Part V Urban Politics and Urban Interventions

Chapter 42

City Interventions

Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson

Any attempt to write a comprehensive overview of urban policy across the world, in an introduction of this kind, would undoubtedly fail. There is such a wide variation in cities, political systems, and forms of governance, specific cultures and national histories, on the one hand, and urban initiatives and responses to urban problems on the other. Instead in this chapter we briefly revisit the conceptual frameworks of this volume and consider at a broadbrush level the urban policies that have been constructed within these frames. What we are telling here is a metanarrative of policy possibilities and imagined and performed action, hinting where appropriate at more specific outcomes and approaches.

It could easily be argued that all urban policy is about imagining since in some sense policymaking inevitably involves imaginative leaps and visions of a better way to do things. However here the focus is on the terrain in which imagination has been translated into urban planning and design. Cities have been planned since their inception in the sense that the organization of space has been managed, while land, property rights, and the provision of urban services have all been organized in some form. But from a Western perspective – and one which subsequently had an influence on the formation of cities across the world, particularly the colonized world – the utopian visions of certain key players, rooted in Enlightenment thought, have had long-lasting effects on urban form and structure throughout the course of the twentieth century.

By the end of the nineteenth century the effects of industrialization on cities – the perceived disorder, pollution, ill health, chaos, and immorality – were increasingly erupting as a cause for public and moral concern. Discourses of cities as sites of moral degradation, unrest, and potential revolution were rife. In this context, the notions of progress, rationality, and order which were embedded in the project of modernity were translated into planning ideas and the desire to find a way of organizing social and economic activities in cities in a rational, predictable, and esthetically pleasing way (Boyer 1983). The aim was to improve the living conditions of urban populations without impeding economic progress and growth. Three visionaries define the utopian modernist tradition: Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd

Wright, and Ebenezer Howard. Each of these had a profound influence on the way cities have been organized, even though none of them had his vision realized in a complete form.

Le Corbusier was born the son of a Swiss watchmaker. Order and precision were the very stuff of his childhood that arguably marked his later vision of the city as a machine for living. Corbusier developed several grand visions for cities: *La Ville Radieuse* (1933) and *La Ville Contemporaine* (1922), being the most fully developed and only partially realized in the planning of Chandigarh (Hall 1988). These modernist plans were large scale, interventionist, comprehensive, and embodied a belief in rationality and the possibility of order, easy mobility, the separation of home from work, and streamlined conditions of life.

Successful planning in Corbusier's view could iron out all of the chaotic city's ills. The model was based on a centralized bureaucracy with no notion of the populace being involved in the process. This was planning from above – neatly reflected in Le Corbusier's penchant for airplanes discussed by Antony Vidler in this Companion – where the organization of space implied the organization of people – the worker bees in an elaborate constructed hive where everyone knew their place. But as Alan Mabin (chapter 46 in this volume) points out, this was not the only tradition in modernist planning; rather there was another tradition which dated back to the Enlightenment and which incorporated much more explicit humanitarian objectives.

Frank Lloyd Wright is well known for his "Broadacre City" plan, which was conceived as a counterpoint to the traditional crowded and dense city, and was based around homesteads each set in an acre and connected by the private automobile which would effectively abolish distance and allow for a new community based on self-reliance and individualism (Le Gates and Stout 1996: 335). His vision, though, was never realized very successfully; instead what happened across the West was the persistence of compact core cities surrounded by urban sprawl where reliance on private transport created new forms dependency and privatized suburban family life, with all the problems that entailed – for women particularly (Watson 1988). Ebenezer Howard, with his idea of the garden city, probably had the greatest influence in Britain, though his ideas also took a material form in Australia and several other countries. This was a city form constituted by an anti-urban nostalgia for a rural idyll where the problems of the large metropolis were to be solved by building a number of small garden cities. These were economically independent, cooperatively owned, and surrounded by green belts to ensure their autonomy rather than a satellite relation to the city. Letchworth and Welwyn in Britain are two such experiments.

