World City Futures

The Role of Urban and Regional Policies in the Asia-Pacific Region

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Acknowledgements

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Abstract

The future of world cities depends to a great extent on the response of public policies to the dynamics of urban growth and expansion. In the Asian context, world city regions are currently expanding at rates that will lead to a doubling of size in less than 20 years. Each world city integrates a larger region of which it is the economic and financial capital. The world city hierarchy is not in a stable equilibrium, and individual cities may rise or fall in their economic standing as "control centres" of global capital. How cities respond to these dynamics/challenges will to a significant extent determine their future in the next century. Six policy issues are discussed, including spatial organization; regional governance; the question of environmental and social sustainability; the social integration of migrant workers and their families; the new relations between state, economy, and civil society; and the formation of intercity networks. The essay concludes by proposing a strategic alliance among major cities on the Pacific Rim — an Asian League of Cities — to promote these several purposes.

"No matter how successful or unsuccessful, the future of Pacific-Asian societies and their cities will be determined as much by localized socio-economic and political processes as by global imperatives."

Douglass (1996a, p. 2)

I have chosen the title of my paper with some care. To be candid, I have no idea what the future of any so-called world city will be in the next century. I do know that cities differ greatly among themselves, and that their *historical trajectories* are far from random: the past will shape the future of each city but not determine it. In addition, cities have always been parts of systems of cities, and today's global economy has brought into being a *global urban system*. This interdependent character of the urban dynamic will

similarly shape the future of any given city, though not determine it. Finally, and this is what I would particularly like to stress in this paper, urban outcomes are to a considerable extent a result of *public policies*. They are, in part, what we choose them to be. The cities of the next century will thus be a result of planning in the broadest sense of that much abused term. This is not to fall into the naive belief that all we need to do is to draw a pretty picture of the future, such as a master plan, or adopt wildly ambitious regulatory legislation as a template for future city growth. At best, such efforts remain in the realm of good intentions. Filling the gap between intention and reality is a good deal more complicated than that. Still, it is useful to think ahead to see what problems we face as we embark on the third millenium of the Christian era. There is no doubt in my mind that the coming decades will witness profound changes in the ancient civilizations of Asia and that these changes will be made palpable in the cities, both old and new, of this vast region. Let us hope that these cities — unprecedented in scale as they surely will be — will also become a fitting home for the billions of people who will come to live in them.

The World City Concept

The term "world city" was introduced into the discourse on urban studies in the early 1980s and has since been widely adopted (Friedmann and Wolff, 1982; Friedmann, 1986; Sassen, 1994; Knox and Taylor, 1995; Lo and Yeung, 1996), but a certain ambiguity has always attended its meaning. "World city" can either refer to a class of cities that play a leading role in the spatial articulation of the global economic system, or designate a dimension of all cities that in varying measure are integrated with this system. These two meanings can be reconciled by positing a *global hierarchy — or hierarchical system — of cities*, where every city occupies a position that reflects its relative importance in the spatial articulation of economic and financial activities or, to put it more plainly, its relative economic power.[1]

At the top of this hierarchy we find a very small number of global financial centres: London, New York, and Tokyo (Sassen, 1991). Descending from these pinnacles of power, we can identify multinational financial centres (Miami, Frankfurt, Singapore, among others), centres that dominate large national economies (such as São Paulo, Paris, Sydney and Seoul), and important subnational or regional centres (Osaka-Kobe, Hong Kong, Vancouver, the Rhine-Ruhr conurbation and Chicago are relevant examples). In all, some thirty "world cities" fall into these categories which reflect the spatial reach of their economic and financial articulations (Table 1). We can perhaps get a better sense of this "reach" by looking at the dominant linkages of the global airline network. Map 1, prepared by David J. Keeling of Western Kentucky University, clearly shows the triadic structure of the global cities network, with subsidiary roles performed by airports at Miami, Los Angeles, Singapore, Cairo, Frankfurt and Paris.[2]

What is striking about the concept, but has rarely been singled out for comment, is that world city discourse is typically couched in the language of economics. Although this uni-dimensional character gives the world city concept analytical power, it hides from view other important dimensions of urban life. As a concept in economic geography, it aims at universal significance, highlighting what is common to all members of a class of world cities while ignoring everything that is uniquely emplaced in particular sites: the historical, socio-cultural, administrative, political, and environmental dimensions of urban life. But, if the concept is going to be useful for public policy, the general and the specific must be brought together. This imperative is captured in the phrase "the global-local nexus." Articulating this nexus is the challenging task of urban policy planning and design.

The Geography of Global Capitalism

In a recent paper, Allen J. Scott defends the thesis "that world capitalism is moving into a phase of development marked by an

Table 1   Spatial articulations: 30 world cities

1   Global financial articulations
  #   London* A (also national articulation)
  #   New York A
  #   Tokyo* A (also multinational articulation: SE Asia)

2   Multinational articulations
  #   Miami C (Caribbean, Latin America)
  #   Los Angeles A (Pacific Rim)
  #   Frankfurt C (western Europe)
  #   Amsterdam C or Randstad B
      Singapore* C (SE Asia)

3   Important national articulations (1989 GDP>$200 billion)
  #   Paris* B
  #   Zurich C
      Madrid* C
      Mexico City* A
      São Paulo A
      Seoul* A
 #   Sydney B

4   Subnational/Regional articulations
      Osaka-Kobe (Kansai region) B
  #   San Francisco C
  #   Seattle C
  #   Houston C
  #   Chicago B
  #   Boston C
  #   Vancouver C
  #   Toronto C
      Montreal C
      Hong Kong (Pearl River delta) B
  #   Milano C
      Lyon C
      Barcelona C
  #   Munich C
  #   Düsseldorf–Cologne–Essen–Dortmund (Rhine-Ruhr region) B

Notes: Population (1980s):
         A 10-20 million; B 5-10 million; C 1-5 million.
         * national capital.
         # major immigration target.
         For European cities, I have benefited greatly from Klaus R.
         Kunzmann and Michael Wegener, *The Pattern of Urbanization in
         Western Europe 1960-1990*.
Source: Friedmann, 1995, p. 24.

