

**Whither the Region? Re-thinking the space and place of
regions and cities in international comparative perspective**

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What place for the Region? Reflections on the regional question and the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research.

Introduction

The idea for this Debates and Developments symposium sprang from an editorial conversation within the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) at its board meeting in Montreal in October 2012 about how the journal should be contributing to innovative and challenging research in urban and regional studies in the future and to what extent the identity of the journal continued to be represented by its original title.

The purpose of this Debates and Development collection of short essays is to contribute to a redefinition of the meanings of the ‘regional’ and the ‘urban’ in light of the evolution of contemporary debates in the fields of critical urban and regional studies. We thus decided to publish a collection of essays by long-term IJURR contributors and board members/editors, as well as by well-known scholars of the region in order to make an intervention in the regional debate. Early drafts of these papers formed part of an internal discussion of the Editorial Board concerning our editorial line:

Should we keep the word ‘regional’ in our title? If so, what do we mean by it and where to draw the line between the kinds of ‘regional’ papers we wish to publish and those that we do not want?

Editors, contributors and readers clearly feel that ‘international’ is an accurate description not only of the journal’s mission in covering developments in urban and regional research in every part of the world, but also in publishing leading-edge scholarship from researchers in and from the ‘Global South’ as well as the ‘Global North’. Indeed, over its 36-year history IJURR’s editorial board and corresponding editors have reflected the growing strength and importance of urban and regional scholarship from Asia, Africa, Oceania and Latin America as well as the continuing vibrancy of this research field in Europe and North America. Colleagues were equally unanimous in their view that ‘the urban’ in general and critical urban studies in particular is central to the mission and identity of the journal. However one chooses to define cities, towns or urban territories, IJURR has been at the forefront of international theoretical and empirical debates on ‘the urban question’ over the best part of four decades, and this is reflected in the fact that the vast majority of papers submitted to the editors deal with an urban theme.

This then left the issue of the first ‘R’ and whether given the focus of interest and scholarship in critical urban studies it may not be more appropriate to drop the word ‘Regional’ from the title altogether. Support for this proposal pointed to the bias towards conventional regional science, planning, and regional economics in the papers submitted to IJURR, which would be better published in journals that are more explicitly relevant to these fields. Reviewers of rejected papers frequently noted the preponderance of

empirical case studies that often lacked a critical or comparative understanding of wider epistemologies, methodological developments or scales of interactivity. In short, too many 'regional' submissions took a descriptive approach to their research area and suffered from tunnel vision in failing to explain the relevance of the research to the journal's broader concerns with issues of social, gender, sexual, 'racial' and ethnic inequality, with the problem of uneven geographical development and environmental sustainability, and with broader concerns surrounding the nature of social justice and human rights within territorially bounded communities.

Despite these misgivings, the editorial board strongly endorsed the view that the regional must continue to remain a central focus of the journal—that the first 'R' in its title was important not only in identifying all 'sub-national' territories and spaces including the semi-rural and rural within the remit of IJURR's research, but also because the journal felt now was an appropriate moment to take stock of its historic contributions to research in the field of regional and regional-urban studies as well as to invite contributions to a debate on what significance the region, regionalism and regional studies more generally have for the theory and practice of social-spatial research in the twenty-first century.

However, before introducing the symposium papers and summarising their key arguments and contributions, we thought it would be useful to contextualise these essays by charting the historical development of the 'urban-regional' debate within IJURR and the broader academic community especially within the field of urban and regional sociology.

The Regional Debate and IJURR

When IJURR was launched in 1977, in their opening statement the editors explained the need for a journal of this kind as 'a consequence of the growing interest in problems of urban and regional development and of the recognition that such problems are intimately related to fundamental economic, social and political processes which operate at local, national and international levels' (emphasis added). That remains as true today as it did in the 1970s, but what precisely do we mean by 'regional' as opposed to 'urban' development and how do the problems associated with regional development manifest themselves in terms of economic, social and political processes?

The 'regional' in IJURR has its origins in the decision to call a meeting of the Research Committee on the Sociology of Urban and Regional Development (RC21) by those present at the 1970 World Congress of Sociology in Varna, Bulgaria. In her article in IJURR in 2001, Aleksandra Milicevic notes that the Research Committee was initially an uneasy coalition between those whose main concern was with urban and regional planning as conventionally understood, and the proponents of what became known as the 'new urban sociology' (Milicevic 2001). By 1972 the new urban sociologists had clearly taken over the committee and although not all involved were Marxist influenced, the dominant concern was to examine the relations between the capitalist mode of production and cities and regions, or as Enzo Mingione put it, 'in the relations between capitalism and territory'. In this sense, in principle at least, IJURR was never intended to be more or less 'urban' or 'regional'. Interestingly, as Lebas noted in her review of urban sociology for the International Sociological Association in 1982 the

French counterpart of IJURR, founded by Henri Lefebvre and Serge Jonas, was named *Espaces et Sociétés*.

Differences of approach remained however. Manuel Castells in particular, perhaps for both theoretical and political reasons, sought to define the urban as a ‘unit of collective consumption’, and the region as ‘the space of production’. Few within RC21 at the time were convinced by this dichotomy, but it oddly mirrored the sort of division that had existed between largely economic/geographical (and neoclassical economic) conceptions of the regional and old style urban sociology. The first ignoring everything except markets and economic factors, the latter ignoring the ways in which cities are shaped by economies and markets. However, even if Castells’ attempt to link cities to consumption and regions to production was unconvincing, his focus (which others shared) on collective consumption, the state and urban social movements did in practice mean that urban rather than regional developments were privileged. This also reflected the political and social realities of the times in which cities and urban policies and politics were far more salient than regional level phenomena (though in Europe, Italy and Italian scholarship was the major exception to this trend).

Therefore in the early years of IJURR it is undoubtedly true that issues surrounding the role of the cities, the state and collective consumption were thought to be where the theoretical heat (if not light) were, and little attention was given to a more sophisticated theorisation of regional development, or of how regions are constituted. But this did not mean that IJURR ignored the regional question. In fact the journal published some 25-30 papers on regional problems and issues, depending on classification, in its first decade. Looking back at these issues of the first ten years or so, the literature was dominated by what might be seen as problems of ‘backwardness’—e.g. declining regions in Britain, and ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘dependent’ regions in the Third World. Probably the most serious and substantial work in this genre was that produced by Italian colleagues on the Mezzogiorno, which went well beyond an economic perspective to examine the economic, social, political and cultural characteristics of a ‘backward region’ and how such backwardness was produced and reproduced. But there were others too whose aim was to develop a political economy approach to regions, for example Mick Dunford, Phil Cooke and Doreen Massey, although their work continued to have a strong focus on ‘backward’ regions.

There was also a range of work influenced by political economy on what was then referred to as ‘Third World Regions’ (more conventionally now ‘regions in the Global South’), notably by John Walton, Bryan Roberts, Alan Gilbert, Josef Gugler, and David Slater. Interestingly, Castells and Godard’s work on ‘Monopolville’ (Dunkirk) was also as much a study of regional as of urban development (Castells and Godard 1974). However, it is clear that in the period from the late 1970s to the end of the 1980s the work that appeared in IJURR on regional issues was somewhat limited and varied. The focus on economically weak or dependent regions began to change as the empirical object itself changed: the recognition of and interest in the emergence of economically dynamic and in some cases innovative regions shaped by globalising capital, some in formerly ‘backward’ regions. For example, the work of Arnaldo Bagnasco and collaborators on the ‘Third Italy’ which referred in fact to changes already underway in the 1970s (Bagnasco 1977), and which he continued to develop in the 1980s and 1990s was path breaking,

but the focus took much longer than this to really shift the research agenda (see Bagnasco and Le Galès 2000).

The work of Storper and Walker on the theory of location, published in IJURR in 1983 was also important and influential (Storper and Walker 1983). A key set of papers edited by Mike Douglass appeared in IJURR in 1988 and traced the ways in which transnational capital was reshaping regions in the Pacific Rim (Douglass 1988) and Mike Storper's work on Post Fordism, flexible production and regional development which he wrote about in the journal in 1990 indicated an emergent body of innovative theory (Storper 1990). In 1988, Allen Scott also contributed an important paper on 'Flexible Production Systems: the Rise of New industrial Spaces in North America and Western Europe' (Scott 1988). It is clear that the number and range of regionally oriented papers increased in this second decade, again depending on classification to around perhaps 65-70. Of greater importance was the emergence of a more coherent strand of work on regional political economy but one that was clearly in conformity with the original remit of the journal.

All this suggests that in its first two decades of publication IJURR took its regional remit seriously and that it published a continuing range of papers that were innovative empirically and in key cases theoretically. In fact, IJURR published many of the key contributors to what Soja (2000) has described as an emergent regional political economy. He cites Michael Storper who noted that 'something funny happened in the early 1980s. The region, long considered an interesting topic to historians and geographers, but not considered to have any interest for mainstream western social science, was rediscovered by a group of political economists, sociologists, political scientists and geographers' (Storper 1997, 3)

Storper notes that of course some attention had been paid to regions by social scientists formerly but, 'such work treated the region as an outcome of deeper political-economic processes, not as a fundamental unit of social life in contemporary capitalism...in the early 1980s, in contrast, it was asserted that the region might be a fundamental basis of economic and social life 'after mass production'. That is, since new successful forms of mass production—different from the canonical mass production systems of the postwar period—were emerging in some regions and not others, and since they seemed to involve both localization and regional differences and specificities (institutional, technical) it followed that there might be something fundamental that linked late 20th-century capitalism to regionalism and regionalization' (Storper 1997, 3).

The Variegated Region

Much research in IJURR as elsewhere in urban and regional scholarship has wrestled with the problem of defining 'the region', and its derivatives—'regionalism', 'regionalisation', the 'city-region', 'the functional urban region' and the 'mega-region'. As with allied disputes around the character of global or world cities, there can be a tendency for advocates of one position or another to retreat behind their fortifications, firing salvoes of polemic at opposing views without generating any fresh insight or knowledge about the phenomenon in question. This is not to say that strongly held contrasting positions are undesirable, for they convey the importance of establishing the

formal and structural character of regions as a necessary preliminary to work, on for example, regional economic agglomerations, or horizontal and vertical governance arrangements, on labour market and consumer catchment areas, on environmental and ecological boundaries, on social movements, conflict and crime, and in relation to political and cultural identities—to name only some types of regional variants.

At the same time there would appear to be a degree of consensus around the belief that regions like cities are not naturally occurring phenomena. Along with other types of human settlement, regions are socially and politically constituted, although in their economic and cultural aspects, regional boundaries can often appear fuzzy and indistinct. As Allen and colleagues write:

[regional] studies are always done for a purpose, with a specific aim in view. Whether theoretical, political, cultural or whatever, there is always a specific focus. One cannot study everything, and there are always multiple ways of seeing a place: there is no complete ‘portrait of a region’. Moreover, ‘regions’ only exist in relation to particular criteria. They are not ‘out there’ waiting to be discovered; they are our (and others’) constructions (Allen et al., 1998: 2 cited in McLeod 2001, 811).

However, in recent IJURR article Jonathan Metzger (following Paasi 2012) asks, ‘if the idea of the region as a ‘social construct’ has become close to an axiomatic truth’— ‘how, by whom, and through what materials is it constructed in practice? Or posed differently: how do regions become?’ Metzger (2013) and Metzger and Schmitt (2012) drawing on the work of Bruno Latour and Michel Callon suggest that ‘a regionalization process can be likened to the raising of a “regional Leviathan”, in which—using the allegory from the famous frontispiece to Hobbes’ 1651 treatise, ‘the many have become one, and are increased by one’ (Stengers quoted in Haraway, 2008 from Metzger 2013). Paasi also draws attention to the ways in which ‘processes of regionalization are always interventions in the world through which the drawing up of boundaries tacit and explicit, internal and external generate effects of inclusion and exclusion in relation to a particular spatial entity’ (Metzger 2013).

These insights highlight the point that although regionalisation is a purposive, multi-authored process, it is always prone to negotiation, calculation, and the deployment or threat of force among and between its respective constituents. Even taking on board this renewed focus on the human and material constitution of regions and regionalisation from Actor Network Theory—we are still left with the problem of explaining the variety of regionalisms, both in terms of scale and form and in relation to intra and inter-regional functions and activities. If Latourian regional theory insists on the definite article for ‘The Region’ with its presumptions of a universal explanatory framework—then it has to address the puzzle of multiple regionalisms that are not captured by the notion of stabilising, institutionalising publics, even of the cross border variety identified by Metzger.

One approach to categorising varieties of region is to refer to the functional character of these distinct regional types. For example:

- The administrative region - as defined by national states and other sub-national territorial governmental units with or without accompanying representative-democratic institutions.
- The functional economic region - often characterised as the 'travel to work area' or 'consumer catchment area' of a major urban centre or conurbation.
- The networked region (or 'regional corridor') - an extensive, linear, distribution of commercial, production, consumption, transport and residential spaces that exhibit 'untraded interdependencies'. These regional corridors may in some circumstances be transnational and continental in extent.
- The cultural region - broadly defined as exhibiting a distinct set of shared cultural, linguistic, political, ethnic and/or religious identities manifested in an attachment to a shared territory that is smaller than the existing national state but larger than a city, district or province. Cultural regions often constitute 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1991) in which people who may never meet face to face are persuaded that they have a common identity, reflecting shared interests or values.

Between and often also within states, regions, even segregating by function can and do exhibit a bewildering variety of territorial size, physical, climactic, environmental and geographical characteristics, demographic composition, economic activity, governance, interdependence at different levels of scale, mobility of goods, capital and people, infrastructural development and connectivity and self-identification and projection.

As Author Paper 1 observes:

The most forceful presentation of this reinvigorated regionalism, even if it never uses the term New Regionalism, is Michael Storper's *The Regional World: Territorial Development in a Global Economy* (1997) [...] Moreover, Storper argues, primarily through the stimulus of urban agglomeration, cohesive regional economies, especially those in city regions, emit a powerful generative force for economic development, technological innovation, and cultural creativity that is comparable, if not stronger, than market competition, comparative advantage, and capitalist social relations (Author Paper 1, this issue).

Echoing Author Paper 1, Gordon Macleod describes New Regionalism as being associated with a group of scholars 'who have highlighted the significance of the region as an effective arena for situating the institutions of post-Fordist economic governance' (Macleod 2001, 807). Thus pointing to a change of emphasis in regional studies away from formal institutional and functional analysis towards an interest in the political economy of what Lefebvre refers to as 'the production of space' or what David Harvey refers to as 'the spatial fix' of an increasingly globalised and dis-embedded capitalism.

But despite the fact that, as Andrew Jonas argues, '[o]ne finds plenty of assertions to the effect that regions (and city-regions) are becoming more competitive, efficient or resilient...than the nation state', such assertions, 'are often made in the absence of any critical discussion of the role of the state and territorial politics'. If one thinks of the power conflicts inherent in the scaling of government in terms of a Bourdieusian 'political field' (Parker 2006), it is clear that even among highly centralised, unitary states such as the United Kingdom, the persistence of the administrative region as a key player with respect to policy coordination and implementation adds weight to Jonas'

argument in favour of the continuing relevance of territory and politics at the meso-scale. While it is true that ‘bottom up’ mobilisations in support of cultural regionalism/nationalism have at times succeeded in revisiting, and occasionally renegotiating, intra-governmental autonomies, the political construction of regions and their particular juridico-spatial configuration has generally been undertaken at the behest of national state elites with rarely more than token participation from actually existing or putative regional publics (see Author Paper 2, this issue).

New Developments in Regional Theory

Although the functional separation of the region makes a great deal of sense from the point of view of social scientific enquiry, in practice real regional economies, politics and societies are interconnected not just endogenously but also at different levels of territorial scale according to their relative time-space distancing. The processes variously described as ‘glocalization’ (Swyngedouw and Cox 1997; Swyngedouw and Baeten 2001; Hackworth 2007) and ‘re-scaling’ (Brenner 1998; Brenner 2000) address the reality of a post-Fordist global economy in which the regional has become immersed in what Castells refers to as ‘a space of flows’ (Castells 2000). This process has been marked by what many scholars identify as a pervasive deterritorialisation of capital where in many regions of the Global North as well as in some newly industrialising economies, productive, fixed capital is becoming replaced or displaced by finance capital reliant service sector employment leading to what Allen Scott calls ‘a third wave’ of capitalism’ defined by the rise ‘a global cognitive-cultural economy’ or what Nigel Thrift refers to as ‘knowing capitalism’ (Thrift 2005; Scott 2011).

At the same time, the sovereignty that was once exclusively concentrated within the confines of national state bureaucracies has been re-territorialised upwards to supranational institutions such as the European Union, and international finance bodies such as the European Central Bank, the IMF and the World Bank, and downwards to subnational units of government including regions, metropolitan authorities, municipalities and even smaller units of territorial government. This re-scaling trend is far from uniform and consistent across jurisdictions, and it is possible to identify re-centralising tendencies in a number of states (Ross and Campbell 2009; Searle and Bunker 2010; Dickovick 2012; Regulaska 2012). However, the experience of multi-level government is one that most urbanised societies are now familiar with, and this has required an ability to operate vertically as well as horizontally in terms of territorial governance in concert with an increasing variety of non-state service providers, ‘stakeholders’ and decision-makers (Enderlein, Wälti et al. 2010).

Although the nation-state and national economies remain important containers of regions, the increasing uneven geographical development that has resulted from a post-Keynesian withdrawal of compensatory state investment in the more ‘backward’ regions of the developed economies has widened the gap between sub-national economies that are highly integrated with global circuits of capital, knowledge exchange and labour mobility and those ‘peripheral’ spaces that are often isolated even from the circulation of capital, goods and population at the national or inter-regional level (Hadjimichalis 1986; Scott and Storper 2003; Hadjimichalis 2011).

Studies in uneven economic development have been highly influenced by the work of Immanuel Wallerstein (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1982) as well as leading economic geographers who have made extensive use of world systems theory in their research such as Peter Taylor, Michael Peter Smith, Peter Dicken and David Harvey—albeit with different emphases and theoretical lenses. This has given rise to what some writers term ‘the archipelago economy’ (Veltz 1997, Hess 2004, 176 cited in Hess and Yeung 2006, 1197) in which islands of intense economic activity interact intensively with one another at the global scale leaving a dependent but largely disconnected semi-peripheral and peripheral economy to develop in its wake.

