

The Politics of Large-Scale Economic and Infrastructure Projects in Fast-Growing Cities of the South

Literature Review

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Main Issues Addressed in WP2	4
3. Cities and Global Capitalism (Macro).....	5
4. Agglomeration Economies	8
5. Meso and Micro Scales of Analysis	10
6. Urban Regimes.....	12
7. Land Management Institutions and Practices.....	13
8. Mega-Projects and Mega-Events	14
• Mega-Events	17
9. Visioning / Imagineering	17
10. Implementation of Large-Scale Projects: Examining Impacts at the Micro and Metropolitan Scales.....	19
References.....	21

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1 Introduction

Policy-makers in developing countries increasingly place their large cities at the centre of their economic growth strategies. Such city-centric policies usually involve interventions designed to establish either competitive production platforms (e.g., enterprise parks) for engaging with global markets or specialized infrastructure (e.g., urban transport, airport, malls, gated residential communities) for buttressing economic development. Large-scale economic and infrastructure projects in developing countries, aimed at leveraging the potential of cities as growth engines, throw up particular challenges for urban sustainability by fuelling land speculation, exacerbating urban sprawl, reorienting employment patterns, displacing local populations and livelihoods, and increasing environmental health risks. These specialised spaces strive for maximum global connectivity without necessarily favouring linkages with the local economy, thereby creating risks for urban spatial fragmentation and social exclusion. Moreover, they may contain a built-in social bias, i.e., affluent and middle class groups benefit more directly to the extent that these policies promote primarily commercial and service activities requiring skilled labour.

The study of the politics of large-scale economic and infrastructure projects is the central theme of WP2 of the C2S project. This paper will outline a set of questions and hypotheses for this workpackage with reference to existing literature, the objective being to conduct a review through the analytical lenses of the C2S project, that is, with attention to participatory knowledge management systems and

inclusive governance. The main assumption of the overall project is that in order to promote more resilient patterns of development, cities need to incorporate different types of knowledge into their strategic planning activities with the active participation of various types of actors (Hordijk, Baud 2010: 2). This means for instance that economic growth strategies would need to integrate environmental and social dimensions and that local governance would need to involve various social actors including socially marginalized groups in order to produce more deliberative and democratic decision-making (Sao Paulo WP5, p2). It is also assumed that participatory spatialised knowledge contributes to a better understanding of urban development processes, including the social, spatial and environmental impacts on the urban local economy of particular city marketing strategies, notably the promotion of large-scale economic and infrastructure projects, compared to alternative strategies (Sao Paulo WP5, p2).

In our analysis of large-scale projects, also called megaprojects, we give attention to two distinct stages: project conception and project implementation, which often involve different sets of processes and actors. These will be the objects of empirical study in the ten selected cities, and our departure point for examining knowledge management systems and urban governance. As Altshuler and Luberoff point out: “efforts to realize large-scale investment projects often provide an unusually revealing window on patterns of influence in urban development politics. Such projects involve huge commitments of public resources and often entail significant threats to some interests and values even as they promise great benefits to others” (2003: 4).

Detailed analysis of the actors involved in promoting large-scale projects also provide an opportunity to identify groups who are left out of the process. It is observed in some countries that local populations directly affected by large-scale projects are very often uninformed and do not have an opportunity to position themselves to better benefit, to mitigate losses or to organize resistance in an effective manner. In some cases, socially marginalized groups are deliberately excluded and their contribution devalued because they go against powerful interests. Moreover, greenfield development often take place in urban peripheries, where land is cheaper, but this may also be where much of the urban poor live, often in illegal settlements. In such contexts, people who do not hold legal titles are not likely to

be recognized as legitimate stakeholders and hence are excluded from the elaboration and implementation processes of large-scale projects, which severely inhibits their capacity to formulate a collective response or to demand a review. The study of mega-project implementation will include attention to local forms of contestation. It will also involve analysis of social, spatial and environmental impacts, in collaboration with other workpackages.

The aim of this paper is to review the existing literature in order to help us to formulate specific research questions and hypotheses. Given the vast literature on this topic, it is useful to distinguish different scales of analysis and treat them separately (macro, meso, micro).

2

The Main Issues Addressed in WP2

The central research question addressed in WP2 is the importance given to large-scale economic and infrastructure projects in different types of cities in relation to alternative strategies for economic development. We proceed on the assumption that megaprojects are concrete manifestations of a strategy of international competition among large cities to attract investments. How can we explain this policy choice? To what extent do such economic strategies build on existing strengths? What types of employment are sought to be created? Are they articulated with other strategies that cater to small-scale enterprises or informal economy? And do they align with local skill sets?

We further assume that such megaprojects are shaping the future of large cities at all scales: through changes in land use, dislocation of people, changes in employment and local economies, distribution of environmental costs, and as such they are influencing the resilience of cities, their future capacity to resist or recover from exogenous shocks.

They also shape the future of city landscapes and of what “city” means. Megaprojects, often designed by prominent architects and planners operating at the international/transnational level, are outposts to test and foster the dissemination of new urban forms and spatial patterns globally, often without local awareness of these imports, or only for a limited audience. In that sense they cause many displacements, supposedly creative ones, potentially destructive ones (Gellert and Lynch 2003). Because of the manner in which megaprojects are designed they retrace in profound

ways the boundaries between private and public space, and redefine access to public goods and to mobility. As such megaprojects ultimately contribute in a highly influential way in reshaping the daily functioning of the city at the local level for the entire urban population, as suggested by Gellert and Lynch (2003).

It is important to underscore that megaprojects are not a new phenomenon; indeed in some contexts such as the US the ‘great megaproject era’ was during the period 1950-70, after which there was a backlash (Altshuler & Luberoff 2003). But in many places, notably the so-called ‘emerging economies’, megaprojects appear to be on the rise.

Given their impacts, it is important to understand the politics of these projects, the manner in which they emerge, as well as the institutional environment in which they take shape. As indicated above, we are interested in analysing two aspects of the process: knowledge management systems and governance patterns.