The comprehensive, rational, modernist plan Corbusier-style has played a dominant role in the planning imaginary of first Western cities, and subsequently colonized or Commonwealth countries to which it was imported, often by graduates from British planning schools. Embedded in these plans was an imagination of cities as ordered, well-functioning, streamlined spaces, where different land uses were clearly demarcated and separated out, and conflict between these was avoided. Underlying the modernist project were several assumptions: an ideology of progress and some notion of the better good, the notion that cities could be made better without necessarily changing the prevailing political economy, the idea that outcomes can be knowable in advance and that order and rationality were better than

chaos and irrationality. Quotidian, messy, ordinary life was homogenized and regulated through these master plans where difference was denied and gendered assumptions prevailed. Its worst effects can be seen in the construction of huge monolithic housing estates in Britain, the USA, and Eastern Europe, some of which became such alienated, unpopular, and dangerous places, that the local authorities were forced to blow them up (famously, Pruitt Igoe in St. Louis, US, and Ronan Point in Britain).

In recent years there have been extensive critiques of modernist planning (Mabin chapter 46) as too homogenizing, insensitive to difference, and functionalist. Feminists and poststructuralists (see Hillier 1993; Watson and Gibson 1995) have criticized the inherent lack of recognition of cultural, racial, or gendered/sexed differences and embodiment, its masculinist assumptions, and the construction of universal principles which ignore the specificity and micropolitics of power/knowledge relations. They have stressed also the ways in which universal principles are imbued with normative social relations. In an earlier book Patsy Healey (1997) has attempted to construct a new kind of planning theory which addresses some of these issues which she defines as argumentative, communicative, or interpretive. Its key elements (pp. 29–30) are a recognition of the social construction of all forms of knowledge, its recognition of different forms of reasoning and communication, and of the diversity of interests and power relations in contemporary life. This is to be combined with a realization of the need to spread the ownership of public policies directed towards managing coexistence in shared spaces, and a recognition that this leads toward collaborative consensus-building practices and away from competitive interest bargaining. Here (chapter 43) Healey argues for a new planning imagination which recognizes the multiple relational webs transecting cities and which emphasizes that "making places" is not about technical rational solutions. Rather, it is about a strategic imagination, which addresses the specific attributes, which make a place matter to the different stakeholders of the city.

If we are to recognize that cities are complex and heterogeneous, and as such potentially fluid, productive, and enabling, then urban policies which address complexity rather than aim toward some kind of standardized rational solution could be the most useful. Comprehensive rational planning, embodied in the notion of the master plan can be critiqued on these grounds. These ideas connect with Sennett's earlier (1970) work on the uses of disorder. Sennett rails against the suburban neighborhood, socially homogeneous and enclosed. Such environments encourage the persistence of the myth of a purified community of neighborliness and security (although divisions may lurk under the surface). It also perpetuates a form of parochialism based on a naive childlike psychology about other communities in other areas that helps to hold together the internal community myth. Sennett argues that the only way to break down these purified notions, the only way to develop full maturity is to encounter other groups and situations. This happens in the inner city with its mixed communities in a form of politics of encounter. Indeed Sennett proposes a radical withdrawal of municipal support structures (bureaucracy, overall metropolitan planning, policing of local disputes) to heighten the encounter between and within groups. These anarchic survival communities avoid the isolation of their suburban counterparts. However this is a politics of encounter that is bought at the expense of any civic responsibility.

The imagined city in practice needs to be one where power is recognized, negotiated and shared and where frameworks are put in place to enable this. Such an imagination and its resultant practices are a long way from the notion of a solution imposed from above by those with knowledge, expertise, and power. Contemporary cities as we have seen are not homogeneous spaces that are readily amenable to planning solutions imposed from above. As cities are increasingly embedded in a complexity of networks and spaces of flows, where many of the assets of the cities are not fixed or even visible in the built environment, new planning imaginations become all the more urgent.

Division and Difference

Difference and diversity are crucially linked with polarization and divisions. In this sense difference implies a hierarchy of power by which some people are excluded and marginalized and others are not. But difference might also be constructed in a more positive vein. Individuals of different genders, age, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and so on, will usually value their specificity and not necessarily want to be subsumed under some homogenized notion of community for which certain urban policies, for example urban regeneration policies, are devised. The question then becomes both how, and what, are the crucial factors which marginalize and exclude a group or individual on the one hand, or empower them on the other. Urban policies can then be developed to address the underlying issues of exclusion and marginalization.

