unique features of Paris shaped French-speaking urban scholarship for more than a century. The triad of Tokyo, London and New York formed the empirical ground for the development of Saskia Sassen's concept of the global city in the 1980s. And, as we explain in Chapter 11, the Los Angeles School declared that the polycentric metropolis was the paradigmatic urban model at the end of the 20th century. At the beginning of the 21st century, Mike Davis published Planet of Slums (2006), declaring 'slums' as a defining feature of contemporary urbanisation, and Rem Koolhaas presented Lagos as the urban model of the future (Koolhaas et al. 2000); while at the same time Shanghai, Singapore and Dubai became exemplars for the contemporary metropolitan mainstream.

All these models have influenced and defined the ways in which urban scholars have approached, analysed and conceptualised urbanisation processes. They were constructed from the examples of concrete urban territories and then generalised. In doing so certain aspects were usually overstated and sometimes even treated as general traits of urbanisation. Postcolonial urbanism has shown the distortions that this kind of generalising conceptualisations generated. As Jennifer Robinson's (2006) term 'ordinary cities' indicates, there are in fact many other pathways of urban development in the world which are neglected by these dominant Western narratives. Ananya Roy's (2003) study of Kolkata is particularly illustrative in showing what these other procedures and tactics of urban development can entail.

Our own comparison supports this postcolonial critique of misleading conceptualisations resulting from using such parochial models of urbanisation. It reveals not only the Western bias of many of these models, but also shows that constructing a general model of urbanisation by identifying selected traits at a certain moment in time at a certain place may lead to misrepresentations and false assumptions. In fact, urban regions in the West also display unique features that cannot be captured in simplifying notions such as the 'North American metropolis' or the 'European city'. The same is true for concepts of 'Southern urbanism' or the 'Global East'.

A clear example of the limitations of such urban models is Ernest W. Burgess' well-known sketch of the concentric rings of the Chicago model based on a series of specific characteristics. This is a monocentric model, with a dominant central business district that is well connected by public transport to the wider urban region; wealthy people seek to live in large plots at the edge of the city where land prices are low, while the inner-city areas develop into the 'zone in transition', a kind of arrival city for immigrants coming from many parts of the world. This sketch was then formalised and declared to be a universal model. However, the Chicago School did not provide good reasons why this model was universally applicable, but rather showed a tendency to naturalise it based on its own theoretical approach of social ecology with its allusions to bioecology. Scholars studying Paris, however, described a radical different urban model showing that wealthy people may indeed be attracted to residing in central locations while it is the poor and working-class people who are pushed to the margins. In contrast to the Chicago model, the Parisian model thus highlights a strong centre-periphery relation in which the urban centre is conceived of as a desirable place that is endowed with cultural, social and economic value, and even sometimes seen as the core of civilisation. But as in the case of Chicago, the Parisian model should not be seen as universal, but as the result of a specific pathway of urbanisation. The deeply entrenched centre-periphery relation of Paris was in fact initiated by the massive intervention in the urban process by Baron Haussmann in the second half of the 19th century, during which the socioeconomically mixed central neighbourhoods of Paris were demolished and large parts of the city rebuilt as places for the bourgeoisie, thus initiating the process of embourgeoisement. This model is thus the result of massive state intervention into the urban process, which to this day influences the urban development of Paris (see Chapter 15). A comparison of the diverging consequences of the two models is revealing: in Chicago it led to poor and decaying inner-city neighbourhoods, and in Paris it led to the well-known crisis of the banlieue. This shows us that the idea of a universal wealth gradient is not tenable: the 'outer city' is not automatically wealthy (as in Chicago) or deprived (as in Paris). Rather, processes of peripheralisation may happen in both the outskirts and the core of urban regions. And wealthy people are not 'by nature' attracted to either

peripheral residential zones or central areas: in a capitalist society they can always choose according to the actual situation and their own preferences, and they have the means to impose their choice. It is thus not geographical location as such that determines social segregation and socioeconomic status, but a combination of factors that are often highly specific.

At the end of the 20th century, scholars postulated that a new model of urban development was emerging: the Los Angeles model, that in contrast to the monocentric urbanisation models of Paris and Chicago was polycentric, extended and car-dependent (Scott and Soja 1996). Two decades earlier, Reyner Banham (1971) had proposed his 'four ecologies' of Los Angeles—the freeways, the privileged foothills, the beaches and the plains with their endless middle-class suburbs. The Los Angeles School added to this list the polycentric and excentric geographical structure that resulted in an 'exopolis', a city at the edge that no longer resembles the familiar form of the city (Soja 1996a). Again, the generalisation of such a specific pattern of urban development proved to be misleading and did not help us to understand contemporary urban experiences. As shown in Chapter 11, the polycentric basic urban structure of Los Angeles was already prefigured in its pathway of urbanisation. In its initial phase, Los Angeles consisted of a series of villages and towns scattered over the plains and connected by inter-urban railway lines, which were then expanded, subsequently to coalesce and finally condense into a huge horizontal metropolis. This shows that, instead of presaging a new global model of urbanisation, the Los Angeles model provides evidence of the persistence of an urban pattern once it has become established. Indeed, our case studies illustrate the wide range of urban patterns and pathways that have been developing across the world in recent decades.