Accordingly, we are interested in the mobilisation, generation and sharing of knowledge involved with the conception of mega-projects. More generally, what explicit or implicit models inform urban agendas (visioning processes) in the cities we are studying? Which policy instruments are chosen and what are the rationales put forward? Upon what types of knowledge do they repose? How can we characterize in our national and local contexts the governance aspects of these projects: Who decides? To what extent are decisions the result of transparent and participatory decision-making processes? Are various types of actors involved (CSO, private



sector)? In terms of city politics, which local groups can be said to be driving the process? Which levels of government are most directly involved?

There is a vast literature that engages with the issues we are examining in WP2, originating from scholarship in geography, economics, politics, sociology and urban studies. Within these broad disciplinary fields, various theoretical frameworks and approaches are being used. We do not intend to follow any single framework rather we will

borrow concepts and analytical tools from various sources. Moreover, the approach will vary depending on the scale at which the analysis is taking place.

To the extent that this research project examines local economic and social processes across cities, it is particularly concerned with local (metropolitan) scale. But given that our ten cities are located in four different countries, on three continents, there will necessarily be attention to national and subnational scales as well.

3

Cities and Global Capitalism (Macro)

At the macro level, there is considerable literature, mainly originating from critical approaches (regulation school, neo-Marxist, neo-Gramscian), dedicated to explaining the current trend of strategies aimed at creating 'competitive cities'. A major point of departure of much of this literature is that changes in capitalism and technology have accelerated the processes known as globalization and forced states at all levels to engage in **economic restructuring** in order to compete more effectively in the global marketplace. Economic slowdown starting in the 1970s, linked to the decline of the dominant Fordist model of industrial production, led to massive restructuring of national economies in Europe and North America. This resulted in fundamental changes in organisation and technology of industrial production, and in the spatial division of labour, intra-nationally and internationally. As income shifted from manufacturing to service sector activities, cities were increasingly promoted as strategic assets of economic adjustment, and growth became more concentrated in urban areas. Moreover, consumerism in the form of shopping, entertainment and leisure activities, driven by middle and high-income groups, gradually became in itself a motor of many urban economies (Sellers 2002). In the last 20 years similar developments have been observed in cities of the South, as their economies link up to international markets and as local actors aspire to becoming a 'world city' or a 'global city region'. Naturally, the extent to which policy-makers are adopting such **city-centric strategies** will need to be established empirically for each country/city in the project; we can expect that there will be significant variation given the specific 'model' of each country's economy, its engagement with global capitalism, and local social and political specificities.

Harvey was among the first to analyse these processes in what he called the shift to **urban entrepreneurialism**

relying on public-private partnerships for promoting urban growth and development (Harvey 1989). This was analysed as a shift of capitalist reproduction from national to subnational scales. Continuing in the same broad theoretical path, subsequent scholarship elaborated the concepts of glocal states (Swyngedouw 1996) and glocal fixes (Brenner 1998), referring to the specific ways states seek to attract capital through space-based interventions, usually specialised infrastructure, in urban regions. Examples of glocal fixes include fitted out production platforms in the form of industrial parks or state-of-the-art ports or nicely packaged redeveloped urban areas, of which the Baltimore Waterfront and the London Docklands are classic examples.

Such interventions are analysed as part of broader strategies of territorial restructuring and **state re-scaling**, on which there is considerable literature (Brenner 1998, 2004). One of the central hypotheses of this neo-Marxist perspective is that each phase of capitalism is rooted in particular forms of territorial organisation, socially produced 'geographical infrastructures' intended to facilitate capital investment and accumulation, and as capitalism evolves so does territorial organisation (1998: 13). Falling under the broad heading of political geography, this research project attempts to bring together in a common framework two separate bodies of literature emanating from urban studies, global cities in particular, and international political economy. Quoting Brenner: "State re-scaling is a major accumulation strategy through which these transformed 'glocal' territorial states attempt to promote the global competitive advantage of their major urban regions. Global city formation and state re-scaling are therefore *dialectically intertwined moments of a single dynamic of global capitalist restructuring*" (1998: 1, italics added).

Swyngedouw et al (2002) in a study of large scale projects in Europe using a political-economy approach conclude that neoliberalism in cities is the intersection of the shifts in global economic forces and people's lives in specific places (Lefebvre, 1974). They maintain that this conception links with Lefebvre's idea of the 'urban' being the mediating space between global abstract forces and everyday lived space. In this spatial approach, the expansion of global interests in local places increasingly gives rise to resistance of local people to these expressions of the global economy at the local scale in urban space (Harrison, 2006; Pieterse, 2008).

This theoretical literature offers many compelling insights for understanding the processes we intend to study, notably by linking changes in urban policy and development to broader economic issues. One challenge, frequently noted in the literature¹, is to successfully link these somewhat abstract macro constructs with other analytical levels and with local actors, concrete policy measures and development patterns on the ground.

It is assumed for instance that the growing importance of mega-projects in cities, at the core of this WP, is intimately linked to the increasing integration of national and urban economies into a constantly evolving global economic system. This integration is itself linked to the dissemination of a **neo-liberal agenda** (also called the Washington Consensus), notably through international lending organisations. Indeed, structural adjustment loans throughout the 1980s and 90s were tied to specific economic reform packages (the case of India, Perú and Brazil), which imposed particular models with regard to economic regulation and public administration, to name only two broad areas. It is a powerful example of how particular types of knowledge, here hegemonic economic theories, are diffused and reproduced through space. We should recall however that the model is never reproduced in exactly the same form, giving rise to varieties of capitalism (Hall and Soskice 2001), a dynamic field of study.