We have seen in Part III of this volume that cities are increasingly complex and complicated places where simple divisions, core and periphery, rich and poor, Blacks and Whites, and so on, tell only part of the story. What is important therefore in urban policy is to analyze these differences to see where they are productive and where they simply represent concentrations of disadvantage. What is also important is to recognize that economic, social, and cultural differences are persistent, and if notions of community and social justice are to be rethought and maintained in some form, then the tensions will need to be addressed. This means seeing individuals on their own, or individuals within households and communities as differently placed in terms of access to resources and opportunities depending on a range of crosscutting and interrelated factors such as race, age, gender, and social networks (Bridge 1994, 1997). It also means taking on the symbolic exclusions in city spaces that Sibley (1995) discusses as well as the more material and graphic exclusions of the gated suburbs in Mike Davis's Los Angeles (1990).

It could be argued that urban policy has played a crucial role itself in constructing difference. Feminist analysts have pointed out that cities have been structured around the patriarchal family and have been imbued with gendered assumptions (see McDowell 1983; Watson 1986, 1988). The separation of home from work implicit in many urban planning and policy initiatives has been based on the presumed unpaid labor of women maintaining domestic life and childcare and has further served to marginalize women in the suburbs. Housing policies in many countries have also assumed the traditional family both in terms of design and allocation, while transport systems are frequently organized around the male worker going from the suburb to the center of the city for work. In Tokyo the huge

commuter times have led to the phenomenon of the fatherless home (as opposed to the single-parent family), where men live in the city center during the week and return to the suburbs for the weekend even though ostensibly they are commuting within one metropolitan area. But gendered patterns are becoming more complex and difficult to read. Bondi and Christie (chapter 25) highlight the fragmented and contradictory experiences of gender within post-Fordist relations where there is a growing social polarization in cities between women on class, income, and employment grounds where some women have experienced striking economic success while others have become increasingly poor and marginalized.

Discourses of race have also constructed, and been embedded in, urban policy. As Allan Cochrane argues (chapter 44), "race" has underpinned much British urban policy, though frequently as an unspoken presence. In Britain and the US race has been key to a discourse of the inner-city crisis or the problem of the ghetto from the 1960s particularly. The management of areas designated as dangerous has also effectively involved a racialization of those spaces and legitimated intervention by urban policymakers, social workers, and the police. Mike Davis (1990) provides some extreme illustrations of such police activity in the context of Los Angeles. Race has been a crucial element in urban policies in non-Western countries also, sometimes in a benign form, but more often urban policies have reinforced existing divisions. Alison Todes (chapter 52) shows how current South African urban policy is founded on intentions to reintegrate cities, though this has already been critiqued as yet another oppressive form of urban ordering based on a technocratic discourse as the solution (Robinson 1996). While in the context of Israel Oren Yiftachel (1995) has suggested that planning tools have often been used as a means of controlling and repressing minority groups.

Social-spatial divisions are most clearly mapped on the employment/unemployment axis. The single most determinant cause of poverty is unemployment from which other conditions such as homelessness, ill health, and crime can arise. In order to combat unemployment governments have deployed a whole range of national and regional strategies. Urban policy initiatives of this kind include local employment and economic development initiatives that can be variously successful. One of the problems with local area-based policies is that statistics of regional unemployment mask differences between and within households. Thus within one spatial community where unemployment is high the impact is strongly differentiated. For example, Pahl's (1984) study in the Isle of Sheppey nearly two decades ago illustrated the different resource-gathering abilities of different household members and their access to the self-provisioning of goods and services through informal sectors. Skill levels, local knowledges and contacts all have an effect. In many countries access to income and employment from the recycling of discarded goods can mean an escape from poverty and homelessness. Thus unemployment can mean different things to different people. Some individuals may be able to find other forms of income, while for others there is no such option. Unemployment is also crosscut by gender, race, and age, which makes it difficult to assess how different individuals within different households in areas of concentrated deprivation negotiate disadvantage.

Another terrain of social division in the city, which has been addressed by urban policy, is around gentrification. Smith (1996) sees the process of gentrification as an urban frontier, a frontier of capital and social division. The frontier of capital

involves the movement of investment into hitherto devalorized neighborhoods, which leads to a social division as many working-class residents are displaced. An ideological scripting of the city through civic boosterism and notions of revitalization supports this process. This is a discourse that writes out the displaced poor. Smith argues that with the recession and degentrification in the late 1980s in the USA, this civic boosterism has been replaced by a neoconservative urban politics of the revanchist city. This is a politics of revenge where those most marginalized by the reconfigured community of money in the city (the poor and homeless) are scapegoated because of their visibility (e.g. with such policies as zero tolerance to beggars). In this sense difference is used as an ideological weapon. Policies to enable low-income residents to stay in gentrifying areas through the provision of various forms of secure low-rental social housing can maintain mixed neighborhoods. This happened, for example, in the inner cities of Australia in 1972–5 under Whitlam's progressive Department of Urban and Regional Development.