**Map 1**   Dominant linkages in the global airline network
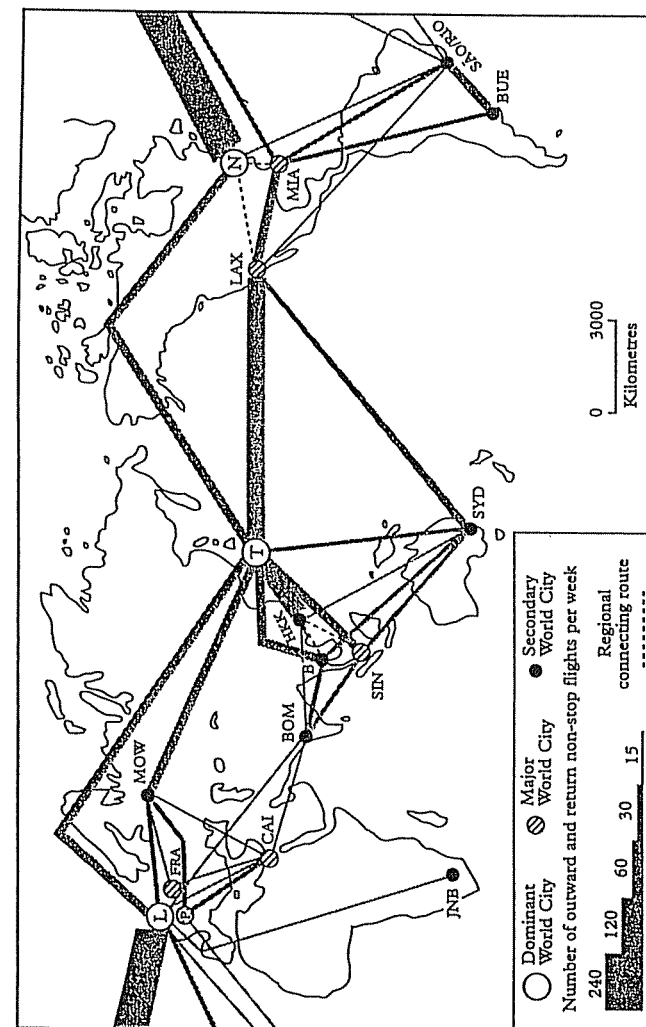
Source: Keeling, 1995, p. 122.

intensified regionalization of production overlaid by — and rooted in — a global division of labour. "In this process," he writes, "a significant reallocation of economic coordination and steering functions is occurring, away from the sovereign state, up to the international and down to the regional levels" (Scott, 1996). I would like briefly to review this geography of global capitalism, because the "regional level" to which Scott refers is precisely the level of world city formation with which we are here concerned. International organizations still collect data on a national basis, and this is perhaps as it should be. But, what we call "the economy" has burst its national container, as effective economic power has shifted both upward towards the global and downward towards regional world city levels.

For our purposes, the relevant scale of economic life is the city region that extends outwards from core cities up to a distance that may be roughly represented by a commuting radius of one to (at most) two hours, covering a sprawling region which, in the Asian context, embraces populations that range from about five to over 20 million and which continue to expand at rates that may well lead to a doubling of population in less than 20 years (Map 2). The chief sources of demographic growth for these mega-city regions come from rural migration (in Asia) and international migration (in Oceania and North America), though Asian world cities are beginning to experience international migration as well. Although agriculture, especially of the intensive sort — vegetables, fruit, small livestock — is still an important activity within these regions, it makes little sense to separate urban from rural in this context, especially in view of the fact that the income of many farm families increasingly depends on non-farm sources. Rural households in world city regions are now tightly integrated with an urban economy that is grounded in manufacturing and business services.

Each world city, as I suggested when discussing the concept earlier, integrates a larger region of which it is the economic and financial capital or, to use Saskia Sassen's apt phrase, the controlling centre. How to draw the actual boundaries of these regions, if

Map 2   The Asia-Pacific Rim: Major extended metropolitan regions with population in excess of two million (2000 AD)
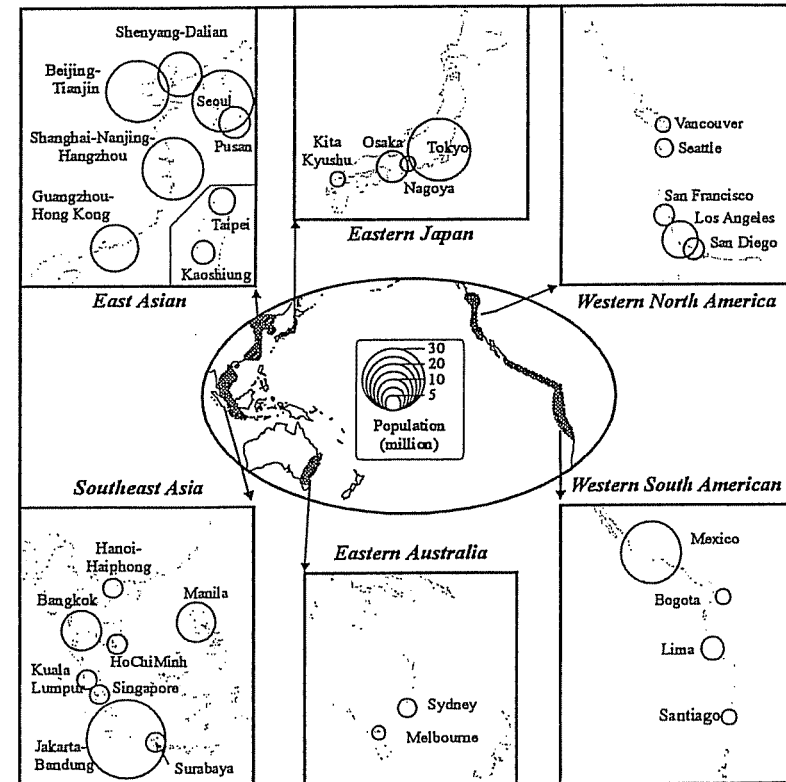
Sources: United Nations, 1991 (after Rimmer, 1994).
Map constructed by Dr Mark Wang, Department of Geography, Melbourne University.

precision is desired, is often problematical, however. The case is fairly straightforward with primate cities, such as Bangkok, whose unchallenged range of control is the entire national territory. But, when you come to a regional city such as Hong Kong,

difficulties arise, even though most people would agree that Hong Kong's primary region of influence, whose economy it can be said to integrate, is the Pearl River delta, which includes Guangzhou as a secondary pole. Hong Kong-based financial interests, however, are found up and down the coast of China, and these linkages will undoubtedly intensify in the coming years. Or, to cite another example, Singapore's immediate hinterland includes parts of Johor in Malaysia and the Indonesian island of Riau, but for certain purposes this dynamic city state serves as a financial centre for the entire Southeast Asian, multinational region.