India's decision to contract a loan with the IMF in 1991 and adopt a structural adjustment programme has been hotly criticized on the grounds that it was taken in the highest echelons of government, and even Parliament was not consulted. Notwithstanding this example, which raises questions about international power relations as well as internal governance, it should be pointed out that the diffusion of neoliberalism can not be explained simply as a top-down process imposed by the global economic system or by Washington based institutions. The particular forms

or aspects of neoliberalism adopted and implemented in countries and cities vary according to national and **local contingencies**, their social, political, economic and historical contexts (Hart, 2004, Veltz 2005). For instance, the GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) policy in post-apartheid South Africa has been analysed by some observers as a macro-scale neoliberal economic policy, the aim of which was to integrate South Africa with the global economy (Peet 2002).² This policy placed the capitalist system at the heart of the reconstruction programme, arguing that economic growth and the 'trickle down' of its benefits would result in social upliftment. The private sector was seen as a key actor in achieving economic growth with the municipalities playing an enabling role.³ This has led to the use of the PPP mechanism as an important neo-liberal tool for stimulating urban development and the emergence of any mega-projects in South African cities, which are embraced as stimulating transformation by creating jobs. However, this portrayal of public action as 'neoliberal' needs to be nuanced; PPPs have been pursued in parallel with a progressive policy orientation, for instance continued public housing and service provision by municipalities. Alongside some relatively fraught PPP attempts has also been a local state that – drawing on developmental state models – has sought to invest in mega-projects that it feels would generate appropriate economic growth returns. Projects such as convention centres, theme parks and business parks have been a feature of this. In many cases the state has taken the primary risk and subsequently sought to lever private investment as a result of these investments and to draw on private partners to help manage some of these processes (documented by (Freund 2010). For these reasons, some observers qualify the South African approach more as a hybrid of neoliberal and populist social democratic agendas along with a populist nationalist influence, pointing out that it involves growing the social welfare programme, large scale subsidy driven public housing, a persistent commitment to state ownership of major parastatals, redistributive programmes and affirmative action (Charlton and Kihato 2006; Harrison 2006).

In Peru, whose economy is heavily dependent on exportation of the extraction of natural resources such as mining (e.g. gold, copper, silver, zinc), gas, oil, fishmeal and wood transnational and national corporations represent powerful actors. They are no doubt influential in circulating

1 See for instance the debate on the autonomy of local levels (Peck and Tickell 1995).

2 Country reports have provided important indications about each country's global engagement and macro-level economic policies, which contribute significantly to defining the overall investment climate.

3 The GEAR policy was introduced into the Integrated Development Plans (IDP) of cities.



norms about institutional arrangements (without forgetting the silent but clear presence of illegal coca production and commercialization), all of which have generated somehow different types of political scandals related to corruption problems (mainly under former President Fujimori presently in jail), and where construction and real estate companies have not been an exception. So, in Peruvian cities the “extractive” model is the way the neoliberal agenda is being deployed, manifested by the deregulation of construction and urbanization permits, by various forms of privatization of city investments, which have become the rule. For instance, big shopping malls have appeared all over Peruvian cities driving into bankruptcy small businesses and traditional local markets. Additionally new high-rise buildings are being built in seismic cities, which traditionally did not build taller than 5 storeys to avoid risk. Nowadays, Lima has plenty of 12 to 20 storey buildings with very expensive department stores as well as fancy office buildings hosting those corporations, as well as small to very small medium class apartments, all of them without the necessary transport, green areas, nor water or waste water treatment services and even worst security situation. “The market will rule, the economy forces will organize it” said in different ways Fujimori and his followers (1993) when he decided to liberalize the transport system in the cities as well as to abolish the entire planning system of the country. As a result, Metropolitan Lima does not have an Urban Development Plan; indeed, planners were suspected of being communists! Overcoming the consequences of those policies is still a tragic legacy with which Peruvian cities are struggling.

In Brazil too, authors of critical training, especially those of the Marxist tradition, have countered the dominant thinking (*pensamento único*). Two types of criticism are formulated: theoretical and more practical in terms of complaints and claims of popular movements. In the theoretical sphere, we find analyses seeking to dismantle the discourses that conceal the practices of strategic urban planning, the so-called coercive policies of international funding agencies like the World Bank and IDB (Arantes, 2004), or discursive practices. For example, Carlos Vainer analyzes how the strategic planning of the city came to be viewed simultaneously in three ways. First the city as a “enterprise”, whose leader, like an executive of a large multinational, must act as if in the corporate world trying to compete and attract investment. The city is also a commodity as it starts to be seen in terms of concrete attributes that should be nice (gardens, parks and culture) that would invariably be sold to corporate interests. And finally, the city is seen as a “homeland” independent from the rest of the nation by opening the ideological front for the so-called war of the cities (Vainer 2002).

The formation of Brazilian thought, especially in the humanities, has been strongly influenced since the 1960s by Celso Furtado’s work on underdevelopment. This view sought to deconstruct the ideology of development and led authors such as Milton Santos to formulate the idea of “Corporate Metropolis” as opposed to another type of urbanization more committed to democracy and social justice.

Urban residents, new and old are calling for more services, but business, economic activities also need the so-called agglomeration economies, i.e., the general means of production. The city budget does not grow at the same pace as the new needs that arise. The dominant development ideology that prevailed in the 1950s and especially the reigning ideology of growth since the late 1960s that help to create what we call corporate metropolis, is much more concerned with the elimination of so-called diseconomies of agglomeration than with the production of services social and collective welfare.⁴ (Santos 1990).

The objectives pursued by current practices of strategic planning are thus familiar in the context of uneven development typical of underdeveloped countries, and explain why the debate in Brazil is almost unanimous in considering that strategic planning is incompatible with democracy and the practices of participatory planning. At the core of the ideology of strategic planning is the idea of developing specific areas of the city, meeting the needs of certain population groups, i.e., those who are able to pay for services. For this, the instruments intended to share the benefits - where they exist - are ineffective or only serve to legitimize the actions designed in other deliberative bodies. Such practices are defended in the name of technical and administrative efficiency. Especially in recent months with demands arising from the major sporting events that are taking place in the country, the urgency of urban reforms is leading to a nearly absolute lack of public consultation or public debate.

But this does not completely inhibit popular claims. There are organized resistance on the part of groups that are being threatened and displaced from their places of residence and use. An example is the “3rd Rally For Adequate Housing” held in São Paulo on 26-27 February 2011, jointly organized by the Ombudsman for the State of Sao Paulo, the National Movement of Homelessness, the Centre for Popular Movements (CMP), Union of Housing Movements (UMM), FACESP, Legal USP XI August, Nucleus Urban Development and Right to the City of Cress-SP Model Office of PUC / SP, Caico, Pastoral House of Ipiranga, Network Live Stream, Gaspar Garcia Centre for Human

⁴ Translation by J. Andrade.