Importantly, we can use our findings to question not only these Euro-American-centric models of urban development but also the idea that there is a distinct form of 'Southern' urbanism. Scholars often present megacities as typical urban forms of the Global South, and highlight urban informality and peripheral urbanisation as the defining features of Southern urbanism (see e.g. Roy 2005; Caldeira 2017). However, to generalise such tendencies is problematic, because in doing so we fail to distinguish between the effects of an urban majority composed of low-income groups, rapid urban growth and specific land regimes. In our comparative study, we identified very different forms and modalities of informality and illegality, which also occur in places like Naples or Belgrade and, more generally, have always been part of housing production and urbanisation all over the planet (Diener et al. 2016). While peripheral urban development is an important feature of Southern urban territories, it is also widely found in the North. Finally, we have to take into consideration the dynamics of urbanisation that constantly create new urban outcomes. Many Southern metropolises are today marked by all sorts of megaprojects and new centralities, by skylines, commodified and gentrified inner-city areas and large condominium developments, similar to many regions in the North.

# CONCEPTUALISING PARADIGMS OF URBANISATION

As our comparative project shows, the patterns and pathways of urbanisation vary much more than is usually assumed. To grasp this variability, we developed the concept of 'paradigms of urbanisation' (see Chapters 2 and 3). While an urban model assumes that the development of an urban territory follows some constants or invariants that are either typical of a certain city or of a certain time, using the perspective of paradigms of urbanisation allows us to draw a much more differentiated and nuanced picture by addressing the specificity of urbanisation in space and time.

For the reasons discussed in the preceding paragraphs, we abstained from developing a comparative typology of urban territories and their characteristics, but sought instead to compare the ways and modalities in which urban territories develop and transform. The basic idea guiding this comparison was to identify and analyse urbanisation processes in each territory and examine their dynamics and characteristics and their interrelations and interconnections. Thus, we focused on patterns of urbanisation through the lens of urbanisation processes. This also meant taking into consideration the specific (historical) pathways of urbanisation and establishing a periodisation, which resulted in the detailed analyses presented in Part II of this book.

Paradigms of urbanisation are always specific in space and time. On the temporal dimension, they can be understood as shorter or longer periods marked by a certain regularity and stability of urban development, which may be disrupted and changed at certain historical moments. Such ruptures are generated in many ways, including revolutions and political regime changes, shifts in the constellations of forces and power relations, and also economic crises that lead to major changes in the economic system. They can also be the result of long-term changes in the way that space is produced.

Turning to the spatial dimension, we may understand a paradigm of urbanisation as the ensemble of urbanisation processes that determine a given territory at a specific time. The combination of these processes is not random: it follows a certain logic, because the different urbanisation processes emerge in the same specific context and are thus related to each other. For instance, a specific type of land regime may exclude certain urbanisation processes—therefore, we do not find plotting urbanism in either strongly regulated or market-oriented territories. Likewise, laminar urbanisation does not develop in territories with weak or multiple territorial regulations and land regimes, because it presupposes fully commodified land markets. Therefore, underlying material patterns, regulatory systems and political and socioeconomic structures can determine the long-term characteristics of urbanisation in a given territory (see Chapter 1).

## MATERIAL STRUCTURES DETERMINING URBAN DEVELOPMENT

On the most basic level, we must remember that the 'space of nature' (Lefebvre 1991 [1975]), particularly geographical location, geomorphological characteristics and topography, may exert a strong influence on urbanisation. Thus, harbour cities have been nodes of networks of trade and information for a long time, as Tokyo and Canton in the Pearl River Delta illustrate. In the 19th century, Hong Kong's entrepôt economy depended entirely on its harbour at the entrance to the Pearl River Delta, and in the 20th century Los Angeles and Lagos took great advantage of their harbours, which increased their connectivity and functioned as hubs for logistics and industrial production. However, not only natural conditions but also the related 'second nature' produced by society plays a role as well. Thus, despite the fact that Los Angeles has no natural harbour, it became the main logistics hub along the North American west coast. This was the result of a local and regional growth coalition, which succeeded in building an artificial harbour at the beginning of the 20th century.

Natural formations like mountain ranges and foothills play various roles in the urbanisation process. The steep mountains that cover large parts of Hong Kong pose limits to large-scale urbanisation. These limits have been partly overcome by adding landfills and constructing the high-rises that are so characteristic of Hong Kong's cityscape. However, as the analysis in Chapter 6 shows, this particular urban design was not only imposed by the topography, but was also a result of the struggle of villagers against the expropriation of their land, which further limited the land that was available for housing construction. Mountains also sometimes have opposite effects as they may attract affluent people who are looking for spectacular views and secluded spaces that shield residents from the urban bustle. The hills in the western part of Mexico City and various foothills in Los Angeles are examples of this effect. However, a hilly topography may also result in reduced accessibility and thus constitute a peripheral location. Such land is often used for popular urbanisation, which is typically located on cheap land that is difficult to build on such as hills, flood-prone land and landslide zones like in Mexico City and Lagos.

The production of the urban fabric also has a long-lasting effect on further rounds of urbanisation. It forms a second nature that petrifies, layer by layer, and has a similar effect as the topography (see Chapter 1). This second nature guides and

sometimes also hinders urban development. Cities like Istanbul, Mexico City, Paris and Tokyo are all based on long-entrenched urban patterns that constitute a major cultural and social value and a unique heritage. Yet relatively young colonial cities like Kolkata, Lagos and Hong Kong also have historical cores that represent an important heritage. When the Hong Kong Government demolished the Queen's Pier and the Star Ferry Clock Tower in 2006, it immediately sparked off huge public protests. This shows that it is not only the material structure that influences further urbanisation but also the fact that the material structure itself incorporates historical values, memories and experiences.

Even invisible structures may exert marked inertia, as became apparent in Tokyo. The almost complete destruction of the urban area in the devastating fire of 1923 and again during the allied bombing campaign at the end of the Second World War did not significantly alter the pattern of urbanisation there. The parcelling of the land and the underlying pattern of railway lines constitute a persistent basic framework, which can be explained by the strong attachment of the people to the land, and particularly to reference points that carry meaning such as mountains, temples or the sites of rituals.