Social-spatial divisions have existed in extreme forms in cities like Johannesburg where apartheid separated whites from blacks. Many cities have similar versions. Here policies towards mixed developments of housing combined with a range of employment possibilities and services can form the basis of a more mixed local citizenry. Another terrain of division in cities which has provoked a whole gamut of urban policies across the world is the division between city centers and suburbs, edge cities, fringe developments, and squatter settlements. In many instances one area concentrates forms of privilege while othering the opposite space as impoverished, dangerous, uninteresting, or as wealthy and exciting. These homogeneous caricatures of city spaces invariably mask considerable complexity and difference.

Urban policies to address these spatial divisions have taken many forms. In some Western cities, attempts to contain the spread of cities and urban sprawl have included greenbelt policies, urban consolidation, land pricing strategies and planning regulations, as discussed by Patrick Troy (chapter 45) in the Australian context. Other policies have focused on decentralizing employment, infrastructure, and services to outer areas where disadvantage is concentrated. The provision of urban infrastructure and services is an issue of considerable urgency facing the megacities of Asia where the growth in areas like the Pearl River Delta has required rapid response to the needs of a fast-growing population.

Homelessness represents a further serious urban issue in many cities of the world, from the sidewalk dwellers of Bombay to the Pacific Islanders in Auckland. Again there are a range of possible urban policy approaches from the laissez faire inaction of neo-liberal city governments to a diversity of social/public housing initiatives from refuges and hostels to more permanent cooperative housing ventures. Urban policies will increasingly need to address the complexities of difference and forms of marginalization if cities are to be places where difference can be celebrated and enjoyed rather than forming the basis of exclusion.

Economy

The relationship between economic change and urban policy shows great differences across the globe. There are, however, a number of recurring themes that can be identified and these relate to conceptions of the public and the private and the scope

of urban democracy. Here the connections between city economies and city publics and their relations to urban policy and politics are dealt with together.

As a general trend there has been a move from assumptions that the market should be regulated by policy to neoliberal arguments that unregulated markets are most beneficial. In the early days of industrial capitalism the market was seen as a source of growth and disorder. Adverse work conditions and social inequalities were most evident in the rapidly growing cities. The point of urban policy was to compensate for the inequalities caused by capitalist urbanization through the provision of welfare and infrastructure. From 1945 to the mid-1970s in the West this policy intervention in markets reached its high tide mark as government policy itself was seen as a form of macroeconomic regulation. In the Keynesian economy spending on public works was a way of overcoming the underconsumption and unemployment that came with slumps in the economy. Cities had a particular role in this. Their size and density of population represented a concentration of public works. In some cases city governments sought a direct role in regulating economic activity (such as the Economic Development Plan of the former Greater London Council in the 1980s).

City governments were more typically responsible for the provision of bundles of collective-consumption goods – the defining characteristic of the urban in the late 1970s according to Manuel Castells (Castells 1977). In an earlier phase of urbanization this activity had been seen in the great municipal revolutions providing basics such as street lighting and drainage through to libraries and public parks. This tradition was sustained in Western cities until the 1970s. Urban policy coped with collective demand for goods and services not provided by the market and attempted to deal with the excesses of market processes in the form of urban deprivation and division (see Cochrane, chapter 44). From an Australian perspective Patrick Troy (chapter 45) describes in detail the major elements of this state-led urban policy of compensation for market disorder. It involved the rational planning of infrastructure and the provision of services (housing, health, and education) to compensate for the depredations of the market.

World recession in the 1970s and the rise of supply-side economics resulted in the collapse of the Keynesian consensus and resulted in deregulation of markets and a different role for policy, particularly urban policy. From a conceptualization of the market economy as a source of disorder and damage, as well as growth, policy moved to regard the market as a solution to urban deprivation and social division. Rather than producing disorder the market was seen as a source of order, a mechanism for settling things in the most efficient way. The state on the other hand became the explanation for deprivation in new-right pronouncements, since it constrained the operation of free markets and therefore prosperity and encouraged sustained deprivation through welfare dependency (Murray 1994).