Rights and Communication Network Street. According to the movements involved, this model of urbanization results in evictions, including evictions in areas well served by infrastructure, occupied by low-income communities, jeopardizing the right to a decent home for a large number of working families. For this group the focus of action from the government are the urban mega projects. Large-scale works undertaken on the road system or those allegedly aimed at environmental improvement for the city have resulted in the forced eviction of low-income residents, whose leaders often end up being arrested and prosecuted.

The **global cities** literature, which has been extremely influential in the last two decades, engages directly with the macro scale. Building on the world system approach, it focuses on the strategic role played by a limited number of large cities in the international economy. These are command centres for transnational corporations, “advanced production sites” for critical producer services and financial goods (Sassen 1991). A key premise of this theory is that certain large cities, termed ‘global cities’, have become delinked from their national economies, and function in a largely autonomous fashion. Although there are historical precedents of this kind pattern, the trend during the 19th century until the 1970s was characterized by the strong degree of integration of cities in their national economies, and their political subordination to the nation state (Brenner 1998). The theory contends that today large cities and their inter-city networks are replacing nation states as the basic territorial infrastructure of capitalist development (Brenner 1998: 5).

Of particular interest here is the influence this literature has had *outside academia*, serving as a model for real world cities to replicate. Indeed, the global system of cities is an implicit or explicit reference used by consulting firms hired to churn out blueprints for building and marketing ‘world-class’ cities across the planet. It is an example of how

particular types of knowledge circulate, how norms are produced, for instance about what is a desirable outcome of urban development. As critical authors have remarked, such scholarship produces hierarchies through city ranking based on *selected criteria*; in the process certain categories of cities, notably those of the South get marginalised. Robinson has argued that “widely circulating approaches to contemporary urbanization – global and world cities, together with the persistent use of the category ‘third world cities’ – impose substantial limitations on imagining or planning cities around the world” (2002, 531). This has significant implications for understanding growth, development and urbanization in cities of the South, since the world cities approach assesses and ‘ranks’ cities outside of the west against this standard of ‘city-ness’ derived from an understanding of the dominant western cities.

This links up with a more general critique of what has been termed “western urban theory”, as being inapplicable to cities of the South (Oldfield, 2007; Ramutsindela, 2007, Roy 2009). It condemns the practice by which the North is conceived as the site of ‘theory production’ while the South is the source of empirical data. This approach is contrasted with that of ‘ordinary cities’, which allows for an understanding of the diversity of experiences across cities in the world and is not only applicable to cities in certain categories, such as ‘Third world cities’ or ‘Western cities’. Its proponents argue that this allows for the distinctiveness of cities to come more plainly into view, and importantly, allows for a more “inclusive and redistributive policies” to be imagined (Robinson, 2008, 75). Clearly, these different approaches rely on different types of knowledge. Taking another perspective on the issue, Roy (2009) argues that urban theory-making must be shifted to the South in order to take into account phenomena that are relevant for all cities (e.g., informality, migration, power and resistance, relationship between city and nation).

4

Agglomeration Economies

Another body of academic work currently influencing public policy centres on the notion of “agglomeration economies” and is used to explain why economic activity concentrates in cities.⁵ Briefly stated, the term (agglomeration

economies) refers both to positive externalities or gains that accrue to all firms as a result of city size and the mix of activities and services (also called urbanisation economies) and to gains that arise from the spatial clustering of multiple firms in related industries (often called localisation economies) (Strange 2008). Sources of agglomeration economies include labour market pooling, input sharing, and knowledge

⁵ This section is adapted from Glen Robbins’ note on Agglomeration and Chance2Sustain 2010.

spillovers. [footnote reads: This section is adapted from Glen Robbins' note on Agglomeration and Chance2Sustain 2010. The 2009 World Development Report (WDR), *Reshaping Economic Geography* (World Bank 2009), which explicitly mobilises the concept, advocates policies that promote urbanisation, i.e., spatial concentrations of population, economic activity and infrastructure, in order to drive up growth rates. Urbanisation economies would arise from the greater availability of forms of skills, services and infrastructure with a wider application across an array of activities supported by density of economic activities. In economic theory, scale brings increasing returns to economic actors as the scale effects put downward pressure on the unit costs of increased production. Here it is worth noting that more recent analyses have suggested that one should not only look at scale but also at diversity effects (in terms of range of choices and options): "A diversified economy is plainly less vulnerable to the vagaries of individual industries, but in a comparatively small urban economy there may be a trade-off between diversity and agglomeration benefits. The latter might only surface if an industry is on a sufficient scale to generate the pools of labour and the subcontracting networks that underpin economies of scale." (Begg et al., 2002: 105). This resonates with the literature on resilience, which considers that economic diversity can help reduce risk from external shocks.

Drawing on the theoretical frameworks of agglomeration economics the 2009 WDR seeks to alleviate what it considers a misplaced fear of urbanisation and dispel the notion that urban economies in developing countries are dysfunctional. Drawing on multiple studies, it makes the case that urban centres in developing countries increasingly serve as engines of economic growth. It is argued that despite concerns about spatial and income inequalities, which characterise many of these environments, working with processes of urbanisation in such a manner that supports the forces of agglomeration is necessary and essential to secure long run economic growth. Although the authors recognise that dynamic urban change brings congestion, informal settlements, and rising demands for services, it cautions against government seeking to work against market trends or interfering in dynamic processes of urbanisation beyond a focus on progressively enhancing access to services and supporting growth-oriented investment:

Governments intervene (usually incorrectly) to spread the benefits of economic growth more evenly across space. Even when the imperatives are political, they have economic consequences. And even if the objectives are economic, they have social and environmental effects. Policy makers thus face sharp tradeoffs and must compromise. (...) Governments can do better by promoting the market forces that deliver both the concentration of economic production and the convergence of living standards, and augment them with policies to ensure

affordable basic services everywhere. They can do this by helping people and entrepreneurs take advantage of economic opportunities, wherever they arise. The market forces that help most are agglomeration, migration, and specialization. (World Bank, 2009: 34).