The persistence of the built-up structure also contributes to the lasting legacy of centre-periphery relations. In Mexico City and Paris, ring motorways called 'Anillo Periférico' and 'le périphérique' separate the urban core areas from the periphery or the banlieue. In Paris this ring motorway was built at the place of the last city wall, that was constructed in 1845, and which had inscribed the duality of the city of Paris and the working-class banlieue into the territory. Similarly, the Yamanote line, the central ring railway line that connects all major centralities, marks the boundary of the central zone of Tokyo.

On the other hand, the existing urban structures may also be weak, and thus open the field up for extensive urban development. This was the situation in Los Angeles with its endless zone of laminar urbanisation covering the plains and valleys. When the small towns scattered over the territory were connected by inter-urban railways, this set an extensive process of urbanisation in motion advancing into the open land. Later, when these railway lines were replaced by freeways, the specific Los Angeles pattern of a horizontal metropolis fully unfolded. In a similar way, the settlement areas of Shenzhen and Dongguan could be extended over the mostly flat and only sparsely settled agricultural landscape; however, the existing material pattern and territorial grid of towns and villages and the specific power relations and territorial regulations engendered a different urbanisation process, mainly based on plotting urbanism.

## TERRITORIAL REGULATIONS

A second aspect of the paradigms of urbanisation are the territorial regulations, and thus the rules that guide the production of space and the use of the land. A decisive precondition for urbanisation is the availability of land for the construction of settlements and infrastructure, which is heavily determined by land use regulations and land ownership regimes.

In Mexico City, ejido land, a type of communal land that was created by the Mexican land reform in 1934, enabled the rapid spread of popular urbanisation. A further land reform in 1992 made ejido land tradeable and thus facilitated mass housing urbanisation in the periphery. Similarly, the existence of state-owned land in Istanbul was a precondition for tolerating the gecekondus and also allowed the emergence of plotting urbanism. In a later phase, the availability of this land also made mass housing urbanisation a feasible option for urban development. In Hong Kong, the land was designated crown land belonging to the colonial state, and thus could be used to generate income for the state and also for steering and controlling urban development. After the handover of the colony to China, this land remained in the hands of the Hong Kong government. In Paris, where most land is privately owned, state agencies have strong planning powers and even expropriation rights. This was particularly important for the French model of mass housing urbanisation and also for the development of the villes nouvelles.

Other regulations took the form of territorial compromises in situations where the simultaneous presence of contradicting land regimes dominated. In Lagos, a dual land regime was established by the conflict-ridden superimposition of customary rules via a formal private property system—which became the regulatory basis of plotting urbanism. In Shenzhen and Dongguan, the remnant of the socialist system of village collectives' rights on rural land has led to complex conflicts and negotiations on land use rights between villagers and town and city governments. The distinction between rural and urban land, regulated by different rules, constituted the legal basis of bypass urbanisation in Kolkata. Under Indian law, state governments have the right to forcibly acquire agricultural land for non-agricultural uses under certain conditions, but the exercise of this right has led to explosive land conflicts; not only in Kolkata, but also in many other parts of India. All these specific forms and modalities of territorial regulation can become very important determinants of urbanisation and may continue to be effective for many decades. They can thus be considered constants of paradigms of urban development.

## SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND DIFFERENCES

A third important dimension of the paradigms of urbanisation is the set of entrenched political and socioeconomic structures and differences that may influence urbanisation in many ways. This is particularly evident in long-lasting centre-periphery relations and social segregation. As discussed above, the centre-periphery relations in Paris set in place by the urban transformation imposed by Haussmann in the second half of the 19th century are still effective today. In recent decades however, the west-east polarisation of wealth and income, which is also rooted in long-standing social differences, has been superimposed on them.

Mexico City displays a similar west-east polarisation, mainly generated by the topography, with the hills in the west and the unstable and flood-prone ground in the eastern part. In contrast, Istanbul and Kolkata have developed quite differentiated social patterns, with some rich and privileged areas but also a large number of mixed neighbourhoods. In Lagos the old colonial method of spatial segregation persists in the central areas, while the intrinsic mechanisms of plotting urbanism have contributed to quite mixed neighbourhoods. In recent times, bypass urbanism has introduced a new kind of segregation between the urban majority and the urban elites, which are looking for an exclusive, Western-oriented lifestyle.

# THE QUESTION OF PERIODISATION

As has been shown in the previous section, features that relate to the specificity of a territory may have long-lasting imprints on urban development. However, a once-established urban pattern is not immutable, and the path dependency of a territory does not prevent radical transformations. It is therefore necessary to analyse paradigm changes in urban development, and thus to conduct a periodisation of the pathways of urbanisation to identify ruptures in the modalities of the production of space, and most importantly, to find answers to one of the key questions in urban studies: how to explain urban change?

Our comparison of the urbanisation pathways reveals the existence of a great variety of urban dynamics, as well as a wide range of possible ruptures and shifts. If we focus on the last hundred years, we see in all our study areas a clear paradigm shift at the end of the Second World War, with the beginning of decolonisation and the postwar economic boom. However, in the decades that followed the different urban areas displayed quite divergent pathways of urbanisation. In Los Angeles, Paris and Mexico City a clear rupture appears in the early 1970s with the economic crisis and the beginning of deindustrialisation. In other territories, however, such transitions happened only in the 1980s or even the 1990s and they are quite different in character. There is another wave of transitions in the 2000s, but in other territories a paradigm change becomes apparent only during the course of the 2010s.