The neoliberal hegemony had a profound effect on urban policy. It meant the shift from a concern with the politics of consumption to one with the politics of production (analyzed by Alan Harding, chapter 48). The point of urban policy was to facilitate the operation of the market. There was a range of measures to attract new business to the city, from tax holidays and rent concessions on urban land through to a proliferation of place marketing techniques to catch the eye of would-be investors. The historic and recreational character of cities also became assets in the competition between cities for inward investment. The London Docklands development,

Battery Park City in New York, and Darling Harbor in Sydney are prime examples of this type of urban development. These broad shifts David Harvey characterized some time ago (Harvey 1989) as the transition from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism.

At the same time as city governments were looking to attract capital investment their welfare functions were cut back. Urban services were increasingly privatized. Activities such as street cleaning and refuse collection were put out to private companies with the city government acting as a purchaser rather than provider of services. Privatization of public transport and state housing has occurred in many countries (although there are of course exceptions, such as Sweden and the Netherlands).

Whereas privatization of infrastructure has been a conscious policy shift in Western countries, in many non-Western cities the need to keep pace with demand and limited government resources means that the private sector has long been involved in certain service markets. For example private transport services became increasingly important in many African cities in the 1980s and 1990s as large public transport companies suffered in recession. Private minibus services, such as the dala-dalas of Dar Es Salaam and cent-cent in Brazzaville, became increasingly important for low-income groups. Nevertheless the primacy given to the private car in both Western and non-Western cities accounts for the logjam traffic conditions, loss of public space, and continued urban sprawl.

This privatization has extended to urban government itself. City government in the US has long been a coalition with private entrepreneurs, companies, and other powerful agents with a vested interest in the city. This model is increasingly true of other cities in the West as they become concerned with the politics of production. Urban growth coalitions and urban regimes increasingly account for urban policy in Western cities. Policy gets made and is implemented through public–private partnerships in which lines of accountability to the ordinary city dweller are not clearly drawn. They exist under the more nebulous term "urban governance," rather than government. There are democratizing tendencies in some cities. Many cities of continental Europe have had strong urban governments that have given them some independence and distinctiveness (e.g. communist or Red Bologna) and there is a move to follow the American model of strong mayors in English cities. Questions are raised here as to whether cities are the appropriate scale for participatory democracy such as discussions over city democracy and networks of cities in the European Union and the return to pan-city government in London. Nevertheless the degree to which these changes are supportive of democracy or urban economic boosterism remains an open question. It is noticeable that many of these changes to urban policy and government bear more resemblance to the premunicipal era in the early phase of capitalist urbanization.

Although characterized more by diversity than similarity non-Western cities do show parallels with the developments of urban policy in Western cities. In fact it is more and more the other way round as in certain characteristics Western cities come to resemble those of non-Western ones.

The deregulated city has been a long-standing characteristic of many non-Western cities. Untrammelled markets are undoubtedly a feature of the rapidly growing cities of East and Southeast Asian cities (at least until the economic crash of the late

1990s). Here urban interventions are about coping with the speed of growth and the necessity for housing and urban infrastructure. In order to keep pace with growth a whole range of policy mixes including private and public provision are pursued. In Singapore, as Chua Beng-Huat points out (chapter 51), the accommodation crisis has resulted in universal public provision of housing in order to support the demands of economic growth. In Beijing 92 percent, and in Hong Kong over 50 percent, of the population lives in public housing (reported in Habitat 1996). Many cities in Latin America, Africa, and South Asia had public housing programs from the 1950s to 1980s but shortage of funds meant that demand for dwellings could not be met. This resulted in an absence of accommodation or insecure shelter of very poor standard (there are over 1 billion people in these circumstances worldwide). Land supply problems also add to the difficulties that city governments have when it comes to housing. Much of the land is in private ownership and cannot be purchased by the state. In many countries building materials have to be imported thus adding to costs (more than 40 percent of the value of residential development in Accra and Dakar, for instance).

The response to the lack of state provisioning has been self-provisioning of accommodation, squatting on land and using any available local materials. In the face of exclusion from the public realm and from adequate support for local economic activity and forms of accommodation various forms of self-provisioning and grass-roots political organization sprang up. Diverse urban social movements represent significant forces for change in non-Western cities. Although such social movements are generally targeted at specific issues it is clear that many of them have had significant impacts on urban governance. Especially important are women's movements – such as those for political participation in Guadalajara, Mexico; neighborhood handicraft associations in Santiago, Chile; and struggles for health-care in São Paulo, Brazil (Habitat 1996: 168). These are political activities on the ground and in the barrios – often a million miles away from the concerns of their city governments and super-rich elites who look to international markets. Unlike the city and the grass roots of Castells' work this is the city separate from the grass roots. Public policy and public interests are often poles apart.