The economics of urban agglomeration literature has stimulated some very robust critiques, one of the most prominent being the tendency to neglect 'negative externalities' of scale where a variety of factors combine to either curtail benefits that accrue from externalities or where rising costs of concentration in space detract from increasing returns (Rigg et al, 2009). Some of this work points to social costs that might arise from urbanisation at scale – more often than not borne by the urban poor where their needs were being subjugated to the demands for space and services by powerful economic interests (cf. infra). More recently, there has been considerable attention allocated to the risks of rising negative externalities around the environment with impacts not only on people, but also in terms of climate change and biodiversity.

Yet further criticism has emerged around the policy dimensions that emerge from the growing tendency to place processes of agglomeration at the centre of frameworks that influence policy on urbanisation and urban development. Here it is pointed out that much of the economic-related literature informing policy prescriptions has a tendency to focus on allocation dimensions with less consideration given to distributional dimensions. For example, localisation economies could allow for firms in a geographic cluster to share in benefits from enhanced supplies of specialised skills but exactly how certain firms might actually secure these benefits and others might not, and further how the benefits to employers might relate to the benefits of employees is often given less policy attention. Work such as that of Peck (1992) has highlighted some of these challenges in making the case that processes that might serve goals of growth and competitiveness might impose burdens on labour.⁶

In terms of the C2S 'knowledge management' analytical framework, the WDR offers compelling material for reflection to the extent it explicitly derives its policies prescriptions from a particular body of theory. Work by Rigg et al. provides a fruitful starting point for a critical analysis of the WDR approach. Among other critiques, they point out several methodological and/or ethical weaknesses: the tendency for the WDR to over-simplify the case material its mobilises as "evidence" and to classify countries into categories for the sake of deriving a rather formulaic set of

6 Recent research in the Tiruppur garment cluster, one of India's largest industrial clusters, corroborates this finding (Vijayabaskar 2009).

policy responses; the tendency to suggest linear forms of development progress associated with stages or phases of urbanization, the latter also based on a particular theories of development; the narrow field of source material drawn on in the writing of the report, which gives prominence to new economic geography with its bias towards the discipline of economics and neglects a large array of scientific research on patterns of urban growth and development.

Other critiques point out the methodological weakness of the WDR, for instance with regard to the statistics used in the analysis, which reflect very diverse definitions of urban phenomena (Moriconi-Ebrard et al. 2010). This lack of rigour introduces a bias in the analysis, notably the overestimation of the importance of metropolitan cities and the world metropolitan system, and throws into question the diagnosis and prescriptions of the WDR.

5

Meso and Micro Scales of Analysis

Dominant models tend to assume a generic process of urban development across space, and posit the predominance of global economic processes in particular for shaping local economies. The resulting image is a flat world where all cities are competing with each other within a global marketplace. Implicitly then, a common premise in many studies is that local levels are mere filters for global processes (Paul 2005).

In examining local economic and social processes across cities, this research project is particularly concerned with local agency. The aim is to conduct analyses that balance structural forces that bear upon cities with local political agency. In doing so, we will examine work by authors who argue that the sources of expansion of local initiatives “often trace more to actors and interests within urban political economies than to pressures from without” and that the diversity of paths, even among similar urban regime types, suggests how much conditions and choices within urban regions matter (Sellers 2002). Work in this vein is critical of the overly central role assigned in the thesis of global urban dualization (or “global cities” thesis) to international business elites and to the decisive influence of external capital or markets on policy-making within cities, whereas it underplays the level of the nation-state (Sellers 2002).

Whereas macro-level studies discussed above stress the role of global economic processes on the urban regions, scholarship on **urban regimes** and **urban governance** has highlighted the power struggles between different groups of interests within cities and shown how local political economy is influenced by the specific nature of local governing coalitions or ‘regimes’, as well as by institutional forms defining inter-governmental relations.

The concept of urban governance became increasingly pervasive throughout the 1990s, most notably in the discourse and programmes of international development organisations. Although the fuzziness of the concept is not doubt partly responsible for its appeal, its fundamental ambiguity lies in the fact that “it is both descriptive and prescriptive” (Chandoke 2003:4); in other words, it refers at the same time to a political project and to an empirical reality (Mooij 2006)” (Tawa Lama-Rewal 2009: 6). The World Bank’s use of “good governance” underscores the normative dimension given to the term, and illustrates the political project it conveys. It has been criticised as a vehicle of the neoliberal agenda, synonymous with ‘rolling back the state’, depoliticising development (Chhotray 2007, Harriss 2001) and a managerial approach to public service delivery.⁷

Although not without problems, the concept of urban governance is useful in that it recognises that decision-making involves informal actors and institutions, in addition to formal ones.⁸ According to Sellers, urban governance refers to “actions and institutions within an urban region that regulate or impose conditions for its political economy” (2002: 9).

An important dimension to governance then is how various local scales interact in managing the city and

⁷ For a detailed discussion on the concept of urban governance, see Tawa Lama-Rewal 2009.

⁸ It can be noted that the definition proposed by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in 1996: “Urban governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action can be taken. It includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens”.

pursuing growth and development. Typically, various layers of government overlap in metropolitan regions, and it is important to understand the parameters of local government in different countries or subnational states. Like in the European context, there is much debate in the countries we are studying about appropriate institutions and optimal scales of governance for meeting the challenges faced by large metropolitan cities. To what extent are countries restructuring their territorial organization to adapt to the metropolitan regions (merging municipalities, creating umbrella organisations)? Have metropolitan cities become full-fledged political entities or rather managed by parastatal agencies (water and sanitation, public works, metropolitan planning)?

In South Africa, in the post 1994 period, large scale legislative and policy reform has resulted in new Municipal legislation which served among other purposes to create administrative units that combine previously white towns, commercial white rural agricultural areas, tribal land and informal settlements, and operate as integrated functional units. It also created a hierarchy of administrative units, ranging from larger metropolitan areas (including Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban), to District Municipalities, which in turn are made up of a cluster of local municipalities. In the 1996 Constitution metropolitan cities are designated as the third sphere of government with the provinces and centre. Within their designated jurisdictions, the metros have a large degree of autonomy, exclusive executive and regulatory powers and a single city tax regime. In addition to their wide-ranging powers, democratically elected metro governments also have considerable social responsibilities: according to the national policies (GEAR, RDP) and the Constitution, local governments are mandated to reduce poverty, provide housing and services, redress inequality and promote economic development. (Country Report, p26).