These findings challenge to some degree one of the most commonly posed hypotheses in urban studies: that the pathways of urbanisation are mainly determined by long cycles of general social development. This hypothesis is based on two assumptions: (1) that urbanisation usually follows the same universal historical pathway and thus displays the same periodisation (see e.g. Abu Lughod 1999); and (2) that a model of accumulation always affects the production of space in the same way. The broad discussion on the transition from a Fordist or developmentalist model of development towards a neoliberal model exemplifies this (see e.g. Leborgne and Lipietz 1988; Brenner and Theodore 2002): Even if there are strong arguments for assuming that there was a fundamental worldwide urban transition during the long 1980s, this does not mean that general tendencies are 'translated' directly into urban space. The production of space is not the direct expression of wider socioeconomic processes but is determined by a multitude of processes, conflicts and forces.

Thus, quite different forms of Fordist urban development and various urban strategies of neoliberalisation exist. Even if we find indications for

a clear break or rupture of urbanisation patterns in many urban territories across the world in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, the question remains as to whether these ruptures are determined by changes in the accumulation regime and the respective mode of regulation, or whether other moments and factors became decisive at this point. It is therefore important not to assume that such changes need no explanation but to proceed with a detailed analysis of the processes of urbanisation and to clarify what really happens on the ground.

## MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENTALISM

On a worldwide scale, the period after the Second World War between about 1945 and 1975 was characterised by decolonisation, the Cold War and the emergence and consolidation of three heterogenous and contradictory political blocks: the West with market capitalism, the socialist Eastern Bloc, and what Frantz Fanon called the 'Third World'. This phase led to the consolidation of nation-states, some of which were newly established during the process of decolonisation. Modernisation and developmentalism were main strategies used by nation-states to promote growth, giving rise to the emergence of what Lefebvre calls a 'state space' (see Schmid 2022: 464–465). In this process, states became the agents that direct and monitor the production of space, control the national resources and the organisation and planning of the entire territory. The national space served as a kind of container for the deployment of Keynesianism in Western countries, and for state socialism and the strategies of import substitution in many postcolonial countries. This period led to an unprecedented economic boom and also unprecedented rates of urbanisation. It is known in Mexico as milagro mexicano (Mexican miracle) and in France as trentes glorieuses.

What was the influence of these regimes of accumulation on urbanisation? In our specific sample of urban territories, it resulted in a change towards expansive paradigms of urbanisation, pushed by waves of domestic and international immigration. In all our case studies, the dominant overall process during this time was thus massive and rapid urban growth. The forces behind this urban growth, however, differed considerably. In some of our studies large-scale industrialisation processes unfolded, either advanced by Fordist-Keynesian growth policies (in Paris, Los Angeles and Tokyo), or by strategies of import substitution (in Mexico City and Istanbul). In contrast, in both Hong Kong and Kolkata, huge waves of refugees stood at the beginning of post-war urban growth. The partition of India in 1947 brought hundreds of thousands of refugees to Kolkata and the Civil War and the rise of the Communist Party in China resulted in a population increase of almost two million people in Hong Kong between 1945 and 1955. The colonial government of Hong Kong responded to the ensuing urban crisis using a strategy of mass housing urbanisation combined with export-oriented industrialisation. In this way, an industrial working class was formed that became the basis of the long-lasting economic boom of the colony.

A very different situation prevailed in Lagos, where industrialisation played a minor role, but oil production and state functions were determining economic sectors (until the relocation of the capital of Nigeria to Abuja in 1991). Other drivers of urbanisation were the harbours in Hong Kong and Lagos. Informal economies also played important roles in Lagos and Kolkata. As they are respectively the major metropolises of Nigeria and the state of West Bengal, both with low levels of urbanisation, they attracted many migrants from rural areas. Further drivers for urban growth were specific state strategies that promoted the concentration of state functions and the centralisation of power, particularly in Tokyo, Mexico City and Paris—which are all located in countries with centralised state structures.

The cumulative effect of all these factors was urban explosions in all analysed territories between 1950 and 1980. The population of the Tokyo Metropolitan Complex increased from 11.3 to 28.5 million; in Mexico City from 3.4 to 13.0 million; in Greater Los Angeles from 4.9 to 11.5 million; in the Paris Region from 7.3 to 10.1 million; in Hong Kong from 2.1 to 5.2 million; in Istanbul from 1.2 to 4.7 million and in Lagos from about 300,000 to 2.6 million.

## THE TRANSITION PERIOD OF THE LONG 1980S

In all our case studies, a sea change in the pathway of urbanisation became apparent during the long 1980s, which was a transitional period of crisis-induced global restructuring that began with the deconstruction of Fordist-Keynesian and national-developmentalist regimes of accumulation in the early 1970s and continued until the collapse of state socialism and the subsequent intensification of global economic integration. However, this change does not constitute a general, clear-cut break in the pathways of urbanisation, as our case studies demonstrate. It could be regarded as an extended transitional period in which a range of significant transformations occurred, combining centralisation and peripheralisation, deindustrialisation and the development of global headquarter economies, and more generally uneven development and non-simultaneity of urban processes.

If we look at the periodisation of the production of space, we see that very different factors influenced the pathway of urbanisation of individual urban territories. The crisis of Fordism in the West

was accompanied by marked deindustrialisation, clearly visible in Paris and Los Angeles. This process started in Paris in the 1960s, driven by the deliberate state policy of industrial decentralisation, which was then aggravated by the economic crisis of the 1970s. In Los Angeles the crisis in the manufacturing sector unfolded in two waves; the first in the 1970s in the classical Fordist manufacturing industries and the second in the early 1990s, when the end of the Cold War and the ensuing reduction of warfare spending led to a crisis in the defence sector.