The growing importance of feminist movements in all their diversity in the cities of the world has been noted by Castells (1997, ch. 4). These movements are looking for practical improvements in the lives of city-dwellers but are also trying to redefine the public in noninstitutional, more radically open ways. In this they might confront more systematic forces of the state but their very openness – and the common themes of many of the issues they are concerned with – have implications and connections beyond the cities they are concerned with to other cities and groups. These forces (both progressive and regressive) are likely to become more prevalent in a more interconnected world. Social movements constitute the other side of globalization and offer the potential for a reconstituted public realm.

Self-provisioning has also taken on a discursive force in Western cities. Policy discussions of social capital (see Amin, chapter 11) hinge on the capacity of networks of disadvantaged individuals to become productive. Voluntary sector and grass roots organizations figure highly in policy manifestos for the social economy and the "third way" (between state socialism and free markets). There is also growing evidence of grass-roots self-provisioning in the form of credit unions in

poor districts, local exchange trading systems (LETS) and the like. Whether valuable or not these community-based arguments bring the policy discourse about Western and non-Western cities closer together.

The wider forces of globalization beyond the cities are the context and the discipline for the formulation of urban policy – as are others. Swyngedouw and Kaika (chapter 47) develop the arguments on the city as natural (as in "nature-full") as well as a social and economic phenomenon. They critique the separation of nature and society – the city that was so prevalent in urban planning. Now planning and policy interventions are not simply local in provenance. Politics of the sustainable city tie urban policy decisions into wider biocultural processes and longer time horizons.

Environmental issues point up the differences between Western and non-Western policies over sustainability. In many non-Western cities sustainability is a matter of life and death and environmental problems are not just global but household issues (such as clean water and sanitation). Generally lower levels of consumption and sustainable practices, such as recycling, are already in place out of necessity. Tens of thousands of wastepickers scratch a living recycling rubbish in cities such as Manila. Environmental damage from pollution is a pressing concern for Western and non-Western cities alike. In Mexico City for example 11.2 million workdays a year are lost because of the bad health effects of pollution. Some measures for sustainable development are being attempted at the city level through the Agenda 21 program that came out of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit (now actively pursued by 1,200 local authorities in 33 countries – World Resources Institute 1996). In Western cities by contrast sustainability is concerned with the consequences of overconsumption.

The economies of many non-Western cities are divided between local production and consumption and global markets and the more "formal" economic sectors. For many this is a colonial legacy and one that is perpetuated in the neocolonial debt relations to which many countries of the south are subject. International financial organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank impose constraints on economies that essentially support the free market principle. This makes for sharp differences between the commercial globally oriented economic activity and local economic provisioning. Cities are divided between areas of affluence and extreme poverty. Although not as pronounced, the "move to the market" in Western cities has resulted in sharper contrasts of poverty and wealth and the divisions between cities and within particular cities between global and local activities (emphasized by Sassen, chapter 15).

Cities encompass different economies. The global/local split divides the attention of urban governments. Like their Western counterparts city authorities must get involved in place marketing for foreign business and tourist dollars, often at the expense of the needs of the local economy and the local population. The local state is often involved in ridding parts of cities of local enterprise and self-provisioning to create enclaves conducive for "global" activities. As Alison Todes (chapter 52) relates in the South African context this is a process of making cities safe for capital. The clearing of the street boys in Yogyakarta (Beazley, chapter 40) through to the revanchist politics of clearing out the homeless to ease the gentrification of the Lower East Side of New York City (Smith 1996) show the global nature of this form of city politics.

Making cities safe for capital results in the commercialization and commodification of urban space and this has impacts on the notion of the public and public space. The clearing of street markets and the homeless and their replacement with patrolled and protected tourist malls and business districts marks the "death of public space" in non-Western cities. In this sense many non-Western city governments are every bit as involved in creating suitable consumption landscapes for their middle classes and tourist markets. It also reveals the tendency for a local/global split in the public realm with formal institutions lacking the will, finances, or probity to truly represent their urban constituents.

All these issues raise questions about the nature of the public and the policymaking realm in contemporary urbanism. Any answer to Ray Pahl's original question "Whose city?" (1975) would now have to move beyond institutions of the elected state to take in the privatization of urban policymaking to include business and other nonelected interests. The purposes of urban policy have moved away from social-democratic notions of redistribution to the support of private capital investment. Widespread corruption and nepotism also make access to public institutions and public representation a problem in many cities.