Questions of measurement aside, I would now like to suggest, by way of an hypothesis, that *the economic power of a world city stands in direct relation to the productivity of the region it articulates.*[3] That is to say, the more productive its space of articulation, the greater will be its economic power. This hypothesis would help explain, in part, the low ranking of African cities in the world city hierarchy (no African city, for example, is included in Table 1), compared to cities on the Asia-Pacific Rim, many of which are just beginning to rise into the top echelons of the global hierarchy. At the same time, we should remember that the productivity of this space is not necessarily pre-given but may be induced by the investment and, to be blunt about it, the colonizing activities of their respective core regions. The well-known examples of Singapore and Hong Kong again illustrate this proposition. Although these relations are based on economic and occasionally also political power, they need not be viewed as inherently exploitative, as my provocative reference to colonization might seem to imply. There is, indeed, a tradition in regional studies which automatically assumes a preponderance of so-called backwash effects — that is, effects negative for the economic growth — as a characteristic of core-periphery relation generally. We need to challenge this assumption in the light of present knowledge. In any event, in most Asian regions, so-called spread effects (which are positive for economic growth) seem to outweigh whatever backwash effects may impact their fortunes.

The overall geography that emerges from this discussion is summarized in Map 3, which is borrowed from Scott (1996). On the one hand, we see here an archipelago of wealthy city regions with their respective hinterlands, all tightly connected with each other. But, we also see what Scott calls the extensive economic frontier of global capitalism with a few "islands of prosperity"

Map 3   A schematic representation of the contemporary geography of global capitalism
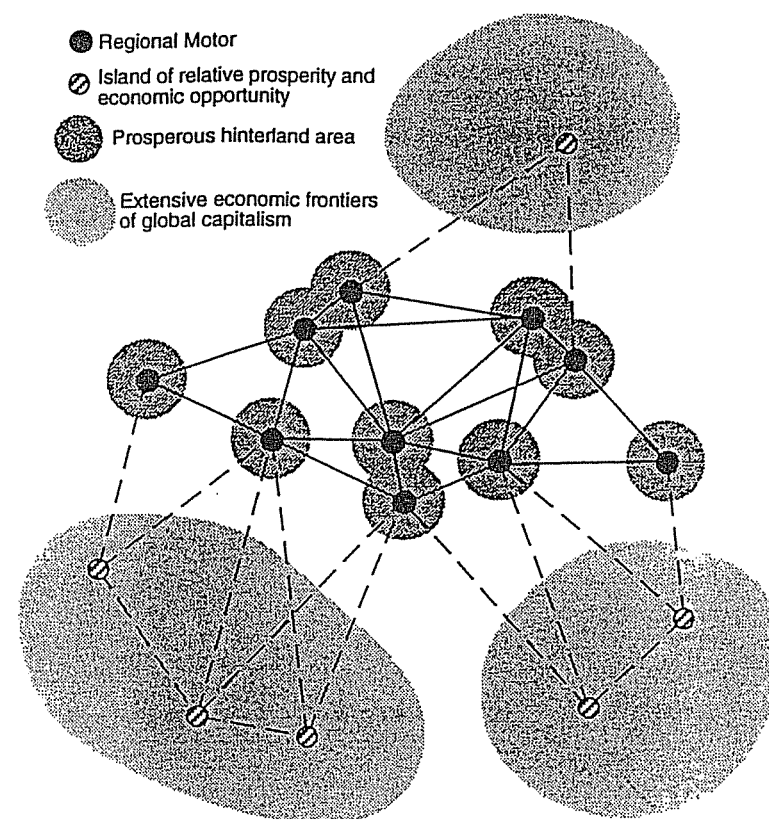
(i.e., low-order world cities) as the major focal points of this artic-
ulation. This extensive frontier is the true world periphery that
supplies primarily raw materials and cheap labour to world city
markets. Altogether absent from this picture, however, are large
parts of the world that are barely integrated with the global econ-
omy, and where a very large part of the world's population still
resides. We may want to call it the excluded *frontier of immisera-
tion*. It is a frontier that, in the longer term, threatens to undermine
the prosperity of world city regions.

The Spatial Dynamics of World City Formation

Finally, and to conclude this rapid overview of the geography of
global capitalism, I want to turn to what we may call the spatial
dynamics of world city formation. For our hierarchy of cities is not
in a stable equilibrium, and cities may rise or fall in their economic
standing as "basing points" and "control centres" of global capi-
tal. I would like to highlight four major causes that can affect a
city's future.

The first and perhaps most obvious cause is *changes in exoge-
nous political circumstances*. Think, for example, of Vienna which
also happens to be my native city. Following World War II, this
former imperial capital of Austro-Hungary tried to safeguard its
neutral position between East and West by attracting a large num-
ber of international organizations during the four decades of the
Cold War era. With the collapse of communism in eastern Europe
and the Soviet Union, Vienna hoped to revive its former glories as
an imperial city by serving as "broker" for the newly emerging
capitalist economies on its doorstep. It wanted to become a multi-
national world city in *Mitteleuropa* (central Europe). But, its hopes
were dashed when it turned out that the newly elected democratic
regime in Prague was more interested in being counted as a West-
ern than a *Middle-European* state, when the Yugoslav Federation
erupted in a brutal civil war whose end is not yet in sight, and
when the neighbouring Hungarians let it be known that they were

quite happy to be on their own rather than under Austrian tute-
lage. And so, Vienna has been unable so far to translate its hope to
be elevated to a higher position in the world city hierarchy into a
concrete, realizable project.

Other examples come to mind. Johannesburg lost its preemi-
nent position in southern Africa, first, because of a world-wide
boycott to force South Africa to abandon its apartheid policies
and, then, with the coming to power of a democratic majority
regime, because of continuing internal turmoil and political insta-
bility. Or, Rio de Janeiro, which at one point in time could have
risen to be a world city of significant rank, but lost the game in
competition with São Paulo after the federal government changed
its seat from Rio to the new capital, Brasilia. Rio's economy never
recovered from this shock and has been on a downward slide ever
since. Similarly, Hong Kong's future remains somewhat uncertain
with its imminent reincorporation into the People's Republic of
China. And, what will be the effect of an eventual reunification of
the two Koreas on Seoul? Similar questions could be asked of a
number of major Asian cities that will be affected by political
changes in the region.

A second force contributing to world city dynamics is *eco-
nomic restructuring under global competitive conditions, coupled with a
city's ability creatively to respond to exogenous change*. The most dra-
matic examples come from old industrial regions that rose to
power on the strength of their production in the heavy smoke-
stack industries of the late 19th and 20th century: iron and steel,
metalworking, automobiles. The images of rusting factories, black
rivers and toxic soils are a familiar and heartbreaking sight in
places like the British Midlands, the German Ruhr Valley, the
Basque Country of Spain, and the northeastern industrial belt in
the United States. Some, though far from all, of these regions have
made successful comebacks, and the final verdict is still out. But
clearly, the affected cities — Manchester, Essen, Bilbao, Detroit
among them — have had to reinvent themselves at enormous
financial and, above all, human cost. None of them have so far
been able to recover even their former position as proud "work-

shops to the world" not to mention making a successful transition to a post-industrial era (del Castillo, 1989; Kunzmann, 1996; IBA Emscher Park, 1996).