This kind of mandate is not found in Indian cities of similar size. Of particular importance, a legal framework in South Africa imposes a governance structure that brings together different stakeholders (e.g. ward committees, p31), for evolving plans (e.g. land-use planning frameworks) and policies and implementing

them, in accordance with a collectively imagined vision for the city's future (source?). Naturally, imposing a governance framework does not ensure that it is the sole or even the dominant decision-making channel, empirical research on ongoing planning processes will provide inputs for assessment.

The **devolution** of policy-making and fiscal powers in many countries has had an impact on urban governance, but patterns vary even *within* countries and will require careful study. In particular, the consequences of decentralisation on popular participation and social redistribution are not clearcut.⁹ Moreover, decentralized institutions may well coexist with a high concentration of power, as has been observed in Brazil where “fiscal and administrative decentralization at the municipal level are combined with a strong centralization of decision-making powers at the federal executive level” (Country Report 2010: 8). The basic explanation for this pattern is the conditional transfer of funds from the federal government, ensuring similar social policies and levels of spending across municipalities. What are the implications for local participation?

In India decentralisation reforms in the mid 1990s along with contemporaneous economic reforms have contributed to reshaping urban governance, and new forms of participation have been documented (Baud, de Wit eds 2008). Notwithstanding, studies also indicate that local urban governments remain weak, and that regional (provincial) states continue to impose their political prerogatives, even on India's largest cities (Ruet, Tawa Lama-Rewal eds 2009). Cities do not dispose of sufficient resources nor administrative capacity to undertake social and economic policy making; others levels of government, central and provincial, are driving the process, for instance with regard to urban infrastructure development (e.g., JNNURM programme). Some observers have suggested there is a concomitant re-centralisation taking place. Notwithstanding, there is considerable institutional change underway as some large urban regions create government structures at the metropolitan scale (e.g., Greater Hyderabad) (Kennedy 2007), (Zerah 2008).

9 See for instance Schneider 2003..

6

Urban Regimes

As mentioned, urban governance will be a major entry point for our examination of large-scale projects, as we will strive to understand how local decisions are taken and by whom. For this, scholarship on urban regimes provides a useful framework, although again the theory has largely been derived from observation of American and subsequently European cities. The urban regimes framework, building primarily on Oliver Stone's work on Atlanta (1989) and enhanced with the vast critical literature it inspired, has generated a rich corpus for the study of urban politics and specifically agenda-setting. Mainly developed by political scientists, this literature aims to understand the functioning of city politics, the processes that explain the emergence of specific political choices.¹⁰ The basic premise of the urban regime concept is that public officials and private interests form an alliance, a governing coalition, and that this political arrangement is *stable*, able to weather a change in ruling party. Although one can imagine various types of coalitions, most of the empirical literature shows quite unambiguously that business interests dominate local politics resulting in a bias toward this group's interests. Organised business groups act together with elected and nonelected public to advance the interests of a 'growth coalition', whether those interests are organised or not. Growth coalitions or 'growth machines' (Molotch 1976) are led by land-based business interests, mainly property developers, who seek to gain from the intensification of land use.

Given that large-scale projects give expression to a growth agenda, this literature can be profitably mobilised for our research. Some strands of the mega-project literature (cf. *infra*) explicitly mobilise the concept of urban regimes:

(...) regime theory is quite helpful in thinking about the politics of mega-project authorization and financing. Mega-projects are generally nonroutine. They normally require special authorizing, funding, revenue, land acquisition, and regulatory actions by two or more levels of government. They are all at least initially controversial. And they typically proceed so slowly that their political base must hold firm through electoral and business cycles. The stable and overwhelming support required to keep a mega-project on course for many years clearly does involve public-private cooperation of the sort that regime theorists describe (Altshuler and Luberoff 2003: 267).

10 Kennedy, Dubresson 2009. „Questioning 'urban regime' and 'growth machine/coalition' concepts in Indian and South African contexts.“ In CORUS/ISA Workshop. Cape Town, South Africa.

But these same authors clarify that this does not mean mega-project coalitions need a stable regimes, but it is an additional asset where it exists (Altshuler and Luberoff 2003: 268)

Although compelling in its seeming relevance for many cities, the urban regimes literature does not offer a satisfactory response to explain *why* city officials form alliances with business interests and why these are the dominant regime types, at least across most cities studied. External economic constraints are often put forward, the idea that inter-city competition, on the rise in recent decades, compels officials to focus on attracting investment. This explanation reinforces the theoretical suppositions of the restructuring/re-scaling literature examined above, i.e., that global capitalism is driving change at various territorial scales. But whatever the influence of exogenous market forces, such structural factors cannot explain variations across cities, which must necessarily derive from the internal dynamics of local governance. Internal economic resource constraints is another factor cited in this literature to explain what pushes local governments to form alliances with the business community, endowed with resources and knowledge about how to promote the local economy (Imbroscio 1997). A sociological explanation sometimes put forward is the idea that politicians and business groups are 'natural' allies', promoting a vision of city development based on shared values or at least shared conceptions about desirable patterns of urban development. This resonates with the knowledge management framework, and there is scope for exploring this factor comparatively across case studies. (This argument would appear to resonate with recent research conducted in India on the increasing mobilisation of middle classes around neighbourhood issues (Tawa Lama-Rewal 2007, Zerah 2007). Some similar themes are found in work on urban elites in South Africa (Moffett and Freund 2004).