The crises in Paris and Los Angeles had a direct relationship with the simultaneous rapid growth of export-oriented manufacturing industries in East and South-East Asia, which brought about a 'new international division of labour' (Fröbel, Heinrichs and Kreye 1978). Tokyo and Hong Kong were at the forefront of this global transformation. In Tokyo the export-oriented growth regime continued until the Japanese economic crisis of the 1990s induced a long phase of stagnation. At the same time, Hong Kong became one of the four Asian Tigers or Little Dragons with strong industrial export sectors (together with Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan). In the 1980s its situation changed dramatically with the radical new economic policy introduced in the People's Republic of China under Deng Xiaoping, which was first implemented in the Pearl River Delta. This resulted in the rapid, state-driven industrialisation and urbanisation of Shenzhen and Dongguan, which together became the 'world factory' during the 1980s and 1990s. Over the course of this process, Hong Kong developed into the most important centre of the Pearl River Delta, while its industrial production was mainly relocated to Shenzhen and Dongguan.

Diverse forms of neoliberalisation employing various strategies of economic liberalisation, deregulation, marketisation and financialisation started in Istanbul and Mexico City in the 1980s and in Kolkata over the course of the 1990s, markedly shifting urbanisation processes towards urban intensification. In contrast, the pathway of urbanisation in Lagos was mainly linked to the question of political stability: after a catastrophic period of bust in the 1980s and 1990s, induced by the global oil crisis, a period of political stability started in 1999.

## URBAN INTENSIFICATION AND METROPOLITAN MAINSTREAM

Over the course of the 2000s and 2010s, a new phase of urban development became apparent in our case study areas that we may subsume under the umbrella term 'urban intensification'. The process of globalisation led to the development of global economic control centres in many metropolitan areas as a result of the spread of global production networks. Thus, in tandem with deindustrialisation, headquarter economies developed in Paris, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Mexico City, Istanbul and also Shenzhen with corporate headquarters, producer services and research and development departments, often accompanied by the construction of technopoles (in Los Angeles, Paris, Tokyo, Shenzhen and Dongguan) and also IT centres (in Kolkata).

Such developments were partly conceptualised by the concepts of world city and global city (Friedmann 1986; Sassen 1991). But these concepts reduce the often complex and contradictory development of urban territories to their global functions, and at the same time neglect the fact that the formation of headquarter economies is also fundamentally transforming many urban territories across the world that do not fit into the categories of global or world city.

The production of privileged spaces to accommodate global elites and the concomitant process of the commodification of the urban affects often entire central areas and also transforms peripheral zones. Strategies of metropolisation, urban regeneration and urban renewal have contributed to establishing a new metropolitan mainstream that manifests itself in the construction of flagship projects, office and condominium towers, mega-projects and large-scale infrastructures, accompanied by policies of urban upgrading and normalisation causing displacements and dispossession (see Schmid 2012). In most of our case study areas we observed processes of the incorporation of differences, and in Lagos and Kolkata, where these processes were not very pronounced, we saw bypass urbanism, and thus the large-scale transformation of urban peripheries.

At the same time, urbanisation was stretching even further out, affecting more and more remote areas that are being transformed by various processes of extended urbanisation (for more details see Schmid and Topalović 2023). They are pushed forward by strategies of metropolisation designed to integrate huge urban areas into encompassing catchment areas, mainly by the construction of mega infrastructure projects. These strategies were deployed in Mexico City, Istanbul and particularly the Pearl River Delta.

# DYNAMICS OF URBANISATION PROCESSES

What were the effects of these transformations on the production of space and how did they take shape on the ground? In our understanding, paradigms of urbanisation are not abstract categories: they are manifestations of concrete urban transformations and become visible through the emergence of new urbanisation processes. However, as discussed above, there is no direct relationship between accumulation regimes and the production of space. The materialisation of general political and socioeconomic tendencies is always mediated by material structures, trans-scalar power relations and territorial regulations, and socio-economic differentiations.

A comparison between Istanbul and Mexico City reveals this contradictory relationship. Both urban territories have large urban cores that represent an important historical legacy. Both metropolises experienced an economic boom and strong industrialisation resulting from import substitution strategies during the 1950s and 1960s, and in both territories popular urbanisation was utilised as an implicit strategy to cope with the problem of constructing housing for increasing numbers of immigrants. Nevertheless, we can observe certain differences in the concrete arrangements and procedures of popular urbanisation, based on different land regimes. These differences became visible in the way in which popular urbanisation played out. It resulted in a kind of consolidated popular urbanisation in Mexico City and plotting urbanism in Istanbul. And once again, in the 2000s, both metropolitan territories showed clear parallels with the process of mass housing urbanisation in the urban peripheries and the incorporation of urban differences in the urban core areas.

Another illustration of this relationship between general tendencies and the specificity of concrete urban territories is the contrast between urban developments in Paris and Los Angeles. Both are large industrial regions that have experienced marked immigration and massive urban growth, and both represent classic examples of Fordist urbanism. In both cases, urban growth was realised by the mass production of housing, but this was achieved by almost opposite urban strategies. While in Paris centralised state strategies were used to produce mass housing urbanisation and later state-planned villes nouvelles and rapid regional metro lines, the dominant process in Los Angeles was laminar urbanisation, which was based on the mass production of privately built single-family homes linked by freeways. However, starting in the 1970s, a certain alignment of urban development occurred. In both territories neoliberal policies were introduced and both metropolises were afflicted by deindustrialisation and by socioeconomic and racialised peripheralisation; thus also developing similar processes of post-proletarian urbanisation, which ignited struggles and uprisings in the 1990s. In both Paris and Los Angeles headquarter economies arose and new and renewed centralities emerged in the former urban periphery, which resulted in multilayered patchwork urbanisation. And both regions were confronted with processes of urban intensification and the incorporation of urban differences in the last two decades.