In Asia, one of a small number of "rustbelt" cities is Shanghai which is now engaged in a major effort to raise itself to the level of a world city of regional rank. Vast new constructions are underway in Pudong, the eastern half of the city across the Huangpu River. Still, Shanghai continues to be a major industrial producer, though its heavy industries can survive internationally only because of extremely low wages and continuing heavy subsidies from the central government.

Although the economic restructuring of old industrial regions is forced upon regional economies by changes in technology and the power of capital to shift production from high-wage to low-wage parts of the world — in some cases, it is also an immediate consequence of political change, such as German reunification in 1989, which overnight laid waste to East Germany's industrial might — it can also be viewed as an "internal" or endogenous process, as a regional economy evolves from labour-intensive to capital-intensive to brain-intensive production, making a series of transitions to world city status into the upper reaches of the global hierarchy. The cases of Singapore and Hong Kong come to mind in this regard, and Taipei seems poised to do the same. Here, it is clearly a matter of intelligent policies and their successful implementation which are the key to whether or not that endogenous restructuring process will be successful. I shall return to this question in the second half of my paper.

A third causal factor in world city dynamics is undoubtedly *intercity competition*. The existence of competition among cities for a share of global capital is undisputed. Much of this competition is among cities within the same national territory. Thus, Los Angeles competes with San Francisco for primacy as a banking centre; Australian city-states — Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide — compete against one another, as in the infamous episode of the "multi-function polis" (Spearritt, 1996); coastal cities in China have been given partial autonomy to negotiate directly for foreign investments; and so forth. In the longer term, however, this competition reaches beyond national borders. A good example is the recent competition among London, Paris, Brussels, Frankfurt and Berlin to capture the headquarters of the new European Central Bank. In this instance, Frankfurt won the prize. Such competition can be extremely wasteful, however, as cities are likely to spend far more in the aggregate on, for example, transport infrastructure than a rational allocation of resources would have allowed. What appears to be an excessive construction fever of port and airport facilities in the Pearl River delta of South China is a relevant instance. I would like to return to this question later, arguing the case for intercity cooperation to balance a natural tendency towards "out-of-control" competition, which, in effect, leads cities to forfeit part of their future to transnational capital whose primary concern is, after all, nothing more ambitious than the prospect of super-profits.

The final cause of why cities may rise or fall in the world hierarchy is closely tied to the discussion on competition, and the nearsightedness of public policies that concentrate exclusively on economic issues. What I have in mind is the question of *socially and environmentally unsustainable growth*. An unspoken assumption among urban policy makers has been that economic growth as such is always a good thing, and that the more growth is generated, the greater will be the benefits for everyone. But, many would contend that this assumption is wrong, both theoretically and empirically. It is theoretically wrong, because growth is always measured on private account, whereas sustainability can be captured only through a comprehensive social accounting system. In other words, increases in the gross regional product do not reflect the costs that growth imposes on third parties, the social and environmental costs. And, it is empirically wrong because, as travellers to some of the famous names on any world city list can easily observe, life in these cities has become better for only a small minority of their population, and even these favoured few suffer from horrific air pollution, monumental traffic jams and fear of crimes that range from kidnapping to car thefts and robber-

ies, while the majority of the population can barely survive under conditions of enormous psychological and physical stress, beginning with insufficient housing and intolerable levels of environmental sanitation (ESCAP, 1993).

What if these third-party costs were to be subtracted from each year's increment of the gross regional product? Except for some World Bank studies on the productivity effects of pollution, the job has not been done, but we can safely assert that actual growth rates of regional income calculated would be very much less on a net-basis than the reported figures. And, where the reported figures are low to begin with — as they are, relative to Asian city regions, in North America — the annual increments in the net regional product may actually turn out to be *negative*. The general sense in a world city like Los Angeles is that the conditions of life there, even for urban elites, have plummeted since the 1970s and continue to decline. Admittedly, the city is only now recovering from a long period of major restructuring, but the quality of life in Los Angeles has visibly declined over this twenty-year period.

My point is that the failure of urban economic policy to take the costs to third parties into account can undermine a city's ability to rise in the ranks of, or even to maintain its position in, the world hierarchy. Maximizing economic growth regardless of social and environmental costs is therefore not a sound policy, either at city-regional or national levels. Moreover, the get-rich mentality associated with it leads to a decline in public morality and may undermine such progress as has been made towards a more democratic social order (Heidenheimer, 1996). The present hyperurbanizing trend in Asia is not only beginning to yield the first hard evidence of corruption in high places (e.g., under the Marcos regime in the Philippines and, more recently, also in Korea), it is leading to enormous increases in air and water pollution levels as well, many times greater than the already spectacular demographic growth. Reporting on Jakarta, Mike Douglass of the University of Hawaii has this observation (Douglass, 1996b, pp. 2-3):

A recent study by the World Bank cites figures showing that in terms of health effects of pollution in Jakarta, the economic costs of environmental degradation totaled $500 million in 1990 alone. Industrial and urban pollution is also threatening coastal fishing industries, and the loss of water to agriculture from the flushing of rivers in the dry season is also significant. Uncontrolled pollution from human and solid waste in tourist resorts is also presenting a potentially serious threat to the growth of tourism revenues, which totaled $3.2 billion in 1992. The report concludes that increasing pollution and congestion will work against Indonesia's efforts to remain internationally competitive for foreign investment, particularly in higher-technology industries, and, further, social resistance to the impacts of a projected ten-fold increase in industrial pollution may also arise.

Major Policy Issues Confronting World City Planners

I hope that this discussion of world city dynamics has made it clear, that public policies can make a huge difference for urban outcomes. There are, to be sure, extraordinary events over which urban development planners and decision makers have little or no control, such as some of the changes in political conditions to which I have alluded. But, the real question is how cities will respond to them. A point on which I would insist is that development planning is not just a matter of economics, and that economic infrastructure — building the world's biggest 24-hour airport, tallest office tower, or whatever — is by no means all that is needed, or even always the most important thing, to succeed in the process of world city formation. Cities are for the people who live in them, and a city's inhabitants must be assured a way of flourishing in the new economic order. Their life space must be defended against developments that tend to favour the few over the many; public services must be provided in adequate measure to everyone regardless of their ability to pay for them; and, the

conditions of the environment from city core to far periphery must be protected and enhanced. These are extraordinarily difficult but not impossible challenges. In the remainder of this paper, I will speak to six major policy issues that confront planners concerned with placing their cities in the top rank of the world hierarchy: spatial organization, regional governance, social and environmental sustainability, migrant workers, the rise of civil society, and intercity networks. These six are not the only ones, but they seem to me to be among the more important.