Lastly, the fact that business groups are those with the most to gain from a growth agenda would explain that they are more motivated than other groups to engage closely in city politics. Indeed it is often difficult for others groups to mobilize support coalitions can, although they can generally block or modify initiatives that threaten them, a pattern that has been called 'negative pluralism' (Altshuler & Luberoff 2003: 261). According to Altshuler & Luberoff, the important

question that ordinary citizens face, “the only aspect of local development policy that most residents care much about”, is whether they can protect their “use value” interests (home, plot, neighbourhood) in the face of threats emanating from the public and business

sectors (Altshuler & Luberoff 2003: 261). This links up with Logan & Molotch’s contention that the major fault line in urban development politics is between ‘exchange’ and ‘use’ value interests (Logan and Molotch 1987) cited in Altshuler & Luberoff 2003: 268).

7

Land Management Institutions and Practices

This raises the important question of land management institutions and practices, which vary across regions. Many countries are struggling to find solutions to issues like: faulty or incomplete land records, insecurity of property rights, management of collectively owned land, illegal land occupation and settlements. These issues come in to play with regard to large-scale projects since they require assembling large tracts of land. In many cases, but this will vary across countries, they involve acquisition of land by pre-emption, i.e., the right of governments to seize or appropriate land for ‘public purpose’, or through other means of state enabling of private purchase, both of which may lead to property disputes or dispossession of unrecognised stakeholders via eviction.

According to the Peruvian economist Hernando De Soto (De Soto 2000) the main obstacle to development of capitalism is informality, including the under utilization of land assets linked to the absence of a legal property system (Gonzales de Olarte 2001). He proposes a seemingly simple solution to capitalist development through the reform of property systems, giving life to ‘dead capital’ by turning informal property into formal property that could be used as collateral for loans. The automatic nature of this transformation has been questioned, including by fellow Peruvians, for various reasons: the poor may not have an interest in formalizing their property, indeed in some contexts informality can offer protection; moreover, even if all informal land in Peru were transformed and used as collateral, there would not be enough credit in the banking system to meet the demand; more fundamentally, De Soto’s conception of capitalist development does not take into account human capital, and the fact that informality is an economic and social problem, not simply the result of legal or political obstacles (Gonzales de Olarte 2001).

From a theoretical perspective, De Soto appears to consider institutions as exogenous, i.e., institutional reform can improve material conditions. De Soto’s

prescriptions clearly promote an ideological agenda: “De Soto proposes a system of representations based on the idea that property generates surplus, capital and wealth. These ideas could bring the whole society together and, moreover, make it progress and increase welfare. His proposal of formalization would be a sort of revolution without social convulsion, attainable by sheer political will and perseverance. (...)The problem is that not all of these ideas survive the reality check. A characteristic of ideologies is that they emphasize facts that benefit certain interests, failing to provide with a wide view of reality. De Soto’s argument suffers from such shortcoming.” (Gonzales de Olarte 2001).

In Peru the work of de Soto and his institute ILD (the Institute of Liberty and Democracy) have had a lot of influence. It inspired the Fujimori government to start a large-scale regularisation policy via the COFOPRI (Comision de Formalizacion de Propiedad Informal). This highly centralized government organism was created to design and execute a programme for the formalization of urban informal property rights, with the financial support of the World Bank, but without participation from local governments or other public sector entities (Miranda 2002). According to COFOPRI the project resulted in improvement of the legal and institutional framework, stimulation of investment and socio-economic improvements in the target population. But other studies have contested this interpretation pointing out for instance that the probability of approval of applications for loans is similar for those having a title as for those having no ownership document (Morris Guerinoni, 2004, pp. 23-24, cited by Arrunada, Benito 2005), although there was a slight increase in the total number of mortgages registered (idem).

In an interesting illustration of how ideas travel, in India powerful advocacy groups, supported by the World Bank and USAID, are lobbying for a land titling programme

inspired by H. De Soto's work (Denis 2011).¹¹ The argument is the same: that titling will support mortgage access and enhance the capacity of the poor to become entrepreneurs and participate in the growth machine. They are choosing to ignore the negative evaluation of the few programmes in Asia that have been implemented following this model in Jakarta, Indonesia and Davao City, Philippines (Payne and al., 2009), which indicates that titling programmes increased commercialisation of housing in informal settlements, and led to sharp appreciation of land values and increases in rental price, thereby reducing access to the urban poor (Keivani and Mattingly 2007: 462). The objective in India is clearly to ease access to the urban lands currently occupied by the poor and working class, which are protected in many ways by their unclear status and the segmentation of land and housing markets that keep apart, as a submarket, transactions on illegal and poorly documented properties.

According to critics, the consequences of this reform, which ignores the case of poor tenants, are not difficult to predict: after the unification of the market and clear titles are issued, eviction will be driven by the market and small parcels scaled up for speculative real estate development supported by corporate capital (Durand-Lasserve, 2006).

¹¹ In July 2010, H. De Soto was in Delhi to advise the Indian government on urban housing and property right issues as part of its agenda for a slum-free India and its overall Policy on inclusive growth.

Already efforts are underway in many Indian States to revise the land registration system and digitalise the cadastre via e-governance initiatives. But there appears to be a trade-off, an incompatibility, between the seemingly innocuous aim of ensuring 'security of tenure' and the preservation of collective rights over land (grazing), which are very commonplace in India, giving rise to dispossession among the more vulnerable groups (Benjamin et al. 2007).

Although it was not frequently mentioned in the literature under review, it would probably be fair to say in many contexts that not only business groups, but politicians and bureaucrats too have a direct pecuniary stake (land or business) in favouring a 'growth coalition'.¹² In this context, attention will be paid to collusion and public graft, as well as to the diverse 'impersonal' mechanisms (market forces, institutional voids) through which vulnerable groups in particular tend to be most affected by large-scale projects (Denis 2006). In Durban, for instance, but it holds for many other contexts, it was noted that because land values are lower in urban peripheries, it is where such projects are planned, but it is also precisely where many poor people live and where informal (often illegal) settlements are located, putting them on an obstacle course with 'urban development'.

¹² In India there are regular press reports about cases of collusion between officials and real estate developers. See for instance on Mumbai, Weinstein 2008.

8

Mega-Projects and Mega-Events

There is a growing body of literature dealing specifically with mega-projects that is useful for identifying research questions and hypotheses (Altshuler and Luberoff 2003), (Flyvbjerg et al. 2003) (Barthel 2010).