In cases where there are interventions the worry is that they are based on outdated modernist and colonial solutions. Thus Alan Mabin writes of the sclerotic influence of the legacy of modernist planning and Alison Todes points to the inappropriateness of rational separation of land use and urban consolidation in Durban – separating out and disconnecting as it does the webs of indigenous economic networks and commercial strategies. What in a Western setting might be regarded as externalities to be countered by separation of different land uses, might well be necessary connections and an essential juxtaposition of the economy and the domestic sphere, and the public and the private in many non-Western cities. The reaction to modernist rationalism and the rigidities of planning are being felt particularly strongly in many rapidly developing cities as they present a set of kaleidoscopic conditions of formal/informal undocumented economic activity. Interestingly feminists have made similar arguments about the lack of flexibility in Western cities.

Again of course there are countervailing influences. In the years between the publication of the first and second UN reports on human settlements (1986–96) 30 countries moved to democratic political procedures. In many countries local governments have been made more responsible for urban affairs. This decentralization of responsibility is seen by some, such as Castells (1997), as a bid by national governments to avoid a crisis of legitimacy by pushing the blame for poor urban services down to the local level. For others (such as Habitat) there is a suggestion that structural adjustment programs force the hands of national governments to cut services. But they also suggest empowering possibilities through links between stronger local state and grass-roots organizations.

In conclusion, political and policy interventions in the urban arena have to face greater and greater complexities. No one policy is likely to be the solution for every city in the world, since policies need to be sensitive to the specificity of place and the global/local interconnections within which a city is situated. Following Healey, it is also important to stress the need for local communities – however these are defined – to be involved in the decisions that are going to affect their lives on a daily basis if exclusions and marginalities are to be addressed. Any urban intervention will

produce conflicting outcomes and no one solution will suit all groups. Recognizing this, and refusing the idea that universal solutions are possible, means building into the processes of governance and government spaces for contestation and disagreement, so that politics can remain in play in the policy process rather than being cast to the sidelines in the drive for entrepreneurial advantage in the competitive market for cities.

REFERENCES

Boyer, M. C. 1983: *Dreaming the Rational City.* Princeton: MIT Press.

Bridge, G. 1994: Gentrification, class and residence: a reappraisal. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 12, 31–51.

Bridge, G. 1997: Mapping the terrain of time-space compression: power networks in everyday life. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 15, 611–26.

Castells, M. 1977: *The Urban Question*. London: Edward Arnold.

Castells, M. 1997: *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture*, vol. 2: *The Power of Identity.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Davis, M. 1990: C*ity of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles*. London: Verso.

Habitat – United Nations Centre for Human Settlements 1996. *An Urbanizing World: Global Report on Human Settlements 1996*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hall, P. 1988: *Cities of Tomorrow.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. 1989: From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler*, 71B, 3–17.

Healey, P. 1997: *Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies*. London: Macmillan.

Hillier, J. 1993: To boldly go where no planners have ever... *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 11, 89–113.

Le Gates, R. and Stout, F. (eds.) 1996: *The City Reader.* London: Routledge.

McDowell, L. 1983: Towards an understanding of the gender division of urban space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 1, 59–72.

Murray, C. 1994: *Underclass: The Crisis Deepens*. Charles Murray with commentaries by Pete Alcock et al. London: IEA Health and Welfare Unit.

Pahl, R. 1975: *Whose City?* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Pahl, R. 1984: *Divisions of Labour.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Robinson, J. 1996: *The Power of Apartheid: State Power and Space in South African Cities*. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

Sennett, R. 1970: *The Uses of Disorder.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Sibley, D. 1995: *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West*. London: Routledge.

Smith, N. 1996: *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City.* London: Routledge.

Watson, S. 1986: *Housing and Homelessness: A Feminist Perspective*. London: Routledge.

Watson, S. 1988: *Accommodating Inequality.* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Watson, S. and Gibson, K. (eds.) 1995: *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*. Oxford: Blackwell.

World Resources Institute 1996: *World Resources Report*. Washington, DC.

Yiftachel, O. 1995: The dark side of modernism: planning as control of an ethnic minority. In S. Watson and K. Gibson (eds.), *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*. Oxford: Blackwell, 216–42.