Spatial Organization

Earlier, I referred to the unprecedented scale of the new city regions of Asia in both population and area. And, urban growth in both dimensions will undoubtedly continue for several more decades until most of the rural population excess has been shifted into urban occupations. Three policy issues arise from this simple and (as it seems to me) irreversible trend. First, can public policy guide the emerging urban form? Secondly, can land use planning be extended to the entire city region? And thirdly, how can the region best be articulated through transportation?

Let me briefly consider the first of these questions. We are talking about agglomerations of 5 to 25 million people within a rapidly industrializing economy. What form should these city regions take in order to economize on travel, preserve fragile environments and create a more liveable, more manageable city? We are dealing here with magnitudes that are unprecedented in human history and that approximate and even exceed some middle-sized countries, such as Australia or Canada (Ginsburg et al., 1991). Not all growth is beneficial, however, and some can be cancerous, destructive of the bases of human life. The physical form of cities can, in principle, be controlled even in market economies, through the wise use of planning instruments and infrastructure investments. Urban densities can be controlled to produce "compact" cities. Multi-centric growth can be encouraged through New Town development schemes commensurate

with the scale of the city-region as a whole. And, high-density corridors can be promoted through rapid transit alignments. In this connection, it may be appropriate to recall a number of Asian inter-urban corridors that have already emerged, such as Tokyo-Osaka, Seoul-Pusan, Dalian-Shenyang, Tianjin-Beijing, Hong Kong-Guangzhou, and Taipei-Kaohsiung. Although it would be wrong to treat these as single entities, or linear "cities," it is clear that both public and private investments will shape the future expansion of individual city regions at either end of the corridor, not to mention at intermediate points.

The second and related issue concerns regional land use planning. Existing land use planning techniques are barely adequate to function effectively at the regional scale or, for that matter, to reflect contemporary interest in sustainable development (McAllister, 1973). The region, large as it is compared to the old city cores, is still a very limited terrain and must therefore be treated as a precious resource that is not to be squandered. For millions of people, it is their life space, and, for economic agents, it must also be a workable space. Furthermore, it is also a space that must preserve some of its natural characteristics as a human habitat. Some facilities, such as airports, are extremely space-demanding, while such modern "landscapes of power" as research parks are typically found in park-like settings. Some European cities, such as Frankfurt, have made elaborate plans for "green belts" and, although green belts are probably not suitable for most Asian cities, it is nevertheless important to preserve certain parts of the region from urban encroachments in order to protect watersheds, prevent floods, moderate climatic conditions, conserve unique landscape resources, such as wetlands, ensure the nearby production of fresh vegetables, flowers and small livestock, and create adequate environments for mass urban recreation. When all these uses are added up, they will amount to a very large — probably the major — portion of any city region. It is therefore obvious that land use planning on a regional scale is imperative. And yet, this can only be done if the region itself is defined in ways that allows for urban expansion without providing an incentive for environ-

mentally destructive facilities to locate in less tightly controlled areas beyond its boundaries, and if land use planners are directly involved with major decisions intended to shape the form of the expanding city, such as airport location decisions, New Towns planning, major transportation corridors, etc. Jurisdictional con-flicts over natural terrain — as between various government agen-cies charged with agriculture, forestry, water management, transportation, housing, and so forth — must also be avoided, by requiring a process of mutual consultation and regional planning review.

The third question relates to transportation planning as a way to articulate the evolving regional structure but also, and at the same time, help in shaping the form of the region. I have already had to introduce the subject of transportation planning in my discussion of both form and land use, showing that these ques-tions are so connected that they cannot be meaningfully treated separately from practice. Let me therefore merely add an import-ant proviso which I have not yet mentioned, and let me be plain-spoken about it. For an Asian city to replicate Los Angeles' love affair with freeways, because Los Angeles figures on most world city maps, is to commit collective suicide. As their income goes up, people will want to become motorized: first on bicycles with engines, then on motor bikes, and finally on cars. All of these vehicles are extraordinarily polluting, however, and as experience has shown in cities from Tokyo to Bangkok, their proliferation chokes traffic in the city to the point of virtual standstill. Urban densities in Asia will require mass transit and stringent controls over the use of motor vehicles for private convenience. Singapore stands out as a shining example of how a large city can effectively control the private automobile and other motorized methods of individual transportation. The extended city region must simi-larly be controlled, partly by decentralizing into a multi-centric pattern so as not to overload the old city centre and partly by investing heavily in high-speed bus lanes and rail transit. Limited access roads are probably unavoidable, if only to move goods quickly from one part of the region to another, but they must not

be allowed to become — as they have in Los Angeles — the (almost) exclusive means of linking parts of the region to each other.

Regional Governance

The preceding discussion has assumed some sort of capacity for government planning and implementation at the scale of the city region as a whole. This assumption must now be looked at more closely and become itself an object of public policy. For what is implied by regional land use planning, regional transportation planning, extending outwards the boundaries of city regions and molding the emerging urban form to reflect a social purpose, is nothing less than a demand for a *new territorial division of powers*. This concept refers to formal distribution of functions and author-ity among territorial units of government, from neighbourhoods and urban districts to larger entities: cities, regions, states or prov-inces, the nation and emerging multi-national territories. The ex-isting division of powers is in most, and perhaps in all, cases insufficient to cope with the problems of urban growth on the scale and at the rates we are forced to take as given in Asian urbanization. On the one hand, there is the danger of fragmenta-tion to the point of ungovernability. This is the typical case of American cities, such as Los Angeles, with its hundreds of sepa-rate jurisdictions, autonomous single-function agencies (such as the Los Angeles Metropolitan Water district or the Los Angeles Air Quality Management district), and a toothless regional plan-ning agency (the Southern California Council of Governments). The City of Los Angeles has a weak-mayor-strong-council form of government. Locally elected council persons wield extraordinary influence within their own districts, while city government is encapsulated within a structure of county government that is headed by a small but extremely powerful group of commission-ers. At the same time, Los Angeles must share decision-making powers with nearly 90 smaller cities, all of them within the county. This turns out to be a totally dysfunctional territorial division of

powers that puts Los Angeles at a severe disadvantage in relation to many Asian and Pacific cities.

Australia, for example, has a very different structure of urban-metropolitan governance. In the Australian urban archipelago, where five major cities are the preeminent focal points of national urban life, it is the state governments of the federation — such as Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia — that have substantial planning powers over their respective city regions of Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Australian states, moreover, have considerable autonomy *vis-à-vis* the federal government sitting in Canberra and play a very active developmental role. In Asian cities, experience varies from the unitary city state of Singapore to different degrees of decision-making power in other leading cities, with continued high dependency on central resources and supervision. If United States practice errs on the side of fragmentation, Asian countries tend to err on the side of centralization. Moreover, actual powers of local government rarely, if ever, coincide with the expanding boundaries of city regions. A good illustration is Jabotabek which is a planning region without substantial executive powers and is already regarded by many as too small to encompass its actual growth dynamics.