One strand of this literature sets out to explain the changing role of infrastructure, "from simple precondition for production and consumption to being at the very core of these activities (...)" and why "infrastructure is increasingly being built as megaprojects" although the performance record of many such projects is very poor in both economic and environmental terms (Flyvbjerg et al. 2003: 2-3). Cost overruns are endemic (overruns of 50% to 100% in real terms are common, above 100% are not uncommon), projected benefits, notably in terms of positive regional development, often turn out to be insignificant or even negative:

In consequence, the cost-benefit analyses, financial analyses and environmental and social impact statements that are routinely carried out as part of megaproject preparation are called into question, criticised and denounced more often and more dramatically than analyses in any other professional field we know. Megaproject development today is not a field of what has been called 'honest numbers' (...) project promoters often avoid and violate established practices of good governance, transparency and participation in political and administrative decision making, either out of ignorance or because they see such practices as counterproductive to getting projects started. Civil society does not have the same say in this arena of public life as it does in others; *citizens are typically kept at a substantial distance*

from megaproject decision making (Flyvbjerg et al. 2003: 5, italics added).

Such studies underscore the necessity to take a healthy distance when analysing material provided by project promoters, e.g., demand forecasts for transport infrastructure or projected employment for production platforms, in part because of the models they use, poor data, and the capacity for consultants to manipulate models to show desired outcomes. But more than technical skills or data, the key problem identified is lack of **accountability**: absence of clear objectives and arrangements for measuring how they are met and for rewarding/punishing poor performance (Flyvbjerg et al. 2003: 107). This raises the question of whether megaprojects should be publicly or privately led. Flyvbjerg et al., who argue that projects on this scale can never be entirely private, make recommendations for increasing accountability on the basis of experience gained in building megaprojects; these include steps to strengthen public sector involvement in some ways (engaging stakeholders and the public; defining regulatory regimes, ...) and weaken it in others (sovereign guarantees should not be given to lenders; government should not act as project promoter); likewise they suggest strengthening private sector involvement in some ways (private risk capital; involve private consortia in performance-based project design) and diminishing it in others (lobby groups less opportunity for rent-seeking behaviour) (Flyvbjerg et al. 2003: 109-10).

For Altshuler and Luberoﬀ, who are more interested in the politics of mega-project development, such projects are “fundamentally an expression of public authority” even when only partially financed through public money. This is because public sector leadership (also referred to as ‘public entrepreneurship’ in public choice literature) is almost always required to see through effective implementation of mega-projects, regardless of whether they were initiated by political leaders or by business enterprises (2003: 220).

Studies of local urban politics in the US show that even in the ‘great mega-projects era’, roughly 1950-1970, municipalities relied on federal aid for realizing large-scale projects, starting with the urban renewal and interstate highway programmes (Fainstein & Fainstein 1983, cited by Altshuler & Luberoﬀ 2003: 251). It will be necessary to study the funding patterns for mega-projects and identify the various actors and institutional levels involved.

Likewise, it is important to analyse the impact of mega-project on city resource allocation decisions: do city budgets contribute directly or are there independent

sources of funding? For instance, in South Africa, the Cape Town Partnership (CTP)¹³, a not-for-profit private company in charge of managing the central city ‘City Improvement District’ (CID), handles a large budget constituted from surtaxes on properties within the CID. In fact, CIDs have a large degree of discretionary spending power; although initially the aim was to facilitate private investments by improving infrastructure and service levels, it has been observed that they are now starting to self-finance infrastructure and engage in urban planning (e.g., pedestrian areas) (Dubresson 2008).¹⁴

In addition to “who finances?” the question of “who implements?” is equally important. It has been noted that mega-projects are generally directed to specialized agencies “well insulated from normal politics” (Fainstein and Fainstein 1983:248, cited by Altshuler & Luberoﬀ 2003: 251). For India, Denis notes:

(...) in parallel to the decentralization process that devolves land management powers to local bodies, various state-level agencies and parastatal bodies are increasingly active on the scene (...). They undertake to assemble land to establish industrial parks but also real estate projects, without bothering to involve these recently ‘empowered’ local bodies. The parastatal land development agencies are aligning their strategies and practices with regional industrial and investment policies and cultivate a coalition of interests with private groups in the spirit of aggressively pursuing economic growth. They strive to facilitate investors’ access to land in a context of inter-state and inter-city competition (CNRS Country Report Inputs 2010 : 6).

Swyngedouw et al. (2002, 195) contend that Urban Development Projects (UDPs) are a product of exceptionalist planning policies and procedures directed by the new urban elite as part of a ‘new urban

13 Its institutional members include the former Cape Metropolitan Council, the former City of Cape Town municipality, the provincial government, Cape Town Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the South African Property Owners Association (SAPOA), Cape Town Heritage Trust, Cape Town Tourism, Business Against Crime, City Community Patrol Board and Cape Town Business Forum.

14 The CTP has been directly involved in defining and implementing large-scale development programmes that have significantly shaped urban space. In general, it ensures that the business interests it represents are defended and that their ‘vision’ for the future of the city is promoted. Kennedy, Dubresson 2009. „Questioning ‘urban regime’ and ‘growth machine/coalition’ concepts in Indian and South African contexts.“ In CORUS/ISA Workshop. Cape Town, South Africa.

policy' approach to managing cities, 'characterised by less democratic and more elite driven priorities'. They also conclude that such developments follow less democratic participatory processes, that UDPs are not properly integrated into wider city planning processes and plans and that they increase socio-economic polarisation and direct budgeting away from social projects (Swyngedouw, et al, 2002). Soja (2001) in his understanding of the shift towards 'postmodern urbanisation' concludes that one of the most important outcomes of the process is the restructuring of the urban form. This is most evident in the emergence of the 'mega-cities' and the internal restructuring of cities. He postulates that 'de-centralisation and re-centralisation' has given rise to the peripheralisation of the centre (to form the 'Exopolis' and 'Edge cities'), the centralisation of the periphery (gentrification and densification in the inner-city) and the breakdown of conventional density gradients apparent in the modern city (Soja, 2001). Local state facilitation of