These developments give us a certain understanding of the relationship between paradigms of urbanisation and specificity. They shed light on the range of options that exist in a certain historical moment: there are often similar problematics, but very different ways of addressing them, corresponding to the different circumstances and underlying conditions leading to the specific pathways of urbanisation of each individual territory. To explore these urban dynamics, we introduce a broad classification of the processes of expansion, intensification and peripheralisation.

## PROCESSES OF EXPANSION

The fundamental problematic of urban growth can be condensed in one simple but protracted question: how to house hundreds of thousands of people in a very short space of time? One possible option is to extend the urbanised area via market mechanisms, which leads to classic forms of suburbanisation. However, this happened in our case studies only in Los Angeles and Tokyo; namely, in the form of laminar urbanisation by means of an endless production of single-family homes over the territory. Due to the very large scale of this urbanisation process it determines the basic structure of both territories to this day.

Another possible solution to this problem is mass housing urbanisation, which usually involves the intervention of the state. This urban strategy was adopted in Hong Kong and Paris. In both cases the threat of protests and social unrest was an important motivation for the respective governments to find a quick solution to the housing problem, and in Hong Kong it also served the goal of exerting control over the working class. State and private actors in Istanbul and Mexico City had recourse to similar urban strategies in the 2000s, but under completely different conditions of financialisation and marketisation.

A very different answer to this question was popular urbanisation. In many urban territories mass housing urbanisation was not an option in the 1950s, because state resources at this scale were not available and the low-income population did not have the means to construct regular houses for themselves. An important precondition for

this urban strategy was the availability of collective ejido land as in Mexico City, or state-owned land as in Istanbul.

Another way of providing housing for many people is plotting urbanism. Usually based on dual or at least ambivalent land regimes, this plot-by-plot process can transform entire landscapes in a very short time because it mainly works without comprehensive planning and coordination and is based on the initiative of individual landlords; and proceeds by the repetition of generic architectural and urban layouts. One primary example of this process is Lagos, where it became the ordinary process of urbanisation. Interestingly, a similar process was established in Shenzhen in the 1980s by villagers who took advantage of grey zones and ambivalences in the land-use regulations. They managed to construct large urban settlements capable of housing a huge number of labour migrants, during a time in which housing was urgently needed but the process of state-driven urban development did not achieve the scale of new settlements needed. In a later phase, the plotted neighbourhoods were demolished and replaced by urban renewal developments. In retrospect, plotting urbanism can thus be understood as an intermediate phase in the rapid urbanisation of Shenzhen.

## PROCESSES OF INTENSIFICATION

As we have seen in the section on periodisation, since the 1990s various processes of urban intensification have taken hold in all our case study areas. Urbanisation has shifted towards the production of urban spaces for the new urban elites and to accommodate headquarter economic functions, leading to simultaneous processes of recentralisation and decentralisation.

An important part of this process of intensification is the production of centralities, including the transformation and expansion of existing centres as well as the creation of new centralities with specific activities and functions. On the one hand, the extension and upgrading of central districts leads to the incorporation of urban differences, such as in Mexico City and in Istanbul. In Hong Kong the strategy of metropolisation resulted in the expansion of the central business district in Hong Kong Island, the construction of a new central district in West Kowloon and new business and entertainment centres in various other locations. An entire belt of new centralities was developed in Shenzhen, and new centralities were also built in Dongguan. And after many attempts, the combined efforts of private and state actors finally succeeded in developing a thriving Downtown in Los Angeles.

These processes of recentralisation were accompanied by state strategies of urban redevelopment and urban renewal, particularly in Istanbul and Hong Kong, but also in Mexico City with the plan 'bando dos' that promoted the upgrading of residential and industrial districts close to the urban centre. The government of Shenzhen launched condominium developments in areas of plotting urbanism, and in Tokyo deindustrialised harbour areas were transformed by manshon urbanisation. Ever since the 1970s, large-scale processes of embourgeoisement have transformed the city of Paris into a huge exclusive zone for metropolitan elites and tourists; and in the 2000s and 2010s, more and more banlieues in the southwest of the Paris Region have also been affected by this process. Surprisingly, in the 2010s, even in Greater Los Angeles with its extensive urbanisation processes urban regeneration and gentrification have been evolving—particularly around Downtown LA, but also in places like Santa Monica and Santa Ana in Orange County.

On the other hand, the production of new centralities in former urban peripheries are reinforcing processes of polycentralisation. While the polycentric structure in Los Angeles has been strengthened and upgraded in the last three decades, new business zones have been created in the urban peripheries of many other metropolises, such as Santa Fe in Mexico City, La Défense in Paris and the new central business district along the Mecidiyeköy-Büyükdere-Maslak axis in Istanbul. New centralities were also built in Dongguan and in Shenzhen outside the Special Economic Zone, reinforcing tendencies of polycentralisation.

The extension of existing centralities and the production of new ones have led to the emergence of multilayered patchwork urbanisation in and around the areas of the villes nouvelles in Paris, in Hong Kong's New Territories and in Los Angeles's Orange County. In a different form, similar processes of the production of new centralities have contributed to the evolution of bypass urbanism in Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City, restructuring the centre-periphery relationships in the entire regions.

Most recently, new encompassing metropolisation strategies have been deployed to enhance international competitiveness, such as the project for Grand Paris. On an even larger scale, the strategy of the 'Greater Bay Area' aims at the stronger integration of the entire Pearl River Delta, including Hong Kong, and at developing the region into an international innovation, science and technology hub.