An optimum territorial division of powers can probably only be imagined. The tension between centralization and decentralization will probably never be resolved once and for all. Nevertheless, it is not a trivial question. If governance does not extend to the whole of the city region, and if local units of government are given insufficient powers, it is unlikely that other objectives vital to world city formation can be achieved. Regional overview questions must be resolved at the appropriate level. At the same time, the regional level should not become enmeshed in purely local matters which require a knowledge of details and capacity for conflict resolution which simply does not exist at the level of a region that is equivalent to a moderately sized country. Although a workable territorial division of powers capable of addressing the issues of world city growth will be difficult to achieve, a restruc-

turing of territorial governance is nevertheless an essential part of any solution to the complex problems world cities face. Some observers have begun to speculate about the emergence of virtual city states in Asia and elsewhere (Taylor, 1995; Scott, 1996; see also Ohmae, 1995). Large Australian cities, for example, already have the characteristics of city statehood within a federal framework. It is perhaps not too fanciful to believe that substantial powers can be devolved from national states to regional quasi-city-states even in the unitary states of Asia, in order to endow critically important regions with the powers and resources they need to deal with their own affairs independent of national intervention.

The Question of Sustainability

For a number of years now, it has become virtually impossible to discuss development at whatever scale without adding the modifying adjective "sustainable." Efforts to give a precise meaning to this epithet have failed so far and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the foreseeable future. For most people, however, "sustainable" suggests a quality of the natural environment or, to place it more firmly in the context of the human habitat, the *quality of people's life space*. A widely accepted implication of this understanding is that developments should not impair or, more optimistically, should actually lead to improvements in the life spaces we inhabit, and that this should be done not only for all living generations but also with an eye to generations not yet born. There is no doubt that this demand is a tall order, not least because it is inherently a democratic one: the quality of life spaces should be maintained or improved *for all the people* and not just for the elites in power.

In practical terms, invoking "sustainability" has more modest, but still daunting, implications: to make the air breathable and water drinkable, to protect unique and fragile environments, such as wetlands against enroachments by urban uses, to cut down on noise and toxic fumes, to make streets easier to navigate and safer for pedestrians, to detoxify soils that have been poisoned, to dis-

pose of solid wastes in ways not harmful to human life and amenities... objectives, in other words, that any city would almost certainly want to achieve and yet finds it immensely difficult to do. The actual trends, especially in hyperurbanizing Asia, seem to go in the opposite direction, and the results are measured in terms of sickness, death, energies drained, time lost and a relentless assault on the senses. The problems are so well known that I do not wish to dwell on them (ESCAP, 1993; The World Resource Institute, 1996). The steady deterioration of life spaces in many Asian cities is a result of the single-minded pursuit of economic growth to the exclusion of other considerations and reflects, at least partly, a failure of political will to make urban development "sustainable." Of course, there are those who would argue that countries and cities in the so-called developing world should "grow now and improve later." But I am not persuaded that generations must be sacrificed on the altar of prosperity for the few. The "grow now, improve later" argument is identical with one that asserts increasing inequality of income as a necessary condition for capital accumulation, when even the World Bank has long ago abandoned this misguided doctrine. In the perspective of emerging world cities, the neglect of the physical environment is a particularly near-sighted strategy because, in the end, conditions may become so bad that international business interests will look for more amenable sites elsewhere, where lungs do not have to breathe leaded air, traffic can move at more than 5 km an hour, and clean water is not just what comes out of a bottle.

A less well entrenched meaning of "sustainable," and one I would like to speak to briefly now, is one that refers to an acceptable *quality of life* insofar as it is socially determined. Here I mean such things as housing, community infrastructure and public services (education, health, sport, security, communication, transportation, etc.), work at decent wages for all who seek it, and a robust, well-organized civil society. All these, except for the last, are typically subjects of public policy. Their coverage and quality, of course, are a matter of resources, but they are also one of distribution, fairness, and social justice. It has become part of

everyday wisdom (assiduously promoted by international aid agencies), that the market should rule in these as well as other matters, and that the best policy for promoting the quality of life is to have no policy at all but to let the "free market" decide. But, consider the outcome of this doctrine. Those who have money will buy their way into a luxurious quality of life in their palatial homes (heavily guarded by private security services), send their children to exclusive private schools or abroad, be treated in private clinics, communicate with the world through computers, faxes and cellular phones, drive private automobiles (on public roads, of course) and relax in country clubs whose golf courses (reserved exclusively for men) are kept immaculate and green while people in other parts of the city (nearly all of them women) stand in line for an intermittent supply of water dribbling out of a standpipe. Somewhere in all of this there must be a balance. Countries with extremely skewed income distributions — Brazil, Peru, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines come to mind — are stagnating, their political regimes unstable, their social fabric torn by civil war or serious social conflict and, for all these reasons, unable to establish even the minimum conditions that would permit them to flourish. And, what holds for some countries holds for their cities as well. Somewhere there must be a balance, so that society does not polarize, the rich do not simply get richer and the poor poorer.

Migrant Workers or Citizens?

World cities — indeed, most cities — grow primarily through migration. If the natural rate of reproduction in the country is 2 per cent and a city grows at 6 per cent each year, it is safe to assume that the difference in rates is accounted for by migration. The hyperurbanizing cities of Asia are thus drawing on the so-called surplus population of rural and small town areas within their own country, although migrant workers are beginning to arrive in larger numbers also from abroad (Castles and Miller, 1993). What is striking about this situation is that migrant workers

and their families are typically invisible. If they live in squatter areas, they do not appear on official maps; if they engage in small-scale trade or manufactures, academics theorize them as part of the "informal sector" which means essentially that they are not monitored by the state and so are rendered officially invisible; if they are treated, as in China, as a "floating" population, meaning that their official residence continues to be in the villages whence they came, they are again invisible: no provisions are made for them in the official plans for housing, education, health, and so forth; they are treated as non-persons.

Foreign workers fare worse. Their presence may or may not be known to the government — the number of illegal migrants is rising in Japan and elsewhere — but they are workers inherently without rights. They cannot join labour unions, they cannot buy housing, they are not expected to settle in the city where they work. Most would agree that they are among the least protected members of the workforce and often subject to brutal exploitation.