Referring to the growth of extensive, inter-regional networks in Europe in the latter decades of the twentieth century Neil Brenner describes the process as ‘a powerful expression of the centripetal, polarizing forces that have been unleashed since the crisis of North Atlantic Fordism’ (Brenner 2004: 188 in Parker 2011, 104). Attempting to give these new regional subjects clear definition can, however, be a frustrating exercise. Even the ‘city-region’ which Jane Jacobs claimed to have identified in Tokyo, London, Paris and Milan (but not Glasgow, Edinburgh, Marseille or Naples) (Parker 2011, 102) appears as an elusive category—at times an economic regeneration development symbol, at others an exercise in metropolitan aggrandisement, still less often an accurate description of a trans-urban governance model that maps onto a coherent functional regional economic system (for a discussion in the British context see Harding 2007; Jonas and Ward 2007; Harding, Harloe et al. 2010; Harrison 2010).

Aspects of Regional Development in International Perspective.

In celebrating the ‘amazing “discovery” of the generative power of cities and regions’, Author Paper 1 makes the bold claim that this is not ‘just a path-breaking idea in urban and regional studies, it may be the most important new idea in all the social sciences and humanities’ (Author Paper 1). What is particularly significant about the ‘new regionalism’ in the view of this author is that, ‘[t]oday, regions are seen as powerful driving forces in themselves, energizing regional worlds of production, consumption, and creativity, while at the same time shaping the globalization of capital, labor, and culture’.

While Author Paper 1’s call for a revived engagement with the dynamic process of regionalisation is one we would strongly endorse, it does not follow that all forms of regional development including ‘city-regionalisation’ assume the same form and share the same causal processes everywhere. Our aim in putting this selection of papers together was therefore as much to highlight the variety of ‘the regional’ within and between Global North and Global South state spaces as much as to draw out shared patterns and features. Contributors to this debate were therefore encouraged to bring their own perspectives to contemporary understandings of the region and processes of regionalisation, drawing on their knowledge of particular regional geographies and disciplinary traditions.

As we noted earlier, one of the unintended consequences of the surge of interest in the political economy of regions and regionalisation from the early 1980s onwards may have been to occlude the continuing relevance and role of the state and political organisation and conflict at the regional level. As Author Paper 2 explains, urban regions

continue to be ‘spaces for social and political mobilization’, not least because, ‘urban regions challenge the issues of identity and legitimacy as well as traditional ways of mobilization’. Following Purcell (2007), Author Paper 2 endorses the need to pay closer attention to the question of democracy in urban regions as a counterbalance to the idea that ‘neoliberal globalization has negatively impacted cities and urban regions’ in a top down and one directional fashion. This is a particularly important insight in the context of the often-fraught economic and political integration of the European Union where ‘the regional debate in Europe is intrinsically linked to the rise of the politics of decentralization since the 1980s’, but where the idea of Europe as ‘a region...is not based on usual mental visions of Europe shared by European citizens and political decision makers, which reveals the complexity of the territorial concepts’ (Author Paper 2).

Although its economic and political context is very different to that of Europe, as the authors of Paper 3 explain, in the metropolitan region of Durban in South Africa (eThekweni Metro) individual political entrepreneurs can play ‘a critical role in making the resources available and putting the institutional mechanisms in place to create a place for traditional authorities in metropolitan governance and organisational structures’. The new political opportunity structures that the end of apartheid in South Africa brought about have thus contributed to ‘a new governmentality of the post apartheid city region’, which in the words of the authors of Paper 3, gives rise to ‘a unitary structure with differential infrastructure levels premised on enduring if conflicting rationalities of land tenure’. Successful regional development in Africa would therefore seem to depend on the ability to broker traditional forms of authority with conventional urban planning, which is regarded as anathema by those who have managed communal tenure without resort to formal governance arrangements. As the Paper 3 authors conclude, ‘it is in navigating the competing interests that are involved in building an integrated method of operating across the fragmented city regional scales that the practice of African urbanism is being defined’.

Returning to the urban regions of the Global North, the authors of Paper 4 argue that, ‘Contemporary metropolitan growth dynamics...have blurred the traditional boundaries – material and imagined – between the city and the suburbs, destabilizing conventional, territorial definitions of urban regions which do not adequately account for the fluid, multiscalar nature of the urban process’. An assessment with which Author Paper 1 concurs, when s/he writes, ‘[w]ithin metropolitan areas...regional urbanization is erasing the once fairly easily identifiable boundary between urban and suburban and, as a new literature suggests, between urban and rural, city and countryside’. This seems to us to be a crucial observation in the context of any discussion of the changing nature and function of the city-region because we too often assume that the classical rural-suburban-urban distinction still holds true. The authors of Paper 4 offer us instead a critical reading of ‘captured sprawl’, in which the apparently infinite, anarchic autopolis of Reyner Banham’s Los Angeles reveals itself instead as ‘the dictatorship of the subdivision’—‘an empire of the private market, and the powerful hand of the federal state, especially the giant flood control and freeway ecologies in the flatlands and the foothills of the region’. ‘Real existing regionalism’, just as in the case of eThekweni in KwaZulu Natal, is about negotiating ‘the modalities of state, market and private authoritarian intervention that are employed in governing institutions at the regional scale’ (Authors Paper 4). Unlike the 1960s when regional planning benefited from the optimism and resources of the post-war boom within the context of a still expanding

Fordist agglomeration economy, '[a]t the current conjuncture [state spatial strategic choices] are primarily embedded in and express neoliberal values and objectives'. As Paper 4 authors conclude, '[w]hile actors at the regional scale are far from powerless in shaping the direction of institutional innovation, they are bound, at this point, by the overall constraints imposed by the discipline of a neoliberal (or post-neoliberal) policy environment where the chief regulatory discourse pushes for a post-crisis developmental consensus'.

Both the nature and intensity of regional economic activity and inter-scalar integration, and the experience of regionalism and the character of regional governance vary considerably from continent to continent, from nation to nation as well as at the sub-national scale. Regional economic spaces continue to evolve and to connect with one another even in the absence of concomitant political regionalisation and increasingly in the face of a de-territorialising new centralism imposed by austerity driven national and state governments. Rapid urbanisation and the financialisation of the global economy has revealed the interconnections between apparently discrete metro-regional economies and re-scaling/re-territorialisation processes in distant states and jurisdictions. But the effects of these processes on actually existing regional economies continue to be uneven and, contra Friedman (2005), increasingly 'spiky' rather than 'flat' in terms of resource and population concentration (Feiock et al 2008).

Conclusion

Inevitably this summary can only highlight the interests and preoccupations of the contributors to this debate, but it does nevertheless confirm the importance of the regional question within IJURR for those who define their research as 'urban' as much as for more traditional regional studies and regional science scholars.

As Paper 1 author argues

Never before have regional approaches been more important in urban research and urban emphases more influential in regional development theory and planning (Paper 1 author this issue).

For IJURR it is important to reflect key developments in regional development and planning while insisting that the work it publishes is empirically, methodologically and theoretically innovative and critically reflective. If IJURR is to continue serving its original aim of being 'an active tool for achieving a wider understanding of the problem of urban and regional development and for informing social action on these issues', it needs constantly to challenge its own assumptions and understanding of how spaces, states, territories and the societies they contain operate, how and why they are changing and what are the broader patterns and trends that we can identify? We hope the papers that follow will stimulate a revived interest in the place of the region and the regional in the pages of IJURR and we look forward to receiving new submissions that address the journal's continuing commitment to explanation and social action in the field of urban and regional research.

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Paper One

ACCENTUATE THE REGIONAL

I want to urge as strongly as I can that IJURR not only retains “regional” in its title but that the journal becomes the springboard for a resurgence of regional research focused on such issues as the extraordinary generative power of city regions and the growing integration of urban and regional studies. Never before have regional approaches been more important in urban research and urban emphases more influential in regional development theory and planning. This increasing fusion of the urban and the regional in theory, empirical analysis, social activism, planning and public policy is creating many new pathways for innovative critical and comparative research, a few of which I will identify and discuss in this essay.

IJURR is one of the very few places for scholarly debate that explicitly joins the urban and the regional together, positioning it to lead the way to advancing critical regional-urban studies. I reverse the usual convention of putting urban first to signal the increasing absorption of the urban into regional studies, or at least the growing inseparability of the two terms and concepts, as signaled in such terms as city region, regional city, and what I will call regional urbanization. If we are entering a “new urban age,” as some proclaim, it is distinctly regionalized urban age.

1. The New Regionalism

A starting point for this effort is to recognize that regional studies have changed radically over the past few decades. Building on the so-called spatial turn, the transdisciplinary diffusion of critical spatial perspectives, a New Regionalism (NR) has emerged and generated a radical reconceptualization of the nature and importance of regions and regionalism.¹ The most forceful presentation of this reinvigorated regionalism, even if it

¹For a discussion of the spatial turn, see Edward Soja, “Taking Space Personally,” in Barney Warf and Santa Arias eds, The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. New York and London: Routledge, 2008: 11-34. A brief discussion of the New Regionalism framed within a discussion of the evolution of regional planning ideas can be found in Soja, “Regional Planning and Development Theories,” in Rob Kitchin and Nigel Thrift eds., International Encyclopedia of Human Geography. New York: Elsevier, 2009: 259-270.

never uses the term New Regionalism, is Michael Storper's *The Regional World: Territorial Development in a Global Economy* (1997).²

Storper asserts that regions are vitally important social units, on a par with social formations based on kinship and culture, economic exchange and markets, and political states and identities, the traditional foci of the social sciences. Moreover, Storper argues, primarily through the stimulus of urban agglomeration, cohesive regional economies, especially those in *city regions*, emit a powerful generative force for economic development, technological innovation, and cultural creativity that is comparable, if not stronger, than market competition, comparative advantage, and capitalist social relations. Even at its most hyperbolic, traditional regional development theory never went this far in its assertive regionalism.³

Unfortunately, the New Regionalism in an explicit and assertive sense has remained poorly articulated in the wider literature and not well developed empirically, even by some of its most forceful proponents. One consequence has been a widespread difficulty in distinguishing between the old and the new regionalism. Many on the left dismiss the NR as just another deceptive neoliberal ploy, while others see only a renewed and economic regional science or a lightly disguised version of growth pole theory, leading to little more than tired demands for entrepreneurial regional government and city-regional marketing.⁴ Still others welcome the NR but define it too narrowly, focusing only on multinational trading blocs. Without a sufficiently clear explanation of the New Regionalism, it is no wonder that contemporary regional studies often appear so confused and uncritical to non-regionalists.

What then are the distinctive features of the NR? What makes the regional question so important in the contemporary academic and political worlds? Most clearly distinguishing the new from the old regionalism is the NR's much more powerful and far-reaching theoretical foundation, as exemplified by Storper and related works of Allen Scott on city

²*The Regional World* was published by Guildford Press. Territory and territorial are often used as a substitute for region and regional, a practice I hope will not continue in the future, if used at the expense of asserting the regional..

³ Regionalism is defined as advocating the usefulness of regions for any particular purpose, for theory-building, identity formation, political action, or just economic efficiency. A simple definition of region is an organized space with some shared qualities. The term comes from the Latin *regere*, to rule, from which comes regal, regime, and regulate.

⁴ John Lovering, using Wales as an example, presented an early critique of the New Regionalism in "Theory Led by Policy: The Inadequacies of the 'New Regionalism,'" *IJURR* v23, 1999: 379-395. See also the work of Costis Hadjimichalis and Ray Hudson, including "Networks, Regional Development, and Democratic Control," *IJURR* v30, 2006: 858-872.

regions and the world economy.⁵ Regions in the past were viewed primarily as places in which things happen., background repositories of economic and social processes. Today, regions are seen as powerful driving forces in themselves, energizing regional worlds of production, consumption, and creativity, while at the same time shaping the globalization of capital, labor, and culture.

As networks of urban agglomerations, cohesive regional economies have come to be seen as the *primary* (but not only) generative force behind all economic development, technological innovation, and cultural creativity. In another twist derived mainly from the work of Jane Jacobs, this generative force may go back more than 10,000 years to the origin of cities and the development of full-scale agriculture.⁶ The NR is built on these far-reaching premises and promises.

2. The Generative Power of Cities and Regions

This amazing “discovery” of the generative power of cities and regions is, in my view, not just a path-breaking idea in urban and regional studies, it may be the most important new idea in all the social sciences and humanities. We have only begun to explore this subject and there remains significant resistance to its implied urban spatial causality, especially among geographers who fear a return to the embarrassing environmental determinism of the 19th century. At this time, research and writing on this stimulus of urban agglomeration, what I called *synekism* in *Postmetropolis* (2000).⁷ has been monopolized by a creative if stiffly quantitative cadre of geographical economists, including several Nobel prize-winners. as well as by a few opportunistic spatial entrepreneurs selling superficial notions of economic clusters or creative cities.

Blunting the development of more comprehensive and critical research has been the almost complete absence in the Western literature of any effective recognition and analysis of the generative power of urban spatial organization. All there is to refer back to are Jane Jacobs, *The Economy of Cities* (1969) and the much earlier work of Alfred Marshall on agglomeration economies. Just recognizing that such an urbanization effect exists, which I believe is now beyond doubt, points to an extraordinary lacuna in the Western social science and humanities literature.

⁴Allen J. Scott (2008), *Social Economy of the Metropolis: Cognitive-Cultural Capitalism and the Global Resurgence of Cities*; (ed. 2001), *Global City-Regions: Trends, Theory, Policy*; and (1998), *Regions and the World Economy*, all published by Oxford University Press.

⁶ Jane Jacobs (1969), *The Economy of Cities*, New York: Random House. Some have claimed Jacobs deserved a Nobel Prize for her “discovery” of the stimulus of urban agglomeration.. Economists now call these urbanization economies Jane Jacobs Externalities.

⁷ *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*, Blackwell Publishers. The term synekism is take from the Greek *synoikismos*, literally coming together to live under one roof, a reference to the stimulating formation of the *polis* or city-state.

Here then is one of the greatest challenges to the future of IJURR: to encourage the conceptual broadening and more acute critical interpretation of research and writing on the generative force of urbanization and regional development. We still know very little about how this generative effect works, whether big agglomerations always generate more than small ones, whether networks of smaller agglomerations generate more development impulses than one large agglomeration. whether specialization or diversity is more important to economic clusters. What is the role of face to face contact (what Storper and Venables have called “buzz”),⁸ has the Internet made location and other spatial variables more or less relevant and influential, does the clustering of profit-motivated firms differ from the logic of cultural clusters of artists or musicians?

Even more challenging and less recognized is the question of how agglomeration also generates *negative* effects, something that the geographical economists have thus far largely ignored. Accepting Jane Jacobs’ argument that this generative effect goes back more than 10,000 years to the very first urban settlements, it becomes possible to trace how urban agglomeration stimulated the development of social hierarchy and power differentials in human society, from the early rise of patriarchy and empire-building states to more contemporary exploitative class relations and racism. We know a little about how capitalism, racism, and patriarchy shape urban space, but almost nothing about how these social processes are shaped *by* the organization of urban and regional space, a necessary component of the socio-spatial dialectic.⁹

There is also the issue of environmental degradation and climate change. Has the concentration of the world’s population in cities and megacity regions been more or less conducive to sustainable ecologies. Are the largest agglomerations more energy efficient than much less urbanized areas and does this matter? Is networking among city regions becoming more important than international organizations in developing effective environmental policies? Given the anti-urban biases of the past and the theoretical weaknesses of the old regionalism, it will take a great deal of effort to put these issues of urban spatial causality and regional synekism on the research agenda

3. Regional Urbanization

Another defining if not definitive feature of the NR is the increasing intermixture of urban and regional concepts and forms that is at the foundation of what I describe as *regional urbanization*. This hybridizing process I argue is leading to a paradigmatic transformation of the modern metropolis, an epochal shift in urban form and “ways of life,” to use the old

⁸ Michael Storper and Anthony Venables, “Buzz: Face-to-face Contact and the Urban Economy,” *Journal of Economic Geography* 4 2004: 351-370. The original subtitle of this paper was closer to “the generative effect of cities” but the journal editors claimed their readers would not understand this title and recommended a change.

⁹ [reference deleted]

Chicago School phrase coined by Louis Wirth. In its wake, much of traditional urban and regional theory is being shattered as regional urbanization opens up many alternative arenas for urban-regional (regional-urban?) research.

Within metropolitan areas, for example, regional urbanization is erasing the once fairly easily identifiable boundary between urban and suburban and, as a new literature suggests, between urban and rural, city and countryside. As “outer cities” take shape through a complex process of decentralization and recentralization, a new “inner city” is also emerging, creating new challenges to urban planning and policy-making. Many downtowns have been hollowed out of their domestic populations and partially filled with suburban-like homes, while some inner city areas have attracted vast numbers of migrants from nearly every country on earth. An unstable and unpredictable inner city is emerging, often filled with tensions and conflicts between domestic and immigrant populations as well as among urban planners confused by declining central city densities and new minority majorities.

At the same time, there has been a growing peripheral urbanization, as high-density development covers what was once sprawling low-density suburbia. An expanding glossary of new terms has been generated from this mixture of the urban and the suburban and the mass urbanization that is “filling in” the entire metropolitan area. Included are edge cities, outer cities, boomburbs, in-between cities, hybrid cities, suburban areas, urban villages, citistates, metroburbs, exopolis. Although these new forms are frequently crammed back into old metropolitan typologies, it is clear that suburbanization is not continuing in the same way as it did in the postwar decades. Traditional suburbia is slowly disappearing as the once relatively homogeneous suburbs are feeling the effects of mass regional urbanization, opening up a rich frontier for comparative research on the differentiation—the many different ways of life--of what some now call post-suburbia.

Some former suburbs, such as Orange County and Silicon Valley in California, have become large urban-industrial complexes, with as many jobs as bedrooms. Combining increasingly dense outer cities with mass migration into the inner city, the five-county Los Angeles city region passed New York City’s 23 county metropolitan area in the 1990 Census as the densest “urbanized area” in the US, a remarkable transformation given that Los Angeles was the least dense major US metropolis 60 years ago. Indicative of its extraordinary peripheral urbanization, the City of Los Angeles is surrounded today by forty cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants.

Despite the urbanization of suburbia and outer city development happening to some degree around almost every major city in the world, many areas have been able to fight in new ways to maintain their old suburban densities and lifestyles, often based on private residential governments and gated communities, as well as specialized zoning laws. Peripheral urbanization and the growth of outer cities has been noted for decades--it has been an integral part of the urban restructuring process generated by the urban crises of the 1960s-- but we still know very little of its dynamics and too many scholars refuse to recognize the magnitude and transformative significance of the changes taking place, and still cling to the old and declining metropolitan model and mentality.

4. The End of the Metropolis Era

Regional urbanization and the rise of polycentric city regions and regional cities (I think the term regional cities will become much more widely used in the future) are the core concepts of the New Regionalism.¹⁰ In several recent writings, I have taken the regional urbanization concept one step further, arguing that it is not just an extension of the modern (or postmodern) metropolis but an indicator of an epochal shift in the nature of the city and the urbanization process, marking the beginning of the end of the modern metropolis as we knew it.¹¹ Such a radical shift also suggests the need for radically new approaches to urban and regional theory and practice.

The “metropolis era” as it is used here began in the late 19th century, growing out of an earlier more centralized and denser version of the industrial capitalist city. Unlike that earlier city, with its unplanned concentricities that the Chicago School adapted from Engels’ view of Manchester, the metropolis was more centrifugal than centripetal, growing primarily by suburban expansion, at least in North America. In the interwar years, the modern metropolis ceased growing by accretion (e.g. incorporating adjacent and already dense “streetcar suburbs”) and instead spawned an expansive suburbia filled with a constellation of little “almost cities”. This created a pronounced dualism, two very different ways of life that became embedded in popular as well as academic notions of urban form and function. The urban studies literature reflected this dualism, being categorically divided into urban and suburban emphases. Furthermore, the metropolitan model came to be thought of by many as a kind of end-state, an ultimate equilibrium that could never become anything else., making the notion of regional urbanization almost inconceivable.

One of the tasks of new research on regional urbanization is to rethink this rigid dual model of the metropolis and recognize the paradigmatic shift that is taking place from a metropolitan to a regional model of urbanization. Now, to be sure, this shift, like all social processes, is happening unevenly, more intensely evident in some areas, much less so in others. With some effort, however, some evidence of peripheral urbanization and outer city growth, as I have noted, can be found in almost every large city region. This widespread impact of peripheral urbanization accentuates the demand for rigorous comparative analysis at the national and international scales.

The relation between peripheral urbanization and sprawl is particularly complicated and needs to be clarified, especially given the negative connotations attached to such notions as

¹⁰ Peter Hall and Kathy Pain, *The Polycentric Metropolis: Learning from the Mega-city Regions of Europe*, Abingdon UK and New York City US: Earthscan, 2006. For a look at the megacity regions of the US, see Arthur Nelson and Robert E. Lang, *Megapolitan America: A New Vision for Understanding America’s Metropolitan Geography*, Chicago and Washington DC, American Planning Association, 2011.

¹¹ [References deleted]

“periurbanisation” in Europe, where it is associated with unsustainable sprawl beyond hinterland boundaries. Regional urbanization does not just involve moving outward from inner to outer metropolitan rings. Urbanization in what was once suburbia can take place almost anywhere, close to or far away from the old city center, and brings with it much higher densities than before. That it strains public services, especially mass transit, often worsens pollution and public health, and creates many other problems, including aggravating income inequalities, needs to be seen and responded too not as an extension of the metropolitan model but of the new processes associated with regional urbanization. Again, the need for good comparative analysis is vital.

In the US, regional urbanization is probably most advanced in the city regions of Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay area, and Washington D.C, with Chicago catching up rather quickly. New York’s very extensive suburbanization contains a large number of edge cities but remains relatively less dense than the other city regions mentioned. The spread of Greater London, the extended regions around Milan , Barcelona, and Berlin, and the multi-centered Dutch Randstad are European examples, as is the almost entirely new “Grand Region” surrounding the financial center of Luxemburg and including the German Saar, the French Lorraine, and other parts of Germany and Belgium. The Gauteng Region of South Africa, containing Johannesburg, Pretoria, and the Witwatersrand, was the first officially proclaimed “global city region.”

5. Extended Regional Urbanization

Another collection of new terms and concepts has arisen from what can be called extended regional urbanization, stretching beyond the outer limits of the metropolis.¹² Included here are the endless city, megacity regions, megaregions, megalopolitan regions, regional constellations and galaxies, and more. Growing out of the computer games empire created by SimCity, for example, the latest version of the OpenSimulator focuses on creating megaregions, assiduously keeping the world of simulation up-to-date with the New Regionalism.

Although a new regional lexicon has not yet been established, the most general term used today is city region, with or without a dash in between (although cityregion as one word is not used); those with more than a million inhabitants are either millionaire city regions or megacity regions. Megacity is also widely used for city regions greater than 5 million, while megaregions (occasionally megalopolitan or megapolitan regions) usually refer to giant regional units of more than 20 million. The UN claims that the first and now largest megaregion combines Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Hong Kong in southern China’s Pearl River Delta., with a population of 120 million En route to an urbanization of the world, some say the scale of urbanization is getting even larger with continental-sized urban regions idenitifiable in North America, Europe,, and East Asia, where an urban zone stretching across China, Korea, and Japan is home to more than 400 million people.

¹² Edward Soja and J. Miguel Kanai, “The Urbanization of the World,” in Ricky Burdett and Dayan Sudjic eds., *The Endless City* , New York: Phaidon 2007: 54-69.

Chinese planners expect 200 million new inhabitants in what they officially call Extended Urban Regions or, alternatively, *chengzhongcun*, meaning areas where village and city mix together. Some Chinese scholars use the term peiriurbanisation, but without the negative connotations associated with its use in Europe. Led by China, the entire world is becoming enmeshed in a network of polycentric and expansive city regions, absorbing and generating a disproportionate share of the world's wealth and innovative capacity. A recent UN report on the State of the World's Cities claims that the 40 largest megaregions, containing 18% of the world's population, today concentrate two-thirds of the world's wealth and more than 80% of its technological and scientific innovations.¹³

Globalization itself is being redefined around the spread of industrial urbanism in some form everywhere, into the Amazon rainforest, the Sahara desert, the Siberian tundra, even the Antarctic icecap, after more than a century of being confined to the core capitalist and socialist countries. 500 megacity regions of more than one million, one-fifth in China, sit atop this worldwide web of regional urbanization, coordinating all planetary activities. Not only has there been a globalization of the urban, giving rise to the most culturally and economically heterogeneous cities the world has ever known (an important research focus in itself), there has also been occurring an urbanization of the world, what some are now calling planetary urbanization, demanding recognition, attention, and further research from an avowedly regional perspective.

In addition to noting the importance of megaregions, the United Nations now lists urban size by city region not metropolitan area or Greater so and so. In the US Census, increasingly complex Metropolitan Area definitions are sidestepped in a relatively new category of "urbanized area," defined by local density levels. Incidentally, it is this measure that has made Los Angeles, perhaps the leading edge of the regional urbanization process, pass New York City as the densest urbanized area in the US.

5. Multiscalar Regionalism

Extended regional urbanization is indicative of another distinctive feature of the NR: its expression at multiple scales. The old regionalism focused almost entirely on sub-national regions like New England, Quebec, Catalonia, Appalachia. Sub-national regionalism remains important in the NR and has seen a resurgence in recent years, stimulated by many different goals: political, economic, cultural, strategic. Examples include Belgium and Italy, all of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, China and India, Brazil and Argentina, Eritrea, Somalia, Sumatra. But the new regionalism is more formatively characterized by the expansion of supranational regionalism, from everything associated with the European Union to the proliferation of regional trading blocs such as NAFTA, MERCOSUR, and ASEAN.

¹³ These figures are from the biannual UN Habitat State of the World's Cities report in 2010 discussing and providing maps of the rise of megaregions around the world. Similar figures are presented in Richard Florida's *Forward to Megaregions: Planning for Global Competitiveness*, edited by Catherine Ross and published by Island Press.

The European Union, as the first attempt to unite advanced industrial nation-states, has probably been the most vigorous promoter of regionalism and regional policies, new and old, in the world today. Through the EUREGIO program and the European Spatial Development Perspective (four words that would never have been combined this way 20 years ago, yet now official policy in all the states of the EU), new cross-border regions have been created throughout Europe where there used to be confronting antagonistic forces. Related to these developments, more advanced forms of spatial and regional planning are recognizing and fostering ‘innovative regions’ (e.g., Rhone-Alpes, Catalonia, Baden-Wurtemberg,) and greater interconnections between the largest city regions. The search for a United States of Europe, as well as what is called a Europe of the Regions, is a form of supranational coalition building aimed, like locally based community coalitions, at achieving for strategic purposes a sufficient size to compete with other giant entities, such as China, Russia, and the USA.

Uncritical approaches to supranational regional training blocs, seen only as efficient state coalitions for competing in global markets, has unfortunately diverted attention away from nearly everything else in the NR. As the first exercise in my class on regional planning, I ask the students to enter “new regionalism” in their search engines and choose three pages of hits to analyze how the NR is being defined and discussed. Usually, there are more than 150,000 hits but a vast majority are concentrated on regional trading blocs, leading to a biased picture of the NR (and loads of confusion for students).

For many political scientists, international relations specialists, economists and some geographers, regionalism and hence the New Regionalism is seen as an alternative to bilateralism and multilateralism in trade relations and defined only as a coming together of nation-states. It takes some effort to convince students as well as a few urban and regional scholars (including influential figures in IJURR?) that there is something more to the NR than ASEAN, NAFTA, and MERCOSUR. At the same time, it must also be said that there is a need for more critical research on trading blocs and their potential for adding more progressive political, environmental, and economic equity goals to their focus on trade regulation.

The NR thus needs to be seen as stretching across many scales. At the global level, in addition to the European Union and trading blocs, there has been a complex restructuring of what has been called the international division of labor, or most simple-mindedly the North-South divide. What was once the Third World has been disintegrated, with the Asian “tigers” or NICs entering the developed world and the poorest countries being relegated to another categorical world of deepening poverty. For the most part, the socialist-communist Second World has disappeared, although it is not entirely clear whether the formerly communist states have entered the First of Third worlds in their old sense. New regionalists such as Kenichi Ohmae have suggested that, as the world becomes increasingly “borderless”, three great regional power blocs have emerged, one in the Western

hemisphere dominated by the US, another in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa dominated by the European Union, and the third in south and east Asia led by China.¹⁴

In another area of interesting debate, it is also still unsettled as to the significance of the differences in urbanization processes between North and South, developed and developing worlds. I have argued that regional urbanization is happening everywhere, unevenly to be sure. That more people live in the cities of the developing South than in those of the developed North, and that this disproportion will increase in the future, takes nothing away from the global process. What the globalization of the urban suggests is that the differences between urbanization in the developed vs the developing world are decreasing. They have certainly not disappeared entirely, but more than ever before their similarities make it possible for London to learn from Lagos as much as Lagos can learn from London. It is this global balance that must inform contemporary urban and regional studies, not some categorical Eurocentrism or Third Worldism.

Similarly, I think it is becoming unacceptable to speak of typically European or North American cities, especially when this refers to compact versus sprawling cities. To some degree, every city on earth is experiencing some similar developmental forces shaped by globalization, the new economy, and the revolution in information and communications technology. At the same time, each experiences these general processes in unique ways, rooted in local history and geography. What is needed is not some confrontation between Northern and Southern perspectives but rigorous and open-minded *comparative analysis* based on an appropriate and contemporary theorization of cities and regions.

What has just been described are examples of scalar restructuring and its regional implications. Closer to the bottom of the scalar structure has been another, still poorly understood, tendency that forms an attractive focus for urban and regional research.¹⁵ I refer to another kind of scalar fusion, as metropolitan regions seem to be blending into larger sub-national regions, creating something like region-states. Barcelona blending into Catalonia is one example. Berlin, Hamburg, and Singapore (and the old Hong Kong) already exist as regional city-states. To some degree, however, all megacity regions have experienced some of this scalar coalescence. Almost by definition, the city region is larger than the metropolitan region. A major problem here is the absence or weakness of regional authority, as the restructuring of economic relations has proceeded much faster than the adaptation of governmental administration. This brings us to another research frontier.

¹⁴ Kenichi Ohmae, *The Borderless World: Power and Strategies in the Interlinked Economy* New York: The Free Press, 1995; and *The End of the Nation-State: How Regional Economies Will Soon Reshape the World*, New York: The Free Press, 1996.

¹⁵ The scale issue and the process of rescaling can take us to a microlevel, from neighborhood, to building, to the body, the so-called geography closest in, a (mobile) nodal region at the base of all nodal (territorial) regions. The NR can thus be seen as extending from the body to the planet.

6. Regional Governance and Planning

Another aspect of the NR worthy of more detailed study is the governance crisis generated by the expansion of megacity regions and the deepening political and economic tensions caused by the tendencies toward income inequality and social polarization that seem to be built into regional urbanization. Several studies in the US have suggested that income inequalities tend to be lower in city regions where there is some effective regional authority.¹⁶ If this is true, then there is an extraordinarily strong case for introducing more effective regional governance and planning in all the world's city regions.

In the old regionalism, regional planners argued that regional planning, usually involving some variant of growth pole/growth center policy, was necessary to reduce income inequalities and prevent widespread social unrest. A similar argument can be made from the perspective of the new regionalism, but this argument is reinforced by a new form of spatial planning focused on the generative effects of urban agglomerations, industrial clusters, and cohesive regional economies. The key challenge here becomes how to take maximum advantage of the positive effects of agglomeration while also recognizing and dealing with the perhaps inevitable accompanying negative effects on social justice and environmental quality.¹⁷

Never before has the necessity for effective regional governance and planning been so great. This intensified demand does not necessarily revolve around the creation of formal regional governments, a primary focus of the old regionalism. A more adaptive and flexible regionalism is needed, focusing on particular issues such as mass transit, environmental management, regional equity, housing, and social justice. One interesting example of such adaptive and flexible regionalism is the new "metropolitics" promoted by the politician-lawyer-regionalist Myron Orfield.¹⁸

¹⁶ A leading figure in this area is Manuel Pastor Jr., Professor of Geography and American Studies and Ethnicity and Director of the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity at the University of Southern California. See Manuel Pastor, Peter Dreier, Eugene Grigsby, and Marta Lopez-Garza, *Regions That Work: How Cities and Suburbs Can Grow Together*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000; and Manuel Pastor, Chris Benner, and Martha Matsuoka, *This Could Be the Start of Something Big: How Social Movements for Regional Equity are Reshaping Metropolitan America*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009.

¹⁷ For more on the old and new regional planning, see Soja 2009, endnote 1.

¹⁸ Myron Orfield, *A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*, Washington DD: The Brookings Institute and Cambridge MA: The Lincoln Land Institute, 1997; *American Metropolitics: The New Suburban Reality*, Washington DC: The Brookings Institute, 2002; and *Region: Planning the Future of the Twin Cities*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Orfield's initial work focused on the Twin Cities, Minneapolis-St Paul area of Minnesota and revolved around the formation of a metropolitan regional coalition, consisting of suburban municipalities and inner city communities willing to pool their tax resources to invest in urban and regional redevelopment. The regional coalition was relatively successful in Minnesota and attempts continue to be made to apply the idea in other city regions.

Other examples of more flexible regional associations and coalitions include various innovative alliances between industry and community groups in Silicon Valley, where regionalism has played a key role in weathering various economic crises,¹⁹ and the growth of community-based regionalism, such as practiced by several successful labor-community coalitions in Los Angeles.²⁰ The largest and most successful of these regional alliances is the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), which consists of around 120 organizations grouped in different ways for different projects. An additional effect of community-based regionalism has been the growing connection between community development specialists and regional planners, a connection that was almost non-existent ten years ago.

7. Seeking Regional Democracy

An open theoretical frontier growing out of the debates on regional governance and planning involves the application of critical regional and spatial approaches to the study of citizenship, democracy, justice, human rights, and social movements. The development of community-based regionalism, as mentioned above, provides one interesting example of struggling for regional democracy. Closely related has been the "regionalization" of the right to the city movement, based on an idea initially presented by Henri Lefebvre as *le droit à la ville*.

The right to the city idea has been expanded to at least the right to the city region if not to the right to occupy space everywhere, a moot point in a sense if one recognizes that the entire world is being urbanized to some degree. In any case, there is now a World Charter for the Right to the City, many UNESCO meetings and publications on the subject, and, most pertinent here, the formation in 2007 in Los Angeles and later more formally in Atlanta of a national Right to the City Alliance, led by regional coalitions from Los Angeles, Washington DC, and Miami. Struggles over the right to the city and community-based regionalism, and with some careful qualification the Occupy Movement of the past several years, all revolve in one way or another around fomenting and promoting more participatory democracy, especially with regard to questions of equity, citizenship, and hierarchies of social power.

¹⁹ A leading figure studying Silicon Valley regionalism is Annalee Saxenian. See *The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy*, Harvard University Press, 2006.

²⁰ The concept of community-based regionalism was developed first by Martha Matsuoka, co-author of *This Could be the Start of Something Big*. See endnote 15. LAANE and other labor-community coalitions are discussed in Edward Soja, *Seeking Spatial Justice*, University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Conclusion

Seven broad themes have been identified, each stimulated by new spatial insights and brimming with innovative research possibilities. We are witnessing an unprecedented period in which the urban and the regional, formerly quite distinct from one another, are blending together to define something new and different, an evolving regional-urban synthesis that demands new modes of understanding. As one of the only forums that explicitly combines the urban and the regional, IJURR has a rare opportunity to take the lead in defining and expanding critical urban/regional studies.

D&D-0077

Paper Two

If urban regions are the answer, what is the question? Thoughts on the European experience

Abstract: This paper contributes to the current debate in the field of critical urban and regional studies on the meanings of the “regional” and the “urban”. From a political science perspective, we focus on the European case. Firstly, we argue that the conception of the regional scale is not the same in various languages and traditions. Regions in Europe carry meanings and connotations that are not always easy to translate without losing their specific histories. Secondly, our analysis of contemporary debates on the “regional” in the field of urban studies reveals that both practitioners and academics consider the regional scale mainly as a functional space, as the suitable space for economic competitiveness. However, urban regions are also to be regarded as spaces for social and political mobilization. We argue that the political dimension of the “regional” deserves more attention and that further research on urban regions is needed to be carried in this direction.

INTRODUCTION

The question “What is a city?” was at the heart of the debates on the “urban” at the beginning of the twentieth century. Sociologists such as George Simmel, Louis Wirth, Ernest Burgess and Robert Park had different views on the positive and negative aspects of urban societies. However, they all agreed that there was a specific urban way of life being the result of the interaction of large population, high density and high heterogeneity of people and activities. The following process of suburbanization and metropolitanization taking place mainly in North America and Western Europe meant the proliferation of other key concepts in urban studies such as “suburbs” and “metropolitan area”. From the 1950s, the census bureau in countries like the United States of America and Canada started to include a statistical definition of metropolitan areas. The process of metropolitanization has continued to develop and expand to the rest of the world in parallel to the process of globalization. Traditional words like “city” are still being used to characterize new processes, i.e. “global cities”, “world cities”, and more recently, “creative cities” and “smart cities”. Nevertheless, there has been a proliferation of other concepts -often used as synonyms: metropolis, postmetropolis, megalopolis, urban agglomeration, urban area, conurbation, metropolitan region, *métropole*, city-region, mega region, urban region, metropolitan macro region... The use of the words “region” and “regional” has been increasing to refer to the development of urban areas, both in policy-making and the academia, and has challenged the meaning of other words like the “urban” and the “metropolitan”.

The aim of this paper is to contribute to the current debate on the “regional”, which is enriched with ideas coming from diverse disciplines. Our contribution is developed mainly from a political science approach and is focused on the European experience. We show in the first part of the paper that the conception of the regional scale is not the same in various languages and traditions. Regions in Europe carry meanings and connotations that are not always easy to translate without losing their

specific histories. The second part is devoted to the analysis of contemporary debates on the “regional” in the field of urban studies. Both practitioners and academics seem to have enthroned the regional scale as the suitable space for economic competitiveness, describing it as a functional space. However, urban regions can be also conceived as spaces for social and political mobilization. We argue that the political dimension of the “regional” deserves more attention and that further research on urban regions is needed to be carried in this direction.

THE EUROPEAN URBAN AND REGIONAL MOSAIC

Dealing with the use of “local”, “urban”, “metropolitan” and “regional”, even “national”, is especially hard in Europe due to its historic background and the richness of languages, cultures and political and territorial organizations. Just looking at the different territorial reforms and names of recently created metropolitan institutions we understand this diversity and the lack of a common definition of the “regional”.

Decentralized countries like Germany, Italy and Spain are rich in urban and regional terminology. Germany has a federal organization where the *länders*, the federate states, are mainly responsible for urban affairs and for the creation of metropolitan bodies. Thus, we find a wide range of solutions for metropolitan regions with different degree of institutionalization. Two examples of this diversity are the directly-elected metropolitan authority of Stuttgart charged of public transport, urban planning and environment created in 1994 (*Verband Region Stuttgart*) and a regional planning agency for the Frankfurt conurbation in existence since 2001 (*Planungsverband Ballungsraum Frankfurt/Rhein-Main*). Italy is another decentralized state, where regions have directly-elected representatives and some powers shared with central government. In the last twenty years there have been attempts to create “metropolitan cities” (*città metropolitana*); the latest law (2012) establishes that these metropolitan institutions should be constituted by January 2014.

In Spain, after the process of decentralization of the 1980s, 17 *Comunidades autónomas* (Autonomous Communities) have directly-elected assemblies and shared powers with the central government. The 1978 Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation but recognizes the existence of “regions” and “nationalities”, the latter indirectly referring to territories with specific identity like Catalonia and the Basque Country. When it comes to local and urban affairs, the sub national or regional governments have the power to create metropolitan or supra local authorities. Instead, during the 1980s these governments abolished the existing metropolitan structures created under the dictatorship, like *Gran Bilbao* (Greater Bilbao), *Consell Metropolità de l’Horta* (Metropolitan Council of Valencia), *Corporació Metropolitana de Barcelona* (Metropolitan Council of Barcelona) and *Comisión de Planeamiento y Coordinación del Área Metropolitana de Madrid* (Planning Commission for the Metropolitan Area of Madrid). Nowadays, the only metropolitan authority with several functions is the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, created by law from the Catalan Parliament in 2010 and put into office in 2011 after local elections. This body gathers the political representatives of Barcelona and its 35 surrounding municipalities. These are the same members of the Strategic Metropolitan Plan of Barcelona, a voluntary association created in 2003 to build a common vision of the development of the metropolitan area. The 36 municipalities are considered the heart of a larger metropolitan region composed of 164 municipalities. This area is used by spatial and transportation planning purposes, like the Metropolitan Transport Authority. The adjective “regional” is thus reserved to the whole Catalan territory, with other political connotations.

Differently, in Madrid the territorial reform of the 1980s made possible to limit this Autonomous Community to the capital and 178 surrounding municipalities, with no other administrative divisions. This territory includes the urban agglomeration, leaving metropolitan policies in the hands of the regional level. In other words, and opposite to Barcelona, in Madrid the “metropolitan” identifies with the “regional”.

In unitary countries there are no regions or they exist empty of political powers. In Portugal, the meanings of “regional” and “metropolitan” are differentiated: there are administrative regions and two recently created Metropolitan Areas (Lisbon and Porto, by laws of 2003 and 2008). Differently, in the Netherlands the debate on the urban and the regional is shaped by the existence of the *Randstad*. Considered in terms of regional planning, it refers to the polycentric urban agglomeration of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht.

Differently, the United Kingdom (UK) and France are two examples of traditionally unitary countries that have started processes of political decentralization. Since the end of the 1990s, the asymmetric UK system of devolution resulted in the creation of the Scottish Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly, with direct elections and some powers. In France, a “region” is an administrative division or *collectivité territoriale* since the 1982 decentralization reforms and has recognition in the French Constitution. However, in both countries metropolitan reforms and main urban policies are directed by the central government. In England, six “metropolitan counties” and the Greater London Council were abolished in the 1980s. Some of the existing bodies were replaced by “metropolitan districts”, while the capital recovered the Greater London Authority in 2000. In France, territorial laws in 1999 created different types of supra municipal structures according to their population, the largest being the “*communauté urbaine*” like in Lyon or Lille, heirs to the “*agglomérations urbaines*” of the 1960s. In Paris, where there is no “*communauté urbaine*”, the Region of Île-de-France has several responsibilities, mainly in transportation and regional planning. However, the central government intervenes directly in the *francilienne’s* policies, like the recent initiative *Grand Paris* to foster economic development. Meanwhile, the City of Paris and almost 200 surrounding municipalities and other *collectivités territoriales* created in 2009 a voluntary association called *Paris Métropole* to develop common projects.

These examples show a diversity of expressions to refer to the “urban” and the “regional”. Moreover, the regional debate in Europe is intrinsically linked to the rise of the politics of decentralization since the 1980s, expanding the creation of regions in traditionally unitary South European countries but also in the United Kingdom and Ireland. During the 1980s, political leaders from Catalonia or Lombardy envisaged Europe as an opportunity to develop a new conception of Europe (“Europe of the Regions”) associated with the federalization of Europe (Loughlin, 1996). But European regions are diverse -depending on their powers, accountability and origin. Keating and Loughlin (1997) identify four kinds of regions: economic; historical/ethnic; administrative/planning; and political. In fact, the reasons explaining the decentralization process are both political (historical demands for more autonomy) and functional (the implementation of European funds). The analysis of the regional question is then confusing due to the different political and symbolic connotations of the term.

The European urban debate is also characterized by the disparate population, size and density of cities and states, which makes difficult using a single definition of the “urban”. Population ranges from small countries like Malta, which has around 400 000 inhabitants, or Luxembourg, which has around 500 000 inhabitants, to Germany, the state which has the biggest population in the European Union (EU), more than 80 million inhabitants. In Germany or France we find different categories of urban agglomerations (small, medium, big), while in less populated countries there is just one “big city”. For example, in Luxembourg, the biggest agglomeration has 130 000 inhabitants vs almost 4 million inhabitants of the German Rhein-Main agglomeration. The definition of an urban area depends also on the size of municipalities and the degree of local fragmentation. North and Central European states have a small number of municipalities because of territorial reforms done mainly in the period 1950-70. For instance, the last wave of amalgamations in Denmark (2007) reduced the number of municipalities up to 98. On the opposite, France has more than 36 000 municipalities and Spain and Italy more than 8 000 municipalities each. The degree of urbanization varies also from country to country and within a country. Central Europe (The Netherlands, Belgium and West Germany) is a high densely populated area while the North and the South are thinly populated, except for the coastal zones and the areas around the capital city (Eurostat regional yearbook, 2011).

Since the publication of the European Spatial Development Perspective in 1999, there has been an increasing focus on the territorial dimension in policies of the Member States and within the EU. However, the harmonization of a European territorial perspective is very difficult because of different traditions in spatial planning of the Member States (for details, see Faludi and Waterhout, 2002). Moreover, the national settlement structures as well as data and methodological problems make difficult to complete a picture of the European urban system. Even if there exist several attempts to classify and compare the “urban”, the “metropolitan” and the “regional” in Europe (i.e. the Urban Audit and the Metropolitan European Growth Areas), the existing databases for urban research on cities across Europe are inadequate (European Commission, 2010: 62).

So as to harmonize data from different countries and use them for the design of European policies, there is a statistical office of the EU, Eurostat. This agency uses the NUTS classification (Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics), which is a hierarchical system for dividing up the economic territory of the EU into regions at three different levels (NUTS 1, 2 and 3, respectively, moving from larger to smaller territorial units). However, the different units correspond to diverse realities (for details of data collection and classification see Regional and Urban Statistics Reference Guide, 2009), which makes difficult doing comparative research with the NUTS method. As an example, the research project called “The Case for Agglomeration Economies in Europe” compared the NUTS 3 of Manchester, Barcelona, Lyon and Dublin with the purpose to examine the relationship between agglomeration economies and city-regional governance. In this research, financed by the European Spatial Planning Observation Network (ESPON Programme 2006), NUTS 3 did not correspond with continuous built up areas or functional areas in terms of economic and employment integration. Moreover, the powers of the different territorial governments were heterogeneous, so it was necessary to be very precise about the nature of each institution (Harding et al, 2010).

To sum up, there is a diversity of European metropolitan and regional meanings, which asks for accuracy while doing research. Nevertheless, seen from outside, these specific traditions of European countries may be diluted into the view of considering Europe itself as a “region”, as an homogeneous territory with two main metropolis (London and Paris) and a network of large, medium and small

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3 cities. This idea of Europe as a “region” is not based on usual mental visions of Europe shared by
4 European citizens and political decision makers, which reveals the complexity of the territorial
5 concepts.
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8 9 10 FUNCTIONAL VS POLITICAL URBAN REGIONS

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12 Having seen the plurality of the European urban and regional scales, we could expect that the
13 theoretical debate has its own specificities compared to the North American. In fact, recent academic
14 transatlantic debates share some aspects but differ in others. The common point since the 1990s is
15 the “urban-regional renaissance” or “the current round of globalization-regionalization” (MacLeod,
16 2001: 804; 806): the idea that urban regions have become the locomotives of the national economies
17 within which they are situated, meaning new opportunities and challenges. Authors use different
18 names to define this process and highlight its complementary dimensions, but they agree on the
19 significance of the urban region as an effective arena for situating the institutions of post-Fordist
20 economic governance.
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24 In North America there are different kinds of new regionalism literatures (Painter, 2008), including
25 the so-called Los Angeles School of geography and urban planning, a political science approach as
26 well as social and environmental activists. The contribution of this heterogeneous group of authors
27 has been deeply analyzed (see Lovering, 1999; the special issue 23 (5), 2001 of Journal of Urban
28 Affairs edited by Frisken and Norris). Along with other aspects, neo regionalist literature supports
29 new forms of collaboration among governments and private and non-profit organizations in a region
30 (the shift from ‘government’ to ‘governance’) (Savitch and Vogel, 2000). In Europe, the study of the
31 connections between the regionalization of governance and the changing nature of the State has
32 been especially fruitful. The nation-state as built during the nineteenth-century has to face pressures
33 emanating from above (international organizations and the EU) and below (the emergence of regions
34 and cities). In this context, European authors, when referring to the urban/regional debate, do not
35 use the term “new regionalism” but “metropolitan governance” (Le Galès, 1998; Jouve, 2003), even if
36 they share the general questions of North American authors. We understand this difference taking
37 into account that some US urban regions, described as “geographical areas of subnational extent”
38 (Scott, 1998: 1), are larger than many European countries. Moreover, we have seen that in Europe
39 regions have a political and historical connotation lacking in North America.
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45 The more recent rescaling and re-territorialization approach focus on issues of economic
46 development and competitiveness (Brenner, 2004). This perspective has provided a new frame for
47 understanding the restructuring of the State through urban regions, pointing out the uneven
48 development that new urban policies produce within countries. However, it has been criticized by its
49 economic determinism and for underestimating the significance of political and institutional variables
50 that shape urban policies (Beauregard, 2006; Le Galès, 2006). The same critics apply to the concept
51 of “city-region” (see for instance the contribution of Jonas and Ward 2007a, b in IJURR). This
52 approach would fail to integrate the role of politics and the mechanisms through which the agents
53 attempt to influence change (Harding, 2007). Indeed, there would be a tendency to consider city-
54 region formation as a “by-product of macro-restructuring” (Jonas and Ward, 2007a: 175), that is, to
55 think of city-regions in terms of economic agency. This trend in theoretical debates can be applied to
56 European policy making, where the regional scale is increasingly considered as a ‘functional space’
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for economic planning and political governance (Keating, 1998). Indeed, the concepts of regional and urban competitiveness have been the main centre of attention of European territorial development policy discussions and plans like the Europe 2020 strategy (European Commission, 2010). In the same way, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has recently launched a new methodology to identify functional urban areas (OECD, 2012).

However, urban regions are not just statistical units for planning purposes. Metropolitan regions, city-regions or urban regions, no matter how we call them, have also a symbolic and political dimension. As Jones and MacLeod (2004: 435) have developed, we can distinguish between “regional spaces” and “spaces of regionalism”. The first is meant to denote the economic or functional dimension while the second deals with the political attempts of constructing regionalism. Regional spaces are claimed to be the heart of the new globalized economy and the spaces of regionalism are the expression of claims for political and citizenship rights linked to a social constructed territory. Up to what extent urban regions are spaces where a collective narrative is being built? Paasi (2003: 477) identifies different elements that compose narratives of regional identity: ideas on nature, landscape, the built environment, culture/ethnicity, dialects, economic success/recession, periphery/centre relations, stereotypic images of a people/community, etc. Do we find them in urban regions? Who are the actors behind these narratives? Do citizens recognize metropolitan regions as a suitable arena for their political aims and ideals? Are urban regions becoming new spaces of solidarity and citizenship?

The analysis of legitimacy and democracy at the metropolitan scale has been generally associated to the degree of institutionalization of metropolitan governance (Heinelt and Kübler, 2005). According to the reformist approach, the creation of metropolitan governments with juridical and financial autonomy and directly-elected representatives should enhance the output and input legitimacy of urban regions. However, there aren’t European examples of pure metropolitan governments. In the case of pseudo metropolitan governments, like the recently created in Stuttgart and London, the political power of urban regions clashes with long-established political boundaries and modes of representation. This is especially evident in Europe where there are already many levels of representation: local, regional or sub national, national and European, even if they are unequally rooted (Ascher, 1995).

We find an illustrative example in European urban policies (Atkinson, 2001). While urban regions are the target for European wide economic development policies, cities and neighbourhoods of the same urban regions are the aim of other European programmes with a social dimension. For instance, the URBAN programme seeks to foster social cohesion through urban regeneration at the municipal or neighbourhood level. The actions are concrete and the results clearly visible. Differently, European plans concerning urban regions (like the European Spatial Development Perspective) are abstract and unknown by citizens. In addition, European programmes like URBAN have been implemented with a bottom-up approach, seeking the participation of local community, while EU plans regarding urban regions are mainly done with a top-down approach. Last but not least, citizens recognize easily neighbourhoods and cities: they have smaller boundaries, a historic background and a collective story. In contrast, the definition of an urban region is still a matter of debate among specialists.

In order to study the meaning that urban regions have for citizens, surveys have been carried in Swiss (Kübler, 2005) and Swedish agglomerations (Lidström, 2010). These researches show the emergence

of an inter-municipal political interest. However, the specificity of urban regions challenges the traditional methods of participation and asks for other means to include the views not only of residents but also of commuters, visitors or property-owners. Indeed, urban regions are by definition discontinuous and changing territories, spaces for the day-to-day life but lacking in most cases of political institutions and collective symbols to identify with. At the same time, political conflicts taking place in urban regions challenge the issues of identity and legitimacy as well as traditional ways of mobilization. In this direction, Purcell (2007) claims that the question of democracy in urban regions merits more critical attention. More specifically, he raises the need of counterbalancing the idea that neoliberal globalization has negatively impacted cities and urban regions by exploring the politics of democratization. In conclusion, there is room for research analyzing urban regions as spaces for political mobilization. In doing so, the debate on the “regional” would be richer and overcome the dominant functionalist view on urban regions.

CONCLUSION

The notion of “regional scale” has been increasingly used to describe the growing importance of urban regions in the global economy. This paper has addressed three main questions that guide urban and regional studies. The first is “What is an urban region?” The definition of urban regions has resulted in a wide collection of indicators and databases coming from different institutions, like the OECD and Eurostat. However, the use of the “regional” is problematic in Europe, where it can describe both an urban region and the various types of decentralized territorial units of the State. This diversity can lead to conceptual confusion when comparing the “regional question” between countries and especially between continents. For Europeans, a “region” can be understood as a unique territory with specific political identity, while from the Chinese perspective Europe itself can be seen as one region. In the urban and regional debate it is thus necessary to clarify the way in which the researcher is using the terms.

There has been a tendency among practitioners and academics to underestimate these differences and thus to consider urban regions as reified spaces. In particular, urban regions have been considered as the best scale for enhancing economic competitiveness, emphasizing their functional dimension at the expense of their political dimension. However, urban regions are living territories where political struggles take place around the issues of economic development, social cohesion, sustainability, etc. The second key question is then “What are the political processes taking place in urban regions and who are the main actors?” Finally, there is a normative debate on the values that should be enhanced at the urban and regional scale (i.e. social justice or better democracy) and the proposal of solutions to achieve those (i.e. changing urban policies). The third debate strengthens the ideological component of urban regions and can be synthesized as “Which kind of urban regions do we want?”

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D&D 0077
Paper Three

**Elite compacts in Africa: the role of area based management in the new
governmentality of the Durban city-region**

Key words: City region, traditional authorities, elite compacts, area based management, post apartheid city, regional service delivery, urban rural linkages, African urbanism, multi-scale governance.

Introduction

City regions are almost never seen as an African issue. This is true across the world’s most notoriously anti-urban continent, and externally where African cities are almost entirely invisible in any global city region rankings (Bryescon and Potts, 2005; Gugler, 2004; Robinson, 2002). The focus on Africa’s emergent city regions currently being ushered in by Chinese investors, the international consulting corporates, and global architecture and engineering firms is transforming the emphasis on African cities from poverty to one of potential wealth (Foster & Briceño-Garmendia, 2010; MCGranahan, 2008; McKinsey, 2010; Monitor, 2011; Moyo, 2009). Notwithstanding often flimsy evidence for the projections of the continents unbridled growth (Buckley and Kallergis, 2013), the potential of a market of millions of urban residents on one continent is creating what Pieterse calls Afro hype (Pieterse, 2013). Whatever the actual economic prospects it is difficult to ignore that there are now at least 50 African cities of over 3 million people (Table 1, Figure 1).

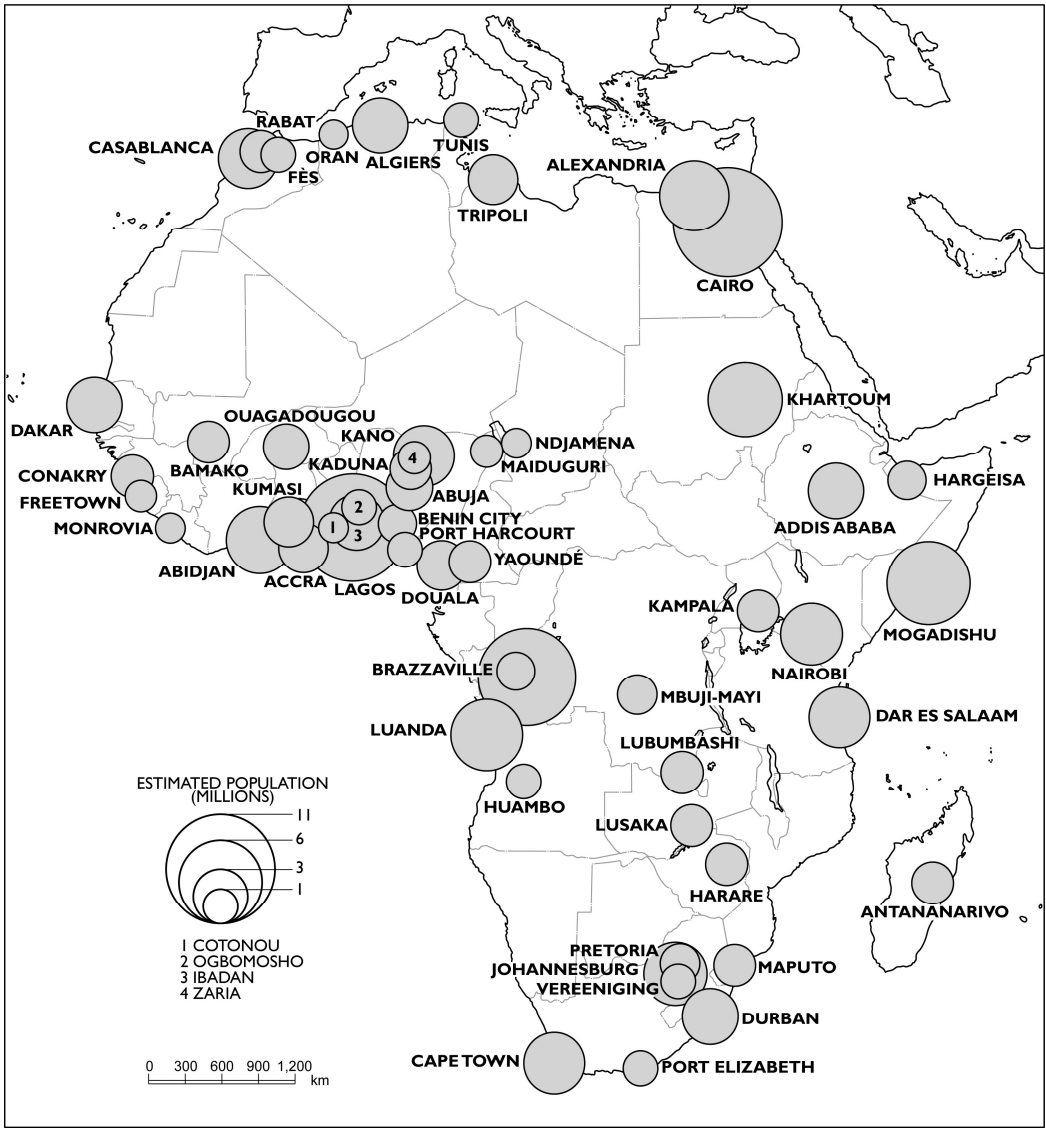
Until recently international reviews of the world’s premier city regions included only Johannesburg, generally in recognition of its international stock market dominance rather than for its political or economic connectivity on the African continent. This is changing with the dawning recognition that some of the most rapidly economically expanding city regions are African and that the response to global environmental impacts of climate change and ecosystem integrity will of necessity require multi scale governance and city regional interventions (ADB, 2011; Leck and Simon, 2012; Parnell and Pieterse, 2013; Murray and Myers, 2007;). If only because of their population size and startling change in land use cover (Seto et al, 2012) the continent’s biggest centres like Lagos are finally attracting some academic and policy attention (Gandy, 2005; Packer, 2006). Much less is known (or cared) about are the the mid sized city regions (pop 1-3 million), including important cities such as Kisumu or Vereeniging.

Table 1: African city regions and their estimated population (adapated from Wiki)

Central City	Country	Administrative area Latest figures from national census authority	Agglomeration[1] (2010; UN WUP)	Agglomeration[2] (2010-01-01; city population.de)
Cairo	Egypt	7,786,640 (2006) Governorate	11,001,000	15,200,000
Lagos	Nigeria	7,937,932 (2006) The 16 local government areas of Lagos proper	10,578,000	11,800,000
Kinshasa	Democratic Republic of the Congo	5,528,000 (1998) Province	8,754,000	8,900,000
Greater Johannesburg / Gauteng	South Africa	3,888,180 (2007) Province of 3 metro councils	3,670,000	7,550,000[3]
Khartoum-Umm Durman	Sudan	2,919,773 (1993) The three principal cities of the Khartoum agglomeration	5,172,000	4,975,000
Mogadishu	Somalia	2,855,800 (2011)	6,346,000	5,845,000
Alexandria	Egypt	4,110,015 (2006) Governorate	4,387,000	4,575,000
Abidjan	Ivory Coast	4,210,200 (2002) Département	4,125,000	4,400,000
Casablanca	Morocco	3,631,061 (2004) Région	3,284,000	3,975,000
Cape Town	South Africa	3,497,097 (2007) Metropolitan municipality	3,405,000	3,775,000
Durban	South Africa	3,468,086 (2007) Metropolitan municipality	2,879,000	3,650,000
Accra	Ghana	1,659,136 (2000) District (Accra Metropolitan Area)	2,342,000	3,575,000
Nairobi	Kenya	3,138,295 (2009) Nairobi administrative area	3,523,000	3,500,000
Kano	Nigeria	2,153,225 (2006) The six local government areas of Kano proper	3,395,000	3,375,000
Ibadan	Nigeria	1,338,659 (2006) The five local government areas of Ibadan proper	2,837,000	3,375,000
Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	2,487,288 (2002) Mkoa	3,349,000	3,225,000
Algiers	Algeria	2,947,461 (2008) Wilaya	2,800,000	3,175,000
Addis Ababa	Ethiopia	2,738,248 (2007) Astedader	2,930,000	3,100,000
Luanda	Angola	1,823,282 (2002) Provincia	4,772,000	3,100,000
Dakar	Senegal	2,452,656 (2005) Région	2,863,000	2,675,000
Pretoria	South Africa	2,345,908 (2007) Metropolitan municipality	1,429,000	2,525,000
Tripoli	Libya	2,222,000 (2006) Mutsarfiyah	2,267,000	2,325,000
Harare	Zimbabwe	1,903,510 (2002) Province	1,632,000	2,300,000
Douala	Cameroon	1,514,978 (2001) Wouri département	2,125,000	2,200,000
Hargeisa	Somalia		1,340,000	2,290,000
Abuja	Nigeria	1,405,201 (2006) Federal Capital Territory	1,995,000	Not listed
Kampala	Uganda	1,337,900 (2005) District	1,598,000	1,970,000
Bamako	Mali	1,215,335 (2005) District	1,699,000	1,920,000
Maputo	Mozambique	1,099,102 (2007) Province-level city	1,655,000	1,910,000
Rabat	Morocco	627,932 (2004) Préfecture	1,802,000	1,890,000
Antananarivo	Madagascar		1,879,000	1,860,000
Lusaka	Zambia	1,084,703 (2000) District	1,451,000	1,830,000
Yaoundé	Cameroon	1,248,235 (2001) Mfoundi département	1,801,000	1,750,000
Ouagadougou	Burkina Faso	1,475,223 (2006) Municipality	1,908,000	1,700,000
Conakry	Guinea	1,092,936 (1996) Région	1,653,000	1,690,000
Kaduna	Nigeria	760,084 (2006) Two local government areas	1,561,000	1,670,000
Kumasi	Ghana	1,171,311 (2000) District (Metropolitan Area)	1,834,000	1,630,000
Lubumbashi	Democratic Rep of Congo		1,543,000	1,570,000
Mbuji-Mayi	Democratic Rep of Congo		1,488,000	1,520,000
Brazzaville	Republic of the Congo	1,174,005 (2005) Province-level city	1,323,000	1,430,000
Oran	Algeria	634,112 (1998) Commune	770,000	1,260,000
Benin	Nigeria		1,302,000	1,240,000
Port Harcourt	Nigeria	541,116 (2006) Local government area	1,104,000	1,230,000
Tunis	Tunisia	911,643 (2005) Municipality	1,108,000	1,210,000
Freetown	Sierra Leone	947,122 (2004) Western Area province	901,000	1,200,000
Cotonou	Benin	665,100 (2002) Commune	844,000	1,150,000
Vereeniging	South Africa	800,819 (2007) District municipality	1,143,000	Not listed
Fès	Morocco	977,946 (2004) Préfecture	1,065,000	1,110,000
Maiduguri	Nigeria	521,492 (2006) Local government area	970,000	1,100,000

Monrovia	Liberia	1,010,970 (2008) Municipality	827,000	1,080,000
Port Elizabeth	South Africa	1,050,930 (2007) Metropolitan municipality	1,068,000	1,070,000
Huambo	Angola		1,034,000	Not listed
Ogbomosho	Nigeria		1,032,000	Not listed
Zaria	Nigeria	408,198 (2006) Local government area	963,000	1,030,000

Figure 1: Africa’s 50 largest cities



Even accounting for data discrepancies in the figures reflected in Table 1, the traditional omission of African cases from the city regional dialogue is clearly problematic, and rectifying the gap is overdue. But we will suggest, addressing the African city region requires more than a few extra case studies to ensure geographical representivity of the global system of city regions and the limited work on African city regions needs to be given much greater weight. The now somewhat dated South African literature on city regions is rich in this regard (Cobbet et al, 1985; Mabin, 1994; Mc Carthy and Smit, 1984; Dewar et al,1986; Fair, 1986),

although this case study of Durban may resonate more with experiences north of the Limpopo River rather than adding to the South African comparison. Ideally, incorporating Africa into the debates about city regions has to not only reflect on how global ideas travel or taken up in the African context, but take seriously the possibility that there are distinctive issues emerging from African cities as well (Simone, 2004; Pieterse, 2011)

The first purpose in this paper is thus to draw attention to important new African informants to city regional thinking, using Durban as a case study. In this regard the issue of city expansion into a once rural hinterland and the associated overlay of traditional and modern governmentalities are fore fronted. The second purpose of the paper is to reveal how established tropes in the city regional literature have cast new light on Africa's large scale urban management problems, enabling elite bargains to be drawn in the everyday management of land and service delivery across the vastly diverse urban conditions of the Durban city region or the eThekweni Municipal Area which extends 2 297 km², and has a population of 3.5 million people (Figure 2). The majority of the population is considered to be urban (86%) but 14% of residents live in dispersed peri-urban or traditional rural settlements, a situation that has significant implications for long term planning and sustainability of the city region as a whole (Freund, 2002a; Sutherland, et al, 2012a; Sutherland et al, 2012b).

We trace how, in the negotiations that saw the end of apartheid, a conscious political decision was made to include the a number of white controlled towns including Durban, various black townships and also parts of the KwaZulu hinterland which was the contested stronghold of African National Congress (ANC) and traditional authorities led by Buthelezi in a unitary structure, the eThekweni Metropolitan Council (Cameron, 1999; Padayachee, 2002). The area has long been described as a functional region (Hindson and Mc Carthy, 1994) and it is the terrain we now describe as the Durban city region (Figures 2 and 3). The first map (Figure 2) shows inequality and poverty in eThekweni based on a composite index of unemployment, income, GDP, Infrastructure backlogs, social facility backlogs and informal settlements. The darkest red zones are those with the highest development needs highlighting peripheral poverty relative to the affluence of the city centre. The second map (Figure 3) profiles service backlogs. Of critical importance here is the 'Urban Development Line' that is shown in red. This line delineates the point beyond which service levels drop to lower 'rural' standards – and includes all of the territory that is the focus of discussion in this paper. The map reflects the new governmentality of the post apartheid city region – a unitary structure with differential infrastructure levels premised on enduring if conflicting rationalities of land tenure.

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Figure 2: The Durban functional region, now broadly defined as the EThekwin Metropolitan Authority (eThekwin Municipality, 2012).

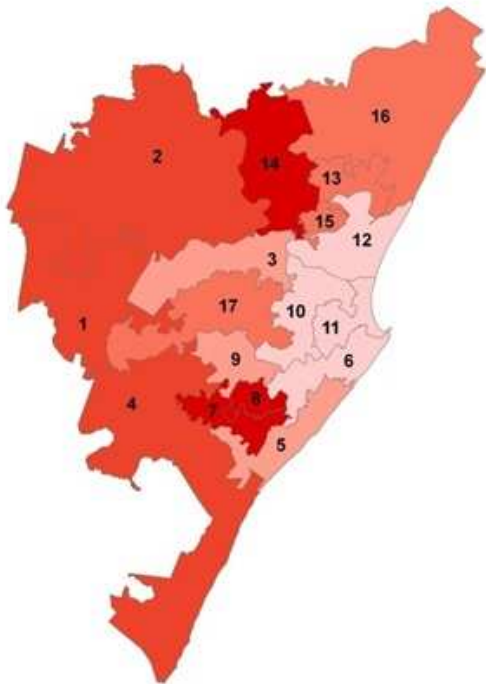
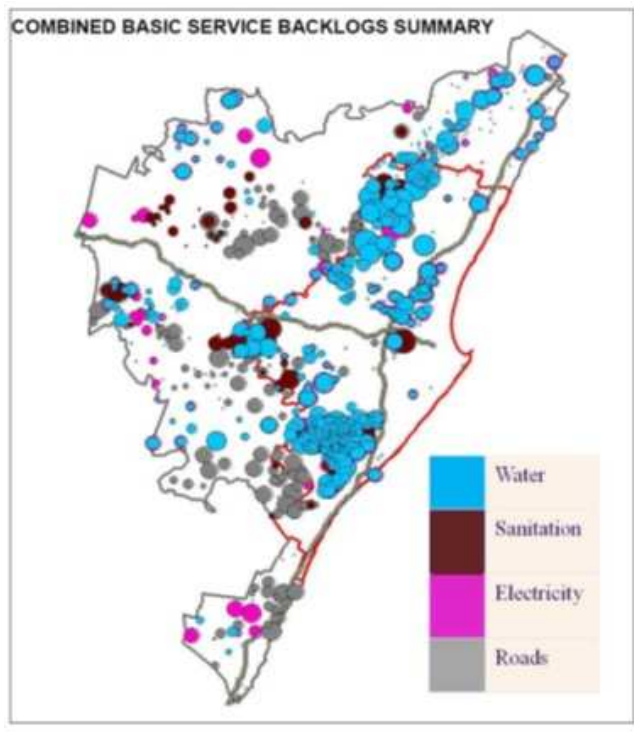


Figure 3: Combined service backlogs in the eThekwin Municipality (eThekwin Municipality, 2012).



In the self-conscious forging of the governmentality of the city region, as opposed to the legal boundary redefinition of a municipality or the informal enhancement of links between a town and its rural areas, the interests of the various elites (traditional land owners, business, political parties and even foreign donors), are negotiated through the construction of a common city regional identity and strategy. In this regard Durban is no exception and like cities everywhere there have been extended city visioning processes designed to secure this common vision and sense of place (Freund, 2002b; Robinson, 2008). Bass (2006) argues that the iconography of post apartheid Durban forefronts the rural images of Zulu nationalism, negating the urbanity that most city regional strategies espouse and perpetuating a kind of African urban denialism. It is this 'rurban' identity that lies at the heart of this investigation into the Durban city region and our focus on the relationship between tradition and modernity and town and country as distinctive markers of African regionalism. Yet we will show that, while it is true that the political bases that African cities must bring together are unusually rural and traditional in character, the tools and the devices that are invoked to secure city wide or greater metropolitan planning and fiscal compromises that make the city region work better, include internationally tried and tested devices of urban planning, in this case area based management.

Through reflection on the practical post apartheid (re)alignment of the competing rationalities that had to be unified under a single extended city regional structure and city vision for greater Durban, the paper teases out the interface between traditional and modern settlement management systems looking at how area based management provided the means to effect a compromise that had popular support across the city region, that did not bankrupt the municipality, that ensured that chiefs maintained extended control of settlement decisions and that the poor had

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some improvement in their living conditions. Of special interest is how the divergent interests of potentially competing and hostile elites were accommodated through a managerial approach.

Africa and the city region

Notwithstanding concerted efforts by scholars to expand the geographical frame and take urban studies to the edge of the world map, even large African cities like Robinson’s home-town of Durban in South Africa remain peripheral to core debates on urban change (Robinson, 2008). The now robust international city regional literature has developed over decades, almost exclusively from empirical reference points that ignore Africa (Gugler, 2004; Pieterse, 2013). Africa and Africanist in turn have typically turned a blind eye to the regional dynamics of the emerging metropoli of the continent, only on relatively rare occasions tracking how African cities are partaking in city visioning or strategy activities that position the city in a wider national or international context (Parnell and Clark 2008; Robinson, 2008; Rogerson, 1999).

Across Africa, population growth and urbanisation means that settlements on the edge of large cities are no longer characterised by independent subsistence or rural economies and are instead increasingly integral to the functioning of the city (including its ecosystem services, infrastructure, labour markets and economic footprint). In post apartheid South Africa ‘peri-urban’ areas that formed part of the functional city region typically became defined as urban and were incorporated into the regulatory and fiscal management of a single geographically extended municipality (Cameron, 1999; Freund, 2002a). This is absolutely the case in Durban where the post 2000 EThekweni Council boundary extends way beyond the urban edge, incorporating swathes of dense informal settlements and more dispersed rural homesteads (Figure 2). In other parts of Africa modernising municipal demarcation processes have been less formal or comprehensive than in South Africa, but the increasing integration of the African town and its countryside is noted everywhere (Myers, 2010; Potts, 2012; Gough and Yankson, 2010).

As African cities have expanded and become more socially and economically complex the role of local authorities and city planning have become more important (Pelling and Wisner, 2012; Watson et al 2012) and like every other context, the issues of how big cities interact with their regions can no longer be ignored. Old debates about regionalism, that were often widely discredited in Africa (Simon, 1993) and especially South Africa where they formed the basis of territorial apartheid (Cobbet at al, 1985) have been given fresh impetus by the greater focus on participation, sustainability and collaborative governance (Freund, 2002b). This shift in attitudes and the embracing of a vision of sustainable urban development that reflects the ecological as well as economic footprint of urban areas, mirrors those espoused globally in the new regionalism (Table 2). Under the rubric of new regionalism the city scale has revived policy attention (Parnell and Clark, 2010).

Table 2: Old and New Regionalism

	Traditional Regional Policies 'Regional Planning' 1950s to 1990s	New Regional Policies 'Territorial Development' 1980s to present
Objectives	Balance national economies by compensating for disparities	Increase regional development performance, reduce environmental risk and promote ecological resilience
Strategies	Sectoral approach	Integrated development programmes and projects that link resource consumption with output
Geog. Focus	Political regions	Economic regions and ecological regions
Target	Lagging regions	All regions
Context	National economy	International economy and local economies, global environmental targets such as carbon emissions
Tools	Subsidies, incentives, state aids, and regulations	Assets, drivers of growth, soft and hard infrastructures, collaboration incentives, development agencies, co-operative governance
Actors	National governments	Multiple levels of governments, private and civic actors. Implementation agencies.

The issue of the scale of sub national government units is critical across Africa, which faces significant challenges that derive from its rapid and sprawling urban growth, as well as the increasing economic muscle and spread of its cities and city regions (McGranahan, 2008; Turok, 2012). The fact that African local government is typically exceptionally weak compounds the challenges multi nodal municipalities or city regions face in horizontal co-operation (Batley and Larbi, 2004) while efforts at decentralisation have done little to shift the hierarchical nature of African states, leaving cities and city regions without much political or fiscal power, especially relative to the strongly nodal character of say Europe. Like the European and North American city regions with which we are more familiar, in Africa's city regions there is an absence of a unified practice or code of urban planning and regulation. In the African case this is compounded by competing rationalities of modern and traditional authority (Pieterse, 2011).

Like large cities elsewhere on the continent Durban's dominant governance challenge relates to the incorporation of traditional authorities as the city expands into its once rural hinterland (Padayachee and Freund, 2002; Bass, 2006). The Durban example highlights a typical African imperative, where calls for greater external national and international orientation to foster economic growth have to be set against demands to address the massive service backlog and the needs of the impoverished urban majority (Batley and Larbi, 2004; Robinson, 2008). Finally the Durban case is interesting for other all other regions because it has had the luxury of reimagining itself and restructuring the systems of governance. The way this city has used the transformation window presented by the ending of apartheid years to address questions of chieftaincy and tradition provides tremendous insight into

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general African urban challenges. For those urbanists unfamiliar with the role of traditional leadership it may be useful to have some background context on the political significance of the chiefs to understand why their incorporation into the governmentality of cities is imperative.

Traditional leadership in modern urban spaces

South Africa was not atypical in having to accommodate indigenous institutions in its new political order when the country made its transition from minority rule to a non-racial democracy in 1994. In many parts of the world accommodation of customary forms of governance continues. This holds (at least nominally) as much for royalty in the United Kingdom as for First Nation people in Latin America. The effective accommodation of aboriginal populations and indigenous institutions in formal democratic governance structures is an issue that has vexed successive administrations in countries as different as Australia (c.f. Porter, 2010) and India, so in this regard African chieftaincy is not exceptional. But in Africa chieftaincy or traditional authority regulation of space has not (yet) been integrated into modern systems of planning which typically apply in the urban core that once fell under colonial control (Myers, 2011).

Chieftaincy in Africa has survived huge social and political change and remains important both as a socio-cultural and political system, having salience beyond the actual and presumed successes and failures of individual chiefs (Comaroff, 1978). Yet in the early years of South Africa’s transition chieftaincy was hotly debated and remains a matter of contention, especially at the local level. Popular opinion divided into two broad viewpoints: the first was that chieftaincy operates as a brake on South Africa’s hard won democracy and on processes of democratic consolidation. The second was that traditional authority is integral to African culture and constitutes a different, even a unique form of democracy. In between were pragmatists who believed chieftaincy should be accommodated because it was part of the institutional fabric of the country.

In some sense these positions were mirrored in academic debates. The antagonists are best represented by Mahmood Mamdani. In *Citizen and Subject* he posited that the colonial period forged a ‘specifically African form of state’ (Mamdani, 1996: 286). Based on a system of indirect rule that relied on the ‘authoritarian possibilities in native culture’ the post-colonial African state was bifurcated along rural and urban lines, between citizens in the towns and cities and an excluded population of rural subjects governed by a system he described as ‘decentralised despotism’ (Mamdani, 1996: 21). Mamdani characterised South Africa as an exaggerated case of the generalised pattern he identified for Africa more broadly, where the apartheid regime ‘keep apart forcibly that which socioeconomic processes tend to bring together freely: the urban and the rural, one ethnicity and another’ (Mamdani, 1996: 32). He predicted that in rural areas indirect rule would be left intact. Mamdani’s seminal book gave rise to extensive debate and a fair share of critique, heralding a number of important studies on chieftaincy and state policy in South Africa and

elsewhere (Bernstein, 1996; Capps, 2009; Cliffe, 2000; Hart, 2002; Ntsebeza, 1999; O'Laughlin, 2000).

The antagonists' argument, broadly cast, was that traditional leadership was manipulated under colonial rule, was used to legitimise separate development under apartheid, and should not be relied upon and sustained by a country espousing liberal democracy (Koelble, 2005; Ntsebeza, 2006). The position of the protagonists was that 'traditional leadership yields a legitimacy that is rooted in culture and tradition' (Oomen, 2005: 28). In this view traditional leadership need not be seen as an anomaly, a compromise or a contradiction that exists within a more legitimate modern democracy. On the contrary, it is suggested that traditional leaders have social and moral obligations towards people under their jurisdiction, in a cultural context that bears shared responsibility: 'that would be vulgarized as nepotism in Western contexts' (Sithole, 2005; Sithole and Mbele, 2008: 12). Bound together by ties of kinship, marriage and patronage, traditional leaders are said to derive their authority from the earned allegiance of subjects and not from coercive power. It is certainly the case that traditional authorities have endured and have been taken as seriously as they deserved. Hence any *renewed* recognition of the customary is generally in the eye of the beholder rather than the observed.

In South Africa much of the scholarship on chieftaincy has struck a pragmatic note, lulled by the assumption that indigenous institutions are accommodated and contained under the umbrella of a liberal democratic constitution (Beall, 2006; Cousins and Claassens, 2004; South Africa, 1996). There has however been recent recognition that there are more substantial governance contradictions arising from the unresolved details of how traditional authorities are to operate in practice, than had originally been imagined or formalised in the Constitution. For example, efforts to extend zoning regulations onto traditional land in order to put in place climate adaptation strategies, such as set-backs from rivers, have been resisted by chiefs as an encroachment on their rights of local settlement management, leaving communities exposed to considerable risk (Ziervogel and Parnell, 2011). Under more overtly traditionalist leadership of President Zuma the Traditional Authorities Bill of 2011 proposes that traditional courts would become mandatory not voluntary institutions in tribal areas. The bill, which among other things, fails to secure gender equality has met with much opposition even in the ANC, but its tabling and the strong support it enjoys in some sectors is evidence of the conflicting rationalities of the traditional and modern and of the de facto as well as de jure competing power bases that these value systems represent, especially at the local level.

Local level reform was relatively neglected during the negotiated settlement, and when it was addressed it became a fiercely contested terrain and the site on which the last remnants of existing privilege were most robustly defended (Pieterse et al, 2002; Robinson, 1996: 211). Among the contenders seeking to protect the status quo were traditional leaders who had already been disappointed about the limits to their power nationally and were alert to any efforts to curtail their authority at the local level. Along similar lines to Ghana, the ANC tried to dissuade them from participating in party politics by promising them a prominent role in developmental

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local government (de Visser, 2005). The White Paper on Local Government, issued by the Ministry for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development in March 1998, stated that on issues such as development, ‘a cooperative relationship will have to be developed’, and offered an image of traditional leaders as benign overseers of local disputes, adjudicators of custom and facilitators on matters of delivery. Yet both the White Paper and the Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998) continued to deny the chiefs any privileged role in decision making.¹ Traditional leaders vociferously held out for more, and just before the 1999 general election their stipends and allowances were raised in an effort to pacify them, effectively doubling the salary bill for traditional leaders across the country (Goodenough, 2002: 20).

Ahead of the 2004 elections, efforts to mollify traditional leaders went even further with the passing of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (TLGFA) in 2003. This endorsed the operation of traditional councils alongside other local government structures. Section Three of the Act states that ‘traditional communities’ must establish these councils, which in turn should comprise ‘traditional leaders and members of the traditional community selected by the principal traditional leader concerned in terms of custom’. Where old tribal authorities existed, established in terms of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, they were simply converted into traditional councils. The Act significantly entrenched the authority of traditional leaders and constituted a real victory for them, particularly when viewed alongside the Communal Land Rights Act (CLRA) of 2005, which provided for the transfer of ownership of communal land in the former homelands from the state to communities resident there. The CLRA accords a central role to ‘traditional councils’ in the allocation of this land, which assuaged the anxieties of traditional leaders about losing control over this key source of power and influence, although it raised anxieties among those who saw it as deeply retrogressive and a problematic obstacle to the advancement of property rights.

Hence the South African state has made consistent and significant concessions to traditional authorities over its first decade in power. The then Minister of Provincial and Local Government, Sydney Mufamadi, wrote in the foreword to the draft White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance (Department of Provincial and Local Government, 2002: 4) that:

‘It is the Department’s considered view that the institution has a place in our democracy, and has a potential to transform and contribute enormously towards the restoration of the moral fibre of our society and in the reconstruction and development of the country, especially in rural areas. It is also important that conditions for democratic governance and stability in rural areas are created so that accelerated service delivery and sustainable development can be achieved. This will only be possible if measures are taken to ensure that people in rural areas shape the

¹ The Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998) served to entrench the focus on the role of traditional authorities in local development, but still firmly under the authority of municipal councils.

character and form of the institution of traditional leadership at a local level, inform how it operates and hold it accountable.'

This accommodation might seem to reinforce Mamdani's (1996) argument that the system of indirect rule has been left largely intact in the post-apartheid period. However, there are four important caveats to this claim that have relevance the city regional question. First, as implied in Mufamadi's foreword, the Constitution trumps other legislation and so the rights enshrined in it remain protected in constitutional law. In our case it is the eThekweni Municipality that holds the ultimate authority in determining the negotiated settlements of how land might be managed and what resources are allocated, not the Chiefs. Second, the TLGFA provides for incremental change. For example, Section Two of the Act states that a traditional council should comprise forty percent democratically elected members of the traditional community, defined as any community that 'is subject to a system of traditional leadership in terms of that community's customs', and that 'at least a third of the members of the council must be women' (Republic of South Africa, 2003). Gender scholars and feminists have been dismissive of the changes, arguing that female relatives of traditional leaders are put in place to fulfil the quota requirements on traditional councils and that nothing much has changed on the ground (Beall et al, 2005; Bentley, 2005; Mbatha, 2003). These critiques have validity, and women's access to and control over land will not be guaranteed until formal property rights replace practices that lend themselves to patronage, clientelism and gender discrimination, yet although substantive reform remains a long way off, in some parts of the country effective leadership has increased the room for manoeuvre created by incremental legislation.

A third limitation of Mamdani's argument is that it ignores those aspects of institutional change that go beyond policy, legislation and formal organisational structures, and that involve instead, gradual cognitive shifts, iterative processes of social interaction and the slow embedding of changing norms, values and practices (Douglas, 1986; Giddens, 1984). We would argue that the use of area-based management for tribal areas and the gradual codification of planning norms is such a strategy. Configured by past circumstances and social conflict, these more informal institutions are characteristically inert and are never in full accord with the requirements of the present, and so there is inevitably a lag. However, institutional change can be hastened by astute leaders taking advantage of historical conjuncture to fast track elite bargains and developmental coalition, as happened in Greater Durban. Lastly, Mamdani treats traditional leaders as an undifferentiated group, which is wrong. While some leaders conformed quite exactly to his expectations, others did not, becoming part not of a bifurcated state but rather a political settlement that was the product of elite bargains and that gave rise to inclusive developmental coalitions. This point is critical in the unfolding of discussions about area based management and signing off of the urban development line (see Figure 3).

Any examination of political settlements undertaken by eThekweni Metro in greater Durban has to assess the pre- and post-2000 periods differently. The year 2000 was

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when the new local government arrangements came into effect and the EMA was formed. Before then (1996-2000) there had been interim arrangements in the context of a political climate when the IFP had considerable electoral power and were allied with the majority of *amakhosi* in greater Durban, which meant they had sway in trying to regulate what should and should not happen in terms of local governance reform. After 2000 the ANC began to achieve greater electoral power at the provincial level and the influence of the municipality was growing. As such the IFP was consigned to the status of a much smaller party and had to negotiate more than it had in the past. Our focus is in on the latter period, which also coincides with the roll out of a large European Union support programme to eThekweni Metro (Albertyn et al., 2009). Significantly this provided the Council with as much as 7 percent per annum additional off budget support and enabled it to experiment with planning interventions that could unblock the considerable challenges the metro had inherited through the incorporation of the tribal areas. In order to deal with a range of challenges across the huge physical area of the EMA the donor support embraced the notion of area based management (Albertyn et al, 2009).

Important in negotiating eThekweni Metro’s political settlement was Obed Mlaba, Durban’s mayor since 1996 and mayor of eThekweni Metro following the 2000 local government elections that ushered in the new local government dispensation. Mlaba is the son of a migrant worker who resided in an all male workers’ hostel in Durban. He was politicised by the experience of visiting his father at this hostel, together with his observation of battles between the government and the independent-minded Roman Catholic teachers who ran the Inchanga Combined School he attended. He retains a firm belief in the value of education, recalling Reverend Mavundla, one of his teachers as saying ‘the country shall be free one day and shall need you guys’ (EMA 2006). His father was keen on education and Obed received a Bachelor of Social Science in Social Work from the University of Zululand, which prepared him for a career both as a professional community development worker and as a civic activist. Later, after attaining an MBA degree from the United Kingdom, he started working in business, first for the large KwaZulu-Natal sugar corporation, Huletts, then for South African Breweries and later the national electricity parastatal, Eskom.

Mlaba was supported in his efforts to reach out to traditional authorities by Durban’s City Manager, Mike Sutcliffe. Formerly an academic planner at one of Durban’s universities and an ANC loyalist with struggle credentials earned during the anti-apartheid era, Sutcliffe along with Mlaba has been criticised, and not without some foundation, for becoming too cosy with commerce and industry at the expense of less well-off citizens.² Sutcliffe also chaired the controversial Municipal Demarcation Board, responsible for realigning municipal boundaries across the country and for incorporating traditional authority areas. It was in this role that he earned the particular opprobrium of many traditional leaders in eThekweni. Formerly they were part of the KZN Bantustan and had fallen within Ilembe Regional Council, over which they had significant control. They resented being within the jurisdiction

² Among their critics are StreetNet, which represents informal traders and the shack dwellers’ organisation, Abahlali.

of eThekweni Metro with the city of Durban at its core and then under the leadership of an executive that included the man responsible for demarcation. This association, reinforced by the bitter legacy of a consultation process over boundaries so volatile that sometimes meetings with traditional leaders could only take place under the protection of the army, meant that Sutcliffe could have been a dubious ally. However, in addition to being loyal to the ANC he was also a canny operator and played a critical role in making the resources available and putting the institutional mechanisms in place to create a place for traditional authorities in metropolitan governance and organisational structures (Beall et al., 2005; Beall, 2006). Key in this regard was the brokering of a sophisticated programme of area based management that allowed local innovation in an otherwise highly centralised metropolitan structure (Freund, 2002b). In the section that follows we explore how area based management emerged as the dominant tool for innovation in the city region's management, explore the specific innovations in planning and standards that were brokered and finally we reflect on how these development constitute an elite compact between traditional and modern urban managers of the Durban city region.

Old tools, new democracy: the use of area based management in eThekweni

Area based infinitives (ABIs) are well established urban management mechanisms intended to bring together the resources commanded by a range of agencies operating in an area, and often supplementing them, in order to tackle a set of serious interlinked problems to aid regeneration (Burton et al, 2004; Rhodes et al, 2005). In South Africa the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) nodes are a local example of the application of spatial targeting or ABI, the European Union support in Durban that became known as the Area Based Development Management Programme or ABDMP, is another.³ Set against our earlier discussion of the difficulty of bringing traditional authorities into South Africa's new democratic governance, our interest here is less about the impact of the ABI in the built environment, or indeed to the people living in the target areas of the ABDMP, and more about how the ABDMP acted a vehicle for the reconciliation of traditional and modern governmentalities.

The ABMDP took shape just after the democratic elections of 1994 when the eThekweni Municipal Authority (EMA), although only a fledgling municipal structure, was able to prioritise massive expansion of infrastructure and service delivery to previously neglected "tribal" areas. These "dense rural settlements" on the periphery of Durban in the old Zululand homeland were characterised by high levels of poverty, traditional tenure and infrastructure backlog. In the first flush of democratic local government's efforts to deracialise and to expand its service delivery these under developed areas, that had never been part of a municipality were a political priority. The ADBPM sought to address two issues common to city

³ Our information draws from a publically available external evaluation undertaken for the donors' on the ABMDP process (Albertyn et al, 2009). Over four weeks during the months of October and November 2008 we held discussions with 162 targeted informants within and without the city administration. Information and perspectives gathered were triangulated with documentation made available, and with information generate through analysis of project and financial reporting.

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regions: multi-agency disjuncture's and the problem of bringing government closer to citizens to foster engagement in these traditionally controlled zones. In practice what the ADBPM facilitated was a dialogue with the Council about how a unitary structure could manage a dual system of land development norms and regulations within a single municipality.

The original conception of the ABMDP was to explore different institutional models for sub-metropolitan deliver as a means of deepening local democracy.⁴ Assisted with a five-year budget-support grant of €35million from the European Commission (EC), the EMA launched the ABMDP in July 2003. Rather than focus on the substantive issues of that report, which concerned the efficacy of European Union's (EU) "on budget" support (i.e. it funded mechanisms running within the EMA's own political, administrative and financial processes instead of a parallel donor programme), we are concerned here only with wider lessons about city regions. Out attention is thus only on the so called "rural" node or ABM as the 5 geographical foci of spending became known.

The "rural" ABM of the EU programme constitutes 65% of the geographical footprint of the EMA and 669 000 residents comprising 20% of the EMA's population. With a five year budget of R 848 665 000 this was 30 % of the overall cost and this disproportionate spending reflected the awareness of the difficulties of incorporating a "rural" settlement into the post apartheid metropolitan governance systems. The funds were largely used to create seed funding for the establishment of partnerships catalysed through workshops and events, and also by providing direct funding to partner activities that supported the ABM objectives, such as organising the local taxis. The ABMs provided much needed support and access to facilities such as meeting rooms, telefax and internet facilities, secretarial services and administrative back up to emerging community structures.

In the late 1990s, when the ABMDP was launched, the newly expanded and unified municipality was going through a massive institutional transformation (Cameron, 1999). There was limited opportunity for the appointed area based managers to generate local projects and so the capacity of the ABMDP was then harnessed to address city visioning priorities, crucially bringing old township and peripheral tribal communities into the overall discussion in about the developmental direction of the city region. In other words rather than only been internally oriented to the specialist needs of a marginalised group in the city region, the ABDM resources were harnessed to translating existing practices of land use management in areas of traditional tenure into city wide or municipal codes and zoning schemes.

An external review concluded that "the ABM approach has played an important pioneering role in providing an integrated focus upon areas that were not historically

⁴ The original programme design required some re-adjustment when the city decided to remain a uni-city. The ABMDP was planned in 2000/01 to be a pilot for eventual roll-out to sub-regional governance structures. While the EC reports that it was talking formally to EMA about Sector Budget Support (SBS) in 2002, the 2003 FA remained in programme mode. It was only in mid 2006 that the amended FA made formal provision for SBS (Albertyn et al, 2009).

part of the Council". The ABMs tribal lands especially made an important contribution in developing new practises, and provided valuable additional capacity in enabling integrated service delivery. Translated this means that the Chiefs and not Council planning officials played the lead role in the allocation of land and decisions on where services should be located. But the City made the bigger decisions on how much of the municipal budget the area would receive and what level service standards would be set at. The bottom line of elite powers in both parties were accommodated – the chiefs continued to manage the land and the City has control of the wider budget.

The EMA is notoriously strong line function departments, and like many city regions its residents struggle to navigate cross-cutting institutional problems and access the budget. We noted earlier that there was also serious political hostility between the leadership of the tribal areas and the elected officials, complicating local engagement with the key municipal strategy processes. Breaking this logjam in the EMA was made possible through a direct engagement of what it meant to bring historically tribally controlled and under serviced areas of settlement into the core functioning (planning and budget) of local government. This was achieved by spending the additional ABDMP budget on education and dialogue within the tribal areas. One of the biggest needs in of the peri urban fringe areas as communicated by stakeholders was access to facilities to enable them to meet and communicate before engaging both traditional leaders and the local authority. These consultations caused initial consternation, especially with councillors w a critical role in making the resources available here relationships between ward councillors and traditional leaders were often tense and characterised by misinformation and ignorance of each other's roles. The area based manager was nevertheless very effective in creating platforms for discussion and communication. Through debates, discussions and consultative/planning processes (such as those around the municipal wide integrated development plan or IDP and budget), councillors and traditional leaders were able to get involved in and gain an understanding of how the City implements its mandate and implements its core functions. Coming to terms with the strict time lines and rigidity of spending of the municipal budget was key in this regard.

It was not immediately apparent the investment was worthwhile, especially during the earlier stages of the programme, where strong individuals and political considerations dominated the determination of project priorities. This shifted the latter stages of the ABDMP, when councillors as well as traditional leaders began to provide inputs into the municipal IDP programmes and to operate within the systems of project planning used by the Council. An increased understanding of municipal processes saw the acceptance of the formal systems and the consolidation of the logic of local government and its governmentality. The significance of including the residents and leaders of 'rural' territories along with at least some of the traditional logic of land use management left intact into the core systems of the City cannot be underestimated. Substantive conflict points between the logic of traditional and modern systems of rule flagged earlier, like gender equity, remain to be fully tested in the EMA. But the foundations of a unitary city region in what was a highly fragmented African settlement have been forged.

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Conclusion

Without making any claims for what may or may not be uniquely African city regional dynamcs, what is clear from the Durban case is that both conventional city regional literature and new city regional ideas have glossed over the significance of understanding what lies behind the adoption of ostensibly practical tools, such as area based management, to resolve the tensions between appointed urban managers, elected local authorities and the traditional rural political elites to adress the super diversity of the functional city region in Africa. In this paper, that traces the formation of a single municipal authority Etekwini that was designed to integrate the peri-urban settlements of the old apartheid homeland of Zululand and the port city of Durban, the imperative of forging a new governmentality that accommodates African realities is essential. We suggest that it is in navigating the competing interests that are involved in building an integrated method of operating across the fragmented city regional scales that the practice of African urbanism is being defined. What the account we present underscores, is that this new city regionalism, at least in the case of Durban, was brokered through an elite compact that offered politically and administrative workable solutions to managing a sprawling and hugely diverse city regional terrain.

In forging the post apartheid governmentality of the massively expanded greater Durban local authority elected and traditional elites as well as donor interests converged to adopt the discourse of area based management as a device to enable a management system that was at once differentiated. In doing so they left some rural practices untouched and integrated western managerial techniques in others. Through this locally conceived fashion, that perpetuated and entrenched rather than eroded the interests of the traditional elite, the regulatory regime of the enlarged municipality was redefined and a unitary system of sub national or urban management was made practical and enforceable. In the process, however, a two tier system of land tenure and associated standards for built environment investment were inadvertently defined. Although the predictability and legibility introduced by area based norms made legible and predictable planning possible, it is less clear that the long term interests of the poor were enshrined in the emergent planning regime of the city region.

The Durban case contrasts sharply with that of other South African cities such as Johannesburg where there are several large metropolitan structures within the Gauteng city regions or that of Cape Town where the issue of the city region has had primarily ecological drivers. Instead Durban is more like other African cities such as Nairobi or Accra where a central concern of a city region is navigating the relationship of urban expansion onto communal land tenure and the terrain of traditional authorities for whom conventional urban planning, whether strategic, spatial or any other form, is anathema. Yet it may be, that in these cities as in Durban, traditional and modern urban managerial practices are fusing: creating familiar yet distinctive new spatial and organisational tools, navigating the tension between vested interests and making the wider metropolitan scale legible as part of

the governance arrangements that are imperative to fostering an urban identity and citizenship.

This framing of Durban's city regional dynamics should sit alongside emerging accounts of transurbanism; circular migration; the peri urban interface; the specificity of mining towns; 'slums'; violence; social polarisation and conspicuous consumption as markers of contemporary African urbanity. Armed with multiple empirical accounts couched by these competing and contrasting themes in urban studies the stereotypes of 'the African City' will surely dissipate and composite pictures of a diversity of cities that reflects the size and complexity of Africa will slowly emerge. At stake in the differential services models such as that instituted in greater Durban, is the not only the assumption of a dual service model within a city region (with lower standards for areas under elite control of chiefs and higher standards in the urban core where formal zoning exists under full municipal jurisdiction) but also the question of who controls the urban growth machine. What will no doubt happen in Durban and across the many city regions of Africa, is that the politics of land will become more intense as the elite compacts that brokered a dual service level agreement break down and the norms of city regional management have to be (re)negotiated.

Bringing the African city region into academic purview thus not only changes the scope of the global and regional or area studies debates, it may also shift how the politics of local urban management and urban service standards are understood, drawing closer attention to the nature of the interface between competing power bases of the rapidly consolidating economic core of large new African metropolitan areas and their traditionally rural hinterlands. If there is to be a renaissance in African urbanism, as several have called for, there is an imperative to better understand the city regional scale and the emerging governmentality of 'the African urban'.

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Paper Four

Real existing regionalism: The region between talk, territory and technology

Regionalism and its offshoot the “new regionalism” have been in debate for more than a decade now. That debate has shifted recently since the initial promises of the new regionalist euphoria seem to have been broken as the realities of splintered and segregated regions belie the heady assumptions about regional cooperation and intra-regional distribution of wealth and resources that underlay the early conversation (for a spectrum see Amin 2004, Dreier, et al 2001). But the critical debate around regionalism has also hit a certain hiatus. While we now know that regions (and regionalism) are better thought of as part of an overall rescaling of global capitalism (Brenner, 2002), political constructs (Jonas and Ward, 2007), critical social constructs (Paasi, 2010), and of “struggles both of exclusion and of economic development” (Jonas, 2011, p. 99), we are also keenly aware that (particularly) after disaster struck many areas affected by the 2008-2009 Financial Crisis, much of the academic and policy talk positing regions as the engine of global economic activity has quieted down or undergone a discursive shift to forward urban regions as sites of economic recovery (Florida, 2012, Golden, 2012, Raco and Street, 2012, Soureli and Youn, 2009).

While a substantial literature attests to the competitiveness and resiliency of urban regions (Jonas, 2012), the regionalist debate and pragmatic discussions of metropolitics, continue to hover between the old dichotomies of Chicago and Los Angeles (and to some degree New York) ‘schools’ of urban and regional thought; most prominently regarding the spatial organization of regional sociology and land use (Conzen and Greene, 2008, Judd and Simpson, 2011). Such debates reinforce binary thinking between the respective roles of the central city and suburbs, as overwhelmingly abstracted from the American urban experience (Bourne, 2008). Contemporary metropolitan growth dynamics, however, have blurred the traditional boundaries – material and imagined – between the city and the suburbs, destabilizing conventional,

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territorial definitions of urban regions which do not adequately account for the fluid, multiscalar nature of the urban process (Brenner, Madden and Wachsmuth, 2012, Soja, 2000). While the dialectics of centre and periphery, invoked by Lefebvre among others, continues to exert its power over the structuring of regions around the world (Schmid, 2012, Walks 2012), theoretically, the question remains as to how “bounded” or “unbounded” a region is persists (Allen and Cochrane, 2007, Amin, 2004, MacLeod and Jones, 2007, McCann and Ward, 2011a, Morgan, 2007). The resurgent influence of relational thinking on the region is politically significant in that it fundamentally problematizes the nature of local actors shaping the physical and social geographies of urban regions, and the very essence of what constitutes the local itself (Harrison, 2010, Purcell, 2006). Yet what “relationality” and “territoriality” mean in the context of regionalism is often defined relative to particular ontological positions and a priori assumptions (MacLeod and Jones, 2007). Consequently, we respond to the call made by Harrison (2010), MacLeod and Jones (2007), McCann and Ward (2010) and others for studies of regionalization grounded in concrete actions, spaces and strategies, while paying critical attention to the role of the state and territorial politics in the process of regionalization (Heinelt and Kübler 2005, Jonas, 2012, Ward and Jonas, 2004).

Regional forms have shown little convergence in this age of globalized regionalization and in each region internal differentiation abounds. Clearly, we are pushing beyond the binary Chicago and Los Angeles readings of the urban region. Flying out of Toronto into Los Angeles will offer all the possible forms of urban regions on display below. Sure, leaving Toronto one sees the classically receding density lines moving west from Pearson Airport into the agricultural expanse of Southern Ontario. But the monocentrality of Toronto is challenged by a number of urban and regional forms that have inscribed themselves on the concentric landscape: the competing suburban downtowns, first among them Mississauga; the strips, most notably Yonge Street; the airport economy itself which has colonized the western suburbs with its ancillary warehousing wonderland; the centrality of the variously scaled transportation infrastructures in their own right; and the decentralized educational mass institutions

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3 from University of Toronto Scarborough and Mississauga to York University. With a bit
4 of imagination (and knowledge), it is also possible to see the regional greenbelt and the
5 emerging growth centres that illustrate compliance, more or less, with the Province of
6 Ontario's planning framework and make for a regulated pattern of "captured sprawl"
7 which reflects, as we see below, a new spatial and scalar compromise that redefines the
8 region.
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11 Flying into Los Angeles, on the other hand also offers some surprises. Touted as
12 one of the archetypes of a chaotic, dissembled and sprawling regionalism in a 60 mile
13 circle (Soja, 1989), the region appears to be more segmented and ordered than one
14 would usually imagine. Especially in the older parts of this "post-metropolis" (Soja,
15 2000), a densely (re)structured regional pattern has overgrown the Tieboutian
16 patchwork of the Lakewood Plan of the post WWII years (Keil, 1998). What one sees
17 below is the dictatorship of the subdivision as an empire of the private market, and the
18 powerful hand of the federal state, especially the giant flood control and freeway
19 ecologies in the flatlands and the foothills of the region (Banham 1971, Desfor and Keil,
20 2004). While the urban region's polycentrality is easy to discern, the visitor will also
21 acknowledge the significance of the downtown whose built form has never been more
22 impressive and more visible as the citadel around which the city flattens out.
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26 In this paper, we depart from the normative and ideological debates around new
27 regionalism and propose the notion of real existing "lived" regionalism. Much recent
28 critical geographic research attests regions (and city-regions) are not solely the
29 territorial construct de jour for economic competitiveness and urban resilience (Jonas,
30 2012). The politics and technologies of regionalism do not occur in isolation from other
31 social and political arenas (Ward and Jonas, 2004) but are fundamentally co-constituted
32 through spatial practices and social processes (McCann, 2007). As urban society is one
33 of multiple and differential space times, processes of everyday life, social reproduction,
34 work and play are ever-emergent and politically contested over a multitude of scales
35 (Lefebvre, 1996). Heeding the calls of feminist scholars who suggest regional spatial
36 politics needs to consider how people manage and live their daily lives (Jarvis, 2007,
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McGuirk and Dowling, 2011), we hold that the lived experience of regionalism clearly illuminates the assemblages and multiplicity of everyday flows that construct the real existing region. Regional space, as such, is embodied in an amalgam of dialectics – centres and peripheries, fixity and fluidity, past and present – which are structured, and spatially expressed by evolving modalities of political and economic power (Young and Keil, 2010, Walks 2012). Using the lenses of the greenbelt, transportation planning and post-suburbanization in Southern Ontario, we will argue that regulatory institutions capture the region in a mix of rhetoric and technological change that complies neither with pre-conceived notions of regionalization nor with the pessimism of total regional dysfunctionality but instead reflects the ongoing, multiscalar negotiation of diverse communities, interests and space times.

Real existing regionalism

The concept of real existing regionalism acknowledges the fact that regionalism is neither a mere normative, ideational construct nor a set of predictable practices but a contested product of discourses (talk), territorial relationships (territory) and technologies (both material and of power). As a concept, it attempts to confront the tensions between the discursive constructions and normative interventions that characterize much regionalist conversation today and the territorial politics (local competition) and technologies that are deployed to give these tensions strategic direction. The technologies are both material in the sense of modal choice (e.g. subway, light rail transit, rapid busways) and of power (negotiating, for example, the modalities of state, market and private authoritarian intervention that are employed in governing institutions at the regional scale; see Ekers et al, 2012).

The real existing regionalism of a particular area will be reflective of, and in turn generate new, state spatial strategic choices. At the current conjuncture those are primarily embedded in and express neoliberal values and objectives. We expect, therefore, no fundamental conflict over the region’s strategic direction, yet divergences in kind during a climate of “roll-with-it” neoliberalization (Keil, 2009). While actors at the

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3 regional scale are far from powerless in shaping the direction of institutional innovation,
4 they are bound, at this point, by the overall constraints imposed by the discipline of a
5 neoliberal (or post-neoliberal) policy environment where the chief regulatory discourse
6 pushes for a post-crisis developmental consensus. While operating fully in the overall
7 governmental framework of a roll-with-it reconstruction of post-crisis neoliberalism,
8 the region has not ceded to be the space of vivid and outspoken contestations about
9 radically different futures. The fact that real existing regionalism operates in the
10 confines of the roll-with-it straightjacket, its technological, ecological and social
11 dimensions at times imply a sense of more fundamental change. In a recent manifesto-
12 style intervention, Richard Florida pleaded (in exasperation):

23 “I’m not advocating a top-down, neo-liberal, business-run Toronto. Too many urban
24 centres had the very life sucked out of them by a self-serving business elite hellbent
25 on remaking once-thriving neighborhoods as homogenized complexes for corporate
26 headquarters. What we need instead is a new set of mechanisms that can garner
27 the full commitment and active engagement of the very top leadership. (...) Toronto
28 needs to act in harmony as one region, not a city versus its suburbs. Joint economic
29 development would enable municipalities to grow together. It makes no sense for
30 separate towns to compete for businesses that are going to locate in a shared
31 region. (...) By working together as a single region, we can stretch our boundaries,
32 leveraging the broader capabilities that can enable greater Toronto to compete
33 with much larger cities around the world” (Florida, 2012).

37 It must be added that the re-scaling of the region and the revamping of growth
38 and mobility management in Southern Ontario occurs at a time of dramatic
39 demographic and socio-economic change. Most predominantly, perhaps, the region has
40 seen a reversal of its social ecology over the recent years as the 905 belt around the
41 core city has seen an influx of both endogenous non-European populations as well as
42 increasingly new immigrants, mostly from South and East Asia. The suburbs around
43 Toronto, most notably Mississauga, Brampton and Markham have acquired
44 ethnoburban qualities over the past 20 years. The cultural logic that might have
45 undergirded the conservationist, and often neo-rural, middle class sensitivities of the
46 exurban polities in previous years (see Abbruzzese and Wekerle, 2011 for a related
47 discussion) has now once again been trumped by a more unpredictable mix of internally

cohesive cultural identity politics, automobilist growth policies, single family home orientation, ostensive consumerism and even authoritarian privatism (Ekers et al, 2012). Yet suburban governments have also begun to push towards alternative growth management policies and regional integration from the outside in that have sometimes challenged and superseded the ostensibly more progressive orientation of the metropolitan core (Keenan, 2011).

Greenbelt

For almost a decade, since 2003, the Ontario provincial government has sent clear messages about the necessity of regional integration through a set of strong regional land use and environmental policies, especially in its central economic heartland region around the *Greater Golden Horseshoe* (GGH) in Southern Ontario. This region ranges from the American border at the Niagara Peninsula in the South, along the Niagara escarpment and beyond to the high tech boom and agricultural regions around Waterloo-Kitchener-Cambridge in the West, beyond the Oak Ridges Moraine into the Muskoka region to the North, to the industrial municipality of Oshawa in the East. Naturally cohesive through the features of lake, escarpment and moraine, the region is really a construction of political and jurisdictional upscaling that challenges the existing territorial arrangements between the central, and dominant, municipality of Toronto and the burgeoning suburbs and exurbs around it. Often caricaturized as a conflict between the 416 and 905 telephone areas, that older territorial logic had some grounding in the realities of distinctly different ideological, political and cultural preferences of its inhabitants and political decision-making apparatuses. In short, the contrast was between the dense, urbanity of the metropolitan core and the sprawling suburbanity that lay beyond (Sewell, 2009). The differences between those territorial realities were stark and real but they also tended to lead to ungovernable and unproductive oppositions between regional actors. While the former conservative government of Ontario under Mike Harris had used and abused those differences in a partisan manner by supporting the political preferences of the 905 and ignoring or even

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3 punishing those of the 416, the new Liberal government after 2003 saw those
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5 differences as being increasingly counterproductive not just to their own reign in the
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7 provincial Queen's Park government but also to the necessary integration of the region's
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9 buzzing economic engine around Toronto. The Ontario government meant to support
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11 growth and accumulation on the one hand by giving industry and real estate
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13 development clear demarcations for their activities (Wekerle, et al., 2007, 2008) and to
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15 reinstate reliable and long term sustainability guidelines aimed at curbing sprawl and
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17 the ensuing cost to state and private actors in the province (Macdonald and Keil, 2012).
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19 The rhetoric introduced by the mutually reinforcing concepts of Places to Grow and
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21 Greenbelt legislations brought in during 2005-6 established a discursive construction
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23 and legal framework through which the region could ultimately be established in the
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25 fields, orchards and vineyards of the area as well as the urbanizing, transit oriented
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27 town centres and edge cities that dot Southern Ontario's expanse of 31,562 square
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29 kilometres with its close to 9 million people. The rhetorical integration provided by
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31 these measures is no small feat in a region with such strongly diverse and often
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33 contradictory social interests. Not just Southern Ontario's aggressive and powerful
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35 development industry had to be brought on board. The regional farmers who occupy
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37 some of the richest soil in all of Canada yet eye development as an ultimately more
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39 lucrative use for their land, emerging environmentalist groups and territorial alliances of
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41 all kind had to be convinced or neutralized in the process of charting the path laid out by
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43 the Greenbelt and Places to Grow legislations.

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45 Of course, the double measure of protection and intensification has not been all
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47 talk. It came with a new territorial concept for the region. While previous legislation had
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49 provided some of the logic for the new framework – especially existing protection for
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51 the Oak Ridges Moraine and the Niagara Escarpment – the new set of rules went way
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53 beyond the status quo. In particular, a new territorial hierarchy was introduced through
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55 the principle that each local jurisdiction was now held by law to make their Official Plans
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57 comply with higher order guidelines brought in by those acts. This meant strong powers
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59 for unilateral compliance of cities with provincial policy and left much less room for
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negotiation in the domain of planning. This had fundamentally two effects on the territorial structure of Southern Ontario. In one sense, it created a tendency towards territorial convergence in the region as individual municipalities scrambled to comply if not with the letter but at least with the spirit of the new regulatory framework. In another sense, though, it also allowed territorial actors in the region a margin of intraregional competition for resources inside the GGH. While the overall planning goals for the region were clearly stated – protection of the greenbelt and intensification of growth centres – there was a considerable space in which municipalities could pursue distinct and differentiated strategies towards achieving those policy objectives. Again, there was now less room to negotiate *vertically* with the Province as the government was clear on wanting to enforce its regional planning framework but the territorial actors were empowered to act *horizontally* both through competition and sometimes in cooperation to accomplish stated growth goals and objectives of social integration. Lastly, in the area of technologies, the real existing regionalism of the Places to Grow and Greenbelt legislations introduces a dialectics of unity and diversity instead of the previous duality between the 416 and 905. In the material sense, technology here refers to the massive increase in significance allotted to planning as an instrument of government. In stark contrast with the previous government’s almost total reliance on the market as a regulator in land use and conservation, the liberal version of neoliberal governance uses the strong powers of the territorial (provincial) state to subject the region to powerful and accountable forms of land regulation in the interest of both accumulation and sustainability. This new regional sustainability fix works through the technological powers of a bureaucratic apparatus at arms-length from the government. Its main institution is the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) that monitors and sanctions the compliance of lower level jurisdictions with the provincial plans. Like the networked mobility infrastructure we discuss below, this new mode of conducting planning in Ontario creates a strong socio-technological structured coherence of accumulation objectives, state action and neoliberal governmentalities at the level of societal actors.

Transportation and Mobility

The Government of Ontario is not only the primary political actor shaping state spatial selectivity and action at the regional scale, but also the key funder of major infrastructure projects. Following decades of underinvestment in infrastructure and a lack of comprehensive transportation planning dating from the 1980s, the Liberal government extended the upscaled regional thinking embodied in the Places to Grow and Greenbelt legislations by institutionalizing a regional transportation agenda for Southern Ontario. In a move viscerally disclosing its role as a regionalizing state, Queen's Park established *Metrolinx* as a Crown Agency charged with managing and coordinating transportation throughout the *Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area* (GTHA) in June 2006. The GTHA presented an alternative, yet broadly complementary territorial construction of the region to the GGH; one founded upon the political jurisdictions of Toronto and Hamilton and municipal regions of Durham, Halton, Peel and York. The underlying logics and development vision forwarded by Metrolinx established a program of infrastructural investments that reinforced the socio-technological structured coherence at the heart of Southern Ontario's post-crisis development fix. As a means to infrastructurally support the Province's growth management strategies, the new agency's regional transportation plan, *The Big Move* (Metrolinx, 2008), prominently incorporated discourses of livability, environmental sustainability and economic competitiveness, but did so in a manner clearly reflective of the normative rhetoric characteristic of "roll-with-it" neoliberalization. In the heightened climate of economic uncertainty catalyzed by the 2008-2009 Financial Crisis, the state scalar selectivity and policy frameworks forwarded by Metrolinx remained strongly codified as a strategy of "competitive regionalism" conditioned by the primary imperatives of globalization and regional resilience (Jonas, 2012, Ward and Jonas, 2004). The 25-year, \$50 billion Big Move plan intended to address the lack of capital investment, poorly integrated transportation networks and limited intergovernmental collaboration curtailing regional productivity and competitiveness (OECD, 2010, Soberman et al., 2006) by catalyzing intensified urban growth around a strategically significant network of "mobility hubs"

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3 which integrate and balance multimodal transportation technologies (from high-speed
4 rail to walking) (Metrolinx, 2008). In doing so, the rhetoric of The Big Move not only
5 highlighted transportation infrastructure as a primary policy sector and technology
6 interconnecting the GTHA’s urban fabric across increasingly blurred jurisdictional
7 borders but presented an infrastructural fix stimulating both investments in the built
8 environment surrounding proposed growth hubs and introducing new notions of
9 urbanity and densification in Toronto’s rapidly evolving suburbs.

16 During the planning phase of The Big Move, Metrolinx operated with a Board
17 primarily comprised of sitting politicians and acted as an institutional space facilitating
18 intra-regional cooperation and marshaling new investments and revenue sources made
19 available by the provincial and federal governments. Galvanizing a strong regional
20 consensus regarding the importance of investment in regional networked mobility
21 infrastructure across the 416 and 905, the regulatory frameworks established by Places
22 to Grow ensured a broad cohesion among municipal transportation plans which, as with
23 their Official Plans, are required (with a degree of flexibility) to conform to provincial
24 guidelines. Whereas previous attempts at region-wide transportation coordination had
25 succumbed to weak mandates and limited institutional powers, the significant authority
26 assigned to Metrolinx by Queen’s Park decisively positioned the city-region as the
27 crucial spatial frame for Toronto’s transportation planning future. Indeed, by proposing
28 a regional mobility network utilizing multiple transportation technologies to connect
29 regional growth hubs – including subway extensions, increased regional bus and
30 commuter rail service, bus- and light rapid transit along key arterial roads and an
31 express diesel rail link between Pearson Airport and downtown – Metrolinx is
32 approaching regional transportation planning in a way which both responds to, and
33 actively encourages, the emerging geography of the Toronto region. Yet while Metrolinx
34 pursues a development strategy aimed at establishing the GTHA as a functional territory
35 premised upon multiple regional centralities, the state scalar selectivity embodied in the
36 elevation of the region as the scale at which to construct a post-crisis infrastructural fix
37 invokes contestation at other scales. As with the rhetorical integration presented

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3 through the Province's land use and environmental programs, the normative discursive
4 evocation of the region as privileged scale of global urban competitiveness ensured
5 consensus among the region's diverse social and political actors regarding a vision for
6 transportation planning in the GTHA. However, as Metrolinx moved to the
7 implementation phase of The Big Move, the territorial interests of politicians sitting on
8 the Board presented a conflict of interest between local and regional development.
9 Most notably, the view of local mobility espoused by the City of Toronto's *Transit City*
10 light rail plan, which would provide rapid transit access across the city for marginalized,
11 transit-deficient "priority neighbourhoods" clashed with Metrolinx's desire for high-
12 speed, limited stop regional movement. In order avoid a prolonged "war of attrition"
13 between the City of Toronto and Queen's Park (Young and Keil, 2010, p. 93), the
14 Province replaced Metrolinx's "political" Board with "corporate" representatives and
15 asserted their authority and ownership over regional transportation development,
16 including Transit City.
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30 The GTHA's urban morphology and existing technologies of mobility compel the
31 implementation of more individualized movement through and between the emergent
32 polycentricism of regional space. Beyond the centrality and densities of the urban core,
33 dispersed industrial, commercial and institutional regional growth centres with
34 established access premised upon auto-mobility result in lengthy commutes (in terms of
35 time and distance); especially for transit riders (Turcotte, 2011) and new immigrants
36 who increasingly make Toronto's suburbs home (Axisa, Newbold and Scott, 2012, Lo,
37 Shalaby and Alshalafah, 2011). Carpooling and workplace shuttle programs – financed
38 by Metrolinx and regional employers through *Smart Commute*, a collection of local
39 transportation management authorities across the GTHA – provide an innovative
40 response to the mobility challenges of real existing regionalism and open the door for
41 sustainable transportation. Yet, their limited utility also reflects the difficulty in realizing
42 collective public transportation options to accommodate the spatial practices producing
43 complex regional "topologies of relationality" (Jacobs, 2012, p. 413). As a consequence,
44 although investments in specific transport technologies are not mutually exclusive, the
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Province’s understanding of regional space and territory – principally founded upon privileged network components (Graham and Marvin, 2001) which optimize regional competitive advantages and ensure socio-technological coherence through technologies of regionalization (both material and of power) – are prioritized among the multiple, overlapping spatio-temporalities and mobilities that constitute lived regionalism.

Real existing regionalism and post-suburban politics

Capital concentrates in uneven spatial arrangements, privileging new “post-suburban” growth hubs, as regional logics of connectivity are overlaid upon, and reconfigure, both established city/suburban and core/periphery metropolitan dynamics and evolving pattern and practices of localized movement with polycentric urban space. The interesting first outcome of the real existing regionalism created by the transportation and land use planning legislation in Southern Ontario is an *integration* of postsuburban realities into the talk, territorial arrangements and applied technologies of the region. While new development is envisioned predominantly in “places to grow”, these are mixtures of existing hubs and emerging points of centrality. This pattern challenges the common centre-periphery dialectic of growth and decline in the region as the region develops multiple centres and peripheries, new in-between landscapes where a new politics evolves. Still, although geographical distance between rich and poor may collapse within post-suburbia, relative connectivity and the symbolic distance between centre and periphery are greatly exacerbated and experienced differentially by users of these spaces. The spatial politics of regionalism are operationalized through a diverse collection of social and spatial practices. Urban nodes figure as assemblages of complex lived urbanities. Inbetweenness becomes a quality of everyday (sub)urbanism and conditions connectivity. While individuality and isolation in the real existing post-suburban region appear to prohibit collective agency (Hamel, 2011), new forms of politics emerge in the interstices of the existing jurisdictional, administrative and territorial governance structures. Clearly, official regional policy reproduces ownership politics (for and by owners of condominiums, houses, businesses, “taxpayers”) at the

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3 expense of tenants, workers, non-citizens and state-dependent populations, and mirrors
4 the tripartite power modalities of state, capital accumulation and private
5 authoritarianism (Ekers et al, 2012). Yet, new forms of collective action may well emerge
6 from the diverse polities that populate the postsuburban region, especially at the vast
7 decentralized workplaces and factories, at the metabolic frontier (Greenbelt) and in the
8 newly emerging field of social welfare delivery in the exurban belt.
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11 For Lefebvre (1996), the introduction of centrality into peripheral zones offered
12 the potential to transform marginalized spaces (or the homogeneity of the suburbs) into
13 actual 'urban space' by extending the right to the city and the struggle against
14 exclusions from space. Certainly, recognizing the structural complexity evident in
15 postsuburbia is a necessary step in breaking the physical, mental and social dichotomies
16 reified under metropolitan urbanization and opening the potential of suburban space
17 within a remodeled city-region (Kolb, 2008). Drawing from a sympathetic reading of
18 relational urban politics, MacLeod argues the emergent, spatially uneven city-region
19 requires a "nimble" urban politics capable of incorporating and mobilizing new
20 connectivities, centralities and overlapping political relations, and democratizing their
21 governance (2011, p. 2651).
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24 Likewise, Young and Keil have suggested elsewhere, that "that in today's city-
25 regional political socio-spatiality, politics will have to be found "in-between" the old
26 lines of demarcation" [reference deleted]. We have entered an era where urban and
27 suburban politics are not easily separated, particularly in urban regions that aspire to be
28 global. In fact, in a globalized context, suburbs are beginning to be key spaces where a
29 newly emerging set of assemblages takes hold that redefine the metropolitan place and
30 the globalized space in equal measure. We are guided here by McCann and Ward
31 (2010b) who have argued that "these assemblages ... shape, reorient, and reconstitute
32 wider flows, thus continually reconfiguring geographies of territoriality and
33 relationality". They also allow us to "overcome ... easy analytical dichotomies –
34 fixity/mobility, global/local" so commonly assumed at the base of urban realities today.
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Taking up the chief themes of what we called real existing regionalism, we can conclude that the discourse (talk), jurisdictional logic (territory), and material power dynamics (technology) of the Toronto region have begun to shift. In the case of the Greenbelt, which we examined briefly above, a sudden push forward in November 2012 has revealed an entirely new way to speak about the region. An announcement made on the possibility of enlarging the greenbelt in order to bring more (urban) communities and river valleys under the stewardship of the protected lands created a new dynamic: the regional logic created by the greenbelt now has the potential of working from the outside of the metropolitan region in as municipalities are becoming the decentralized conduits of (bio)regional integration.

In Toronto as elsewhere (Keil, 2011), regional institutions and non-institutional actors have moved to a mode of internalized globalization. The global character of the relationalities that constitute the region is not in question in this period. It is assumed as the sine qua non of regional development. Regionalist discourse, territorial practices and technologies, while often pegged as a possible (resilient) antidote to threats of globalization (Hudson, 2008, 2009) actually have created more often than not the openings for those processes associated with that metadynamics. Yet, internalizing globalization does not mean enabling uncritically and without regional demands. Quite to the contrary, the discourses, territorial strategies and technological solutions deployed in the real existing region have to be understood as the terrain on which regional urbanization takes shape.

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