## PROCESSES OF PERIPHERALISATION

These processes of intensification, upgrading and commodification went hand in hand with processes of peripheralisation. In an urban society centrality is an important, even indispensable, resource for the entire urban region. According to Lefebvre, centrality constitutes the wealth of an urban society. Access to centrality and urban difference are therefore

crucial aspects of a more just and self-determined urban process. These reflections led Lefebvre to his famous calls for the 'right to the city', the 'right to centrality' and the 'right to difference' (Lefebvre 1996 [1968], 2003 [1970], 1991 [1975]). Interestingly, scientific and activist contributions to the right to the city have increased widely in the last decade in very different contexts. This greater awareness indicates that social exclusion has become more pressing in many places across the world. It is a sign that a contradictory process of urban upgrading continues hand in hand with processes of peripheralisation.

A closer look at this phenomenon may detect quite different processes of peripheralisation as part of various urbanisation processes. One is the dispossession and displacement of people from central to periurban and exurban areas as a result of the incorporation of differences, upgrading and commodification processes. Furthermore, our analysis of mass housing urbanisation in Hong Kong and Paris has shown that since the 1960s and 1970s, processes of logistical peripheralisation and the peripheralisation of the everyday have occurred. In both cases, this turned into socioeconomic peripheralisation in the 1980s. These tendencies are directly related to post-proletarian urbanisation in both Paris and Hong Kong, which have also unfolded in Los Angeles and Mexico City. Moreover, in Lagos and Kolkata bypass urbanism induced the large-scale reorganisation of centre-periphery relations and the peripheralisation of large urban areas in central locations.

# URBANISATION AS AN OPEN PROCESS

As a general conclusion, two key aspects stand out. The first is the insight that urbanisation should be understood as a collective search process. Urbanisation generates constantly new situations and constellations which demand appropriate responses. As this comparison has shown, state and private actors in different contexts have developed a variety of urban strategies to cope with newly arising problematics, which have resulted in quite different outcomes. Sometimes these strategies followed entrenched patterns of urbanisation, and at other times, completely new strategies were developed that could be seen as real collective inventions. Thus, new urbanisation processes have evolved, from plotting urbanism to bypass urbanism and multilayered patchwork urbanisation.

According to Lefebvre, we should understand such often surprising urban transformations neither as accidental results nor as conscious and desired outcomes of political and economic changes. He therefore brought forward the idea of a 'trial by space'. With this formulation he meant that it is the transformation of space itself that puts society to the test (Lefebvre 1991 [1975]: 416–419). This raises the question about the nature of urbanisation as such. It is a process of exploration, shaped as much by urban strategies as by preexisting structures and by chance and sudden events. Urban space is in constant flux. And so, urbanisation is, by necessity, a process that implies constant innovation and inventiveness. Situations arise that call for new responses, sometimes resulting in completely different and unexpected outcomes. Errors and dead ends are as much part of this process as serendipitous breakthroughs and success stories.

This makes the urban an experimental field upon which the rich diversity of society can flourish. We must keep our minds open to new alternatives and routes of development. The urban is an open horizon where the unexpected is always present.

1 We present seven urban portraits in this book; however, our work was also informed by research on Kolkata, which we include in this concluding chapter (see also Chapter 14).

# APPENDIX

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# CHAPTER SOURCES

CHAPTER 1

Partly based on 'Towards a new vocabulary of urbanisation processes: a comparative approach' by Christian Schmid, Ozan Karaman, Naomi C. Hanakata, Pascal Kallenberger, Anne Kockelkorn, Lindsay Sawyer, Monika Streule and Kit Ping Wong. *Urban Studies* 55/1 (2018): 19–52.

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Slightly revised and extended version of the second part of 'Towards a new vocabulary of urbanisation processes: a comparative approach' by Christian Schmid, Ozan Karaman, Naomi C. Hanakata, Pascal Kallenberger, Anne Kockelkorn, Lindsay Sawyer, Monika Streule and Kit Ping Wong. *Urban Studies* 55/1 (2018): 19–52.

CHAPTERS 5–11

Original contributions.

CHAPTER 12

Revised version of the article 'Popular urbanization: conceptualizing urbanization processes beyond informality' by Monika Streule, Ozan Karaman, Lindsay Sawyer and Christian Schmid. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 44/4 (2020): 652–672.

CHAPTER 13

Revised version of the article 'Plot by plot: plotting urbanism as an ordinary process of urbanisation' by Ozan Karaman, Lindsay Sawyer, Christian Schmid and Kit Ping Wong. *Antipode* 52/4 (2020): 1122–1151.

CHAPTER 14

Revised version of the article 'Bypass urbanism: re-ordering center-periphery relations in Kolkata, Lagos and Mexico City' by Lindsay Sawyer, Christian Schmid, Monika Streule and Pascal Kallenberger. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 53/4 (2021): 675–703.

CHAPTER 15

Original contribution.

CHAPTER 16

Revised version of the article 'Peripheralization through mass housing urbanization in Hong Kong, Mexico City, and Paris' by Anne Kockelkorn, Christian Schmid, Monika Streule and Kit Ping Wong. *Planning Perspectives* 28/3 (2023): 477–485.

CHAPTER 17

Revised version of the article 'Incorporation of urban differences in Tokyo, Mexico City, and Los Angeles' by Naomi C. Hanakata, Monika Streule and Christian Schmid. *City* 26/5-6 (2022): 791-819. A new section on Istanbul by Ozan Karaman is added in the book version of the article.

CHAPTER 18

Original contribution.