The invisibility of migrant workers is not unique to Asia; it is also present in Western countries, where foreign workers are made the scapegoat for economic stagnation and the decline of the blue-collar working class, and where recent legislative initiatives are specifically designed to exclude them from public services. The question I should like to pose now is this: are there alternatives to a situation that seems to be obviously unjust? Is making migrants visible the answer, if visibility is merely a code word for government surveillance? Or, does it have something to do with what I shall call *citizen rights*? This issue strikes at the very heart of societal development. Migrant workers now form a sort of underclass that is deprived of virtually all rights, even of people's right to security of tenure on the land, which is the primordial condition for a stable family life and social reproduction. As things are at present, no matter how small they make themselves, they can be evicted from their shack dwellings or overcrowded living quarters at a moment's notice. And, that is only the beginning of their rights deprivation. If they happen to work in sweatshops, they may not be paid for the work they do. When they complain, they

are fired. When they take their case to the courts, no judge will listen to their story. And, needless to say, they are excluded from all political processes.

We have inherited a concept that links citizenship to the nation state, even though, in its original meaning that goes back to ancient Greece, it designated a person with the right to participate in the political life of a city. A person had the city's identity as his or her highest civic good. Today, citizenship — which carries with it certain entitlements such as the right to vote, eligibility for social services, the right to a passport, the right to the protection of the law, along with certain duties, such as obedience to the law, military service for men, etc. — becomes increasingly difficult to define as a national monopoly. Dual citizenship is becoming an increasingly accepted practice, as more migrants become "transnational" whose actual residence or work place is in two or more countries. And, in light of this, we may ask why citizenship should be exclusive to the nation when, in fact, a person contributes with his/her work to the construction of a city and its wealth? Once the concept of multiple citizenship is accepted, as appears to be increasingly the case, cannot a person simultaneously be a citizen of Hong Kong, Bangkok and Surabaya while carrying Chinese, Thai, Indonesian passports? And, what would the entitlements be to go along with local citizenship?

In my view, entitlements would include the right to visibility, to equal treatment with long-term residents of the city, to equal protection under the law, to inclusion in plans for urban expansion, to eligibility for educational, health and other social services on an equal basis and, above all, to secure housing. It would also involve a right to participate in local elections and to contribute with sweat equity to the construction and improvement of neighbourhood communities. Proposals such as these have been made by political parties elsewhere, in Germany, for example (Friedmann and Lehrer, forthcoming). They are, it seems to me, preferable to the alternative, which is invisibility, social polarization, a burgeoning underclass, systematic deprivation of rights

and the growing lawlessness that characterize so many of our "world class" cities today.

The Rise of Civil Society

If you have followed my argument so far, you will be aware that I am giving a rather unusual twist to the usual story about world city formation. Instead of waxing enthusiastic about megaprojects — bridges, tunnels, airports, and the cold beauty of glass-enclosed skyscrapers — which so delight the heart of big-city mayors, I am talking about people, their habitat and quality of life, the claims of invisible migrant citizens and now, in yet another turn, the concept of civil society.

Let me begin with a concrete fact. I shall quote from a recent paper by Michael Douglass (1996b, pp. 16-17):

> For urban Indonesia, estimates of minimum housing demand are one million units per year, depending on what components are included. Within the current national planning period, about 40,000 hectares of densely populated slums in 125 urban settlements are estimated to be in need of upgrading. In the past, the for-profit private housing sector has supplied just a little more than one-tenth of urban housing and has responded principally to middle and upper income demand for housing. The public housing program, which provides another four percent of units, has principally served civil servants and other special groups. Thus, about 85 percent of urban housing in Indonesia is supplied by the people themselves mainly using household savings, self-help, and mutual aid efforts.

If we follow Douglass' account, civil society in Indonesia is everything covered by the last phrase in this quotation: "urban housing... is supplied by the people themselves... using household savings, self-help, and mutual aid efforts." This is a reference to agencies that are neither of the state nor of the corporate economy but that are acting on their own initiative, being so to speak *in* the market and state but not *of* it. Building their own housing and, along the way, their communities as well, people must organize,

raise resources, make decisions, and carry them out in a responsible way. In this way, civil society engages in actions that are empowering (Friedmann, 1992).

But, civil society is also a relational term, juxtaposed to state and corporate economy as a relation of (relative) power.[4] It is primarily in this sense that I speak of "the rise of civil society" as a widely observed phenomenon throughout the world accompanying, whether you approve of it or not, the linked processes of economic growth, global market integration and relentless urbanization. It is people who mobilize outside the state, asserting their claims. Many of these struggles take place over life space issues such as the ones I have discussed. Ultimately they are claims not only for social justice but for a broad spectrum of citizen rights, as people become aware that the state is not necessarily a benign institution acting in the best interests of the people as a whole. Their claims are as old as democracy itself. They are claims for inclusiveness, for accountability of those who hold public office, for transparency in the conduct on the public's business, for information that will allow people to form their own opinions and come to their own decisions, and for participatory processes whenever state actions are likely to affect people's life and livelihood.

The state can move to suppress civil society, keeping it under a tight lid. It can misinterpret simple claims for accountability as undermining the state's authority and move to repress all criticism. It can even resort to terror. But, the long-term future of world cities cannot be imagined without a gradual process of democratization. Civil society will not be excluded from world city formation.

One of the illusions of economistic thinking is that market societies inserted into the global network can extract technology and capital without any of the institutions in which they are embedded. That is simply an unavailable option. Once a society is opened up to the outside world, you cannot restrict the incoming flows to disembodied capital and technology. You will have to make the state also more responsive to people's needs and more

transparent in its operations. That is on the one hand. On the other, is the fact that, in hyperurbanizing cities, people's needs cannot all be met without their active collaboration. That is the story of Indonesia with which I began this section. There is any number of ways that local governments can work collaboratively with people in the provision of basic necessities; Indonesia's famous *kampong* improvement programme is one such example. There are others.[5] The point is that world city formation is not a task for state and corporate interests alone but one that also involves organized civil society, especially at the level of the local community.

Intercity Networks: From Functional to Strategic

To say that a city's economy is inserted into a globe-spanning system underscores the network character of its linkages or, as Manuel Castells would have it, its insertion into a global "space of flows" involving money, goods and services, information, ideas, cultural practices and, not least, also the worker-citizens who enable the economy to flourish. I call all of these *functional* relations, and although hard data are difficult to obtain, there can be no question about their existence. Of particular interest to us in the present context is the transnational "space of flows" that connects city regions across national boundaries in a world-wide web of market relations.