# MAP SOURCES

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CHAPTER 5

TOKYO
Author: Naomi Hanakata
Sources: Qualitative empirical data from extended fieldwork between 2010 and 2016, including participant observation information gained through exploratory walks through the entire area of study; semi-structured interviews and mapping interviews with residents, activists, anthropologists, geographers, architects and planners; together with historical analyses of processes of urbanisation including the consultation of historical maps (from various ward archives); topographical maps and quantitative data maps (GIS) consolidated from the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; e-Stat Japan and Google Earth.

CHAPTER 6

HONG KONG, SHENZHEN AND DONGGUAN
Author: Kit Ping Wong
Sources: Qualitative data from intensive fieldwork in Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Dongguan between 2011 and 2016. This includes semi-structured interviews, site visits and mapping interviews with scholars and researchers, local planners, community groups and individual residents and villagers. Consultation of historical and present maps from Empson H (1992); Mao Z (2002); Urban Planning, Land and Resources Commission of Shenzhen Municipality (2011); Guangdong Province Gazetteer Office (2016). Further information from the Land Department of Hong Kong, the Urban Planning & Design Institute of Shenzhen, LAY-OUT Planning Consultants, Dongguan Institute of Urban Planning and Design. Datasets were also derived from Open Street Map and Google Earth.

CHAPTER 7

ISTANBUL
Author: Ozan Karaman
Sources: Qualitative data collected during several field trips between 2007 and 2015 based on observations, interviews, photography, as well as consultations and mapping workshops with local experts including architects, urban planners and academics. Reports, data and maps by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality including online maps (https://sehirharitasi.ibb.gov.tr/); analysis of existing maps and literatures on the urban geography and history of Istanbul including the INURA New Metropolitan Mainstream mapping project (2008); socio-economic status maps based on 2000 census data by Murat Güvenç; Derviş and Öner (2009), Kaptan and Enlil (2009), Ozus et al. (2011), Turan (2011), Altınok (2012), Seger (2012) and Karabey et al. (n.d.)

CHAPTER 8

LAGOS
Author: Lindsay Sawyer
Sources: Empirical qualitative data from intensive fieldwork between 2011 and 2015, including walk-arounds, semi-structured interviews and mapping interviews with residents, activists, architects and planners; archival maps of Lagos; maps of Lagos collated from a wide range of books and articles; topographical maps and Google Earth.

CHAPTER 9

PARIS
Authors: Anne Kockelkorn and Christian Schmid
Sources: Qualitative empirical data from fieldwork and interviews that took place in 2011, 2012 and 2015, including data gleaned by participant observation through exploratory walks and car rides, mapping interviews with residents, anthropologists, geographers, historians and urban planners; historical analyses of processes of urbanisation; analyses of GIS footprints and tax census data from 2015 in combination with the databases BâtiSig and BâtiStato.

CHAPTER 10

MEXICO CITY
Author: Monika Streule
Sources: Qualitative empirical data from extended fieldwork between 2005 and 2006, 2009 and 2010 and in 2013, including participant observation through exploratory walks, semi-structured interviews on the move and mapping interviews with residents, activists, anthropologists, geographers, architects and planners; historical analyses of processes of urbanisation, including consulting historical maps (from the Archive of the Museo de la Ciudad de México and the online archive of the Fundación ICA); topographical maps and quantitative data maps (GIS) by INEGI (XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda, 2000; Conteo de Población y Vivienda, 2005 y 2010).

CHAPTER 11

LOS ANGELES
Authors: Christian Schmid, Ozan Karaman and Rob Sullivan
Sources: Qualitative empirical data from fieldwork and interviews in 2013 and 2014, including exploratory walks and car rides as well as mapping interviews with anthropologists, geographers, historians, urban designers and planners. Analyses of GIS data.

CHAPTER 12

ISTANBUL
Author: Ozan Karaman
Sources: see Chapter 7

LAGOS
Author: Lindsay Sawyer
Sources: see Chapter 8

MEXICO CITY
Author: Monika Streule
Sources: see Chapter 10

CHAPTER 13

SHENZHEN
Author: Kit Ping Wong
Sources: see Chapter 6

ISTANBUL
Author: Ozan Karaman
Sources: see Chapter 7

LAGOS
Author: Lindsay Sawyer
Sources: see Chapter 8

CHAPTER 14

KOLKATA
Authors: Pascal Kallenberger and Christian Schmid
Sources: Data from qualitative empirical research that took place from 2008 to 2012, with participant observation, exploratory walks and car rides, expert interviews and mapping interviews with social scientists, economists, architects and urban planners, particularly from the Centre for Built Environment, Kolkata (CBE) and the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta (CSSSC).

LAGOS
Author: Lindsay Sawyer
Sources: see Chapter 8

MEXICO CITY
Author: Monika Streule
Sources: see Chapter 10

CHAPTER 15

TOKYO
Author: Naomi Hanakata
Sources: see Chapter 5

HONG KONG
Author: Kit Ping Wong
Sources: see Chapter 6

PARIS
Authors: Anne Kockelkorn and Christian Schmid
Sources: see Chapter 9

LOS ANGELES
Authors: Christian Schmid, Ozan Karaman and Rob Sullivan
Sources: see Chapter 11

CHAPTER 16

HONG KONG
Author: Kit Ping Wong
Sources: Hong Kong Housing Authority; Hong Kong Surveying and Mapping Office; interviews with scholars, planners and activists in Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

PARIS
Author: Anne Kockelkorn
Sources: IAU footprint data from 1982; archives of the SCIC; consultation of satellite views from 1984; databases BâtSig and BâtiStato; see also Chapter 8

MEXICO CITY
Author: Monika Streule
Sources: see Chapter 10

# PHOTO CREDITS

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