Strictly speaking, of course, these transactions involve primarily economic agents, such as corporations and banks located in cities and not the cities themselves as political entities, so that the reference to intercity networks should be taken in a metaphorical sense only. In a recent article, however, commenting on European intercity networks, Klaus Kunzmann defines, in addition to functional, a second category of *strategic* networks (Kunzmann, 1995). These are, above all, network linkages between and among cities as *political-administrative units*. Kunzmann also refers to them as *alliances* that exist between two or more cities. An early forerunner is the well-known sister-city arrangement which is in-

tended primarily to promote cultural and ceremonial exchanges. Since the beginning of the 1990s, however, strategic networks have become extremely popular in Europe. The most significant network so far is EUROCITIES (The European Association of Metropolitan Cities) with a membership of 58. EUROCITIES serves, among other things, as a powerful interest lobby in Brussels. With subventions of 49 million ECU, intercity networks are enthusiastically promoted by the European Council, presumably because it sees such networks as strengthening the European Union.

Strategic alliances among cities may come into being for a variety of reasons. Some, according to Kunzmann, promote *learning* about innovative city projects, such as technology parks, job creation programmes, or the social integration of foreign migrants. Others lead to *collaboration* in undertaking challenging new projects, such as large-scale infrastructure investments (e.g., land reclamation schemes), while still others, such as EUROCITIES, *articulate and pursue common interests*, particularly in international forums.

Any such listing can be, at best, suggestive, but I would like to add to the three already mentioned, four others:

- joint city-marketing, especially as part of efforts to promote tourism;
- encouraging educational and scientific exchanges and research;
- joint financing of megaprojects, such as subways and port developments;
- the extension of reciprocal local citizen rights.

Europe's enthusiasm for strategic networking takes place against a historical background of city leagues that reaches far back to the late Middle Ages. One of the most important of these was the Hanseatic League in northern Europe, centred on the "free city" of Lübeck. The Hansa cities initially banded together to promote and protect long-distance trade in a network that extended from London in the west to Riga and Novgorod in the east.

Hanseatic outposts, such as Bergen (Norway), were used to "capture" trade in strategic commodities, in Bergen's case herring, that were then shipped all over Europe through trading networks. According to German historian Fritz Rörig (1971; original 1933), long-distance trade in the 13th and 14th centuries was more than marginally important; by creating the first world economy in the West, it was the lifeblood that enabled an increasingly prosperous urban economy to come into being and survive.[6] The Hanseatic League lasted until well into the 17th century (surviving miraculously for nearly 400 years); its definitive demise — it had been in decline for some time — came only with the rise of the national state after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which settled what came to be known to historians as the Thirty Years War, marked the end of the Holy Roman Empire as an effective institution and inaugurated the modern state system with its centralizing, mercantilist policies.

I would like to suggest that the experience of strategic alliances, foreshadowed centuries ago in the cities of the Hanseatic League and currently enjoying a revival in Europe, also holds significance for actual and/or emerging world cities along the Pacific Rim. As the national state gradually retreats from micromanaging local development, is it utopian to suggest the possibility of an Asian Pacific League of Cities for the 21st century? The beginnings of strategic networks in Asia are already visible in the new transnational "growth triangles" of which the best known is centred on Singapore and the most promising, in the longer view, is the northern "triangle," centred on the Yellow Sea, that would link Seoul, Dalian, Shenyang, Tianjin, and Osaka-Kobe (Rimmer, 1994). At the dawn of the APEC era, trans-Pacific intercity networks can be similarly imagined.

Conclusions

I shall be brief in my conclusions. For many people, an era of transition, such as the present, induces high anxiety about the

future. New ways of life and work are emerging. The old order is dying, and the new is not yet born. With the upheavals all around us, only a few things seem fairly clear. Just as the 20th century was the century of falling empires and waning national states, so the 21st promises to be one of trading cities and, consequently, an era as much of competition as of cooperation among them. Global forces will continue to be at work, providing the framework for urban policies. But, to a large extent, the future of world cities will be determined by the vision, entrepreneurial daring and skill of their political elites who will need to break loose from traditional habits and patterns of thought so that the brave new world may come into existence.

Notes

1. According to Paul L. Knox, "world cities are centres of transnational corporate headquarters, of their business services, of international finance, of transnational institutions, of telecommunications and information processing. They are basing points and control centres for the interdependent skein of financial and cultural flows which, together, support and sustain the globalization of industry" (Knox, 1995, p. 6). In another attempt at definition, he calls them "the pre-eminent centres of commercial innovation and corporate control, undisputed centres of taste-making, crucibles of consumer sensibility, and seedbeds of material culture" (ibid., p. 7).

2. To construct this map, a matrix was created of scheduled air service to and from 266 cities whose metropolitan populations exceeded one million. Only non-stop and direct flights between cities were captured. The global airline network was divided into seven regions, and the dominant cities in each region were analysed and mapped. The data revealed 20 cities that dominate their respective regional hinterlands and function as major hubs in the global air network (Keeling, 1995, pp. 120-25).

3. The conceptual language here is a bit difficult to navigate. World cities are city regions, but they also function as organizing and control centres for wider areas (which I also call here by that ever useful but slippery term, "region"). Global centres, such as Tokyo or New York, have the whole world as their *space of articulation*; other cities exert a strong (often decisive) economic influence over multinational or national economic "region," and so forth. It is therefore necessary always to identify the scale to which the term "region" is applied. All of this is to say that cities are not spatially disarticulated, and only a small number of world cities exert control at a global scale. *The global economy requires a functional network of cities in order to sustain its processes of accumulation.*

4. There is a rapidly expanding literature on civil society (Keane, 1988; Cohen and Arato, 1994). The concept itself has a long pedigree in Western political theory. For an interesting discussion of both civil society and citizenship from a legal perspective which also incorporates a number of Brazilian case studies, see Sousa Santos (1995).

5. For a splendid attempt to develop a "theory of community activation" which is relevant in the present context, see Douglass (1995).

6. For a fascinating account of intercity networks in Asia during the 12th and 13th centuries, see Abu-Lughod (1989, Part III).

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世界城市的前景

John Friedmann

（中文摘要）

　　世界城市的前景端視乎其公共政策如何回應城市發展與膨脹的動力。在亞洲，世界城市區域正迅速擴大，速度之快，令它們在未來二十年內會在規模上倍增。每一個世界城市都會整合一個較大的區域，其本身即此區域的經濟和金融中心。世界城市的排列次序並非固定不變，個別城市的排序會因應其作爲全球性資金「控制中心」的經濟地位而有所升降。各城市如何回應此動態環境與挑戰將決定他們在下一世紀之前景。本文對六個政策領域作出討論，包括空間組織，區域管治，環境性及社會性延續問題，移民工人及其家庭的社會整合，國家、經濟和公民社會三者之間的新關係，和城市間網絡的組成等。在結論部份，本文建議亞洲太平洋地區的主要城市組成一戰略性聯盟（「亞洲城市聯盟」），以推動上述項目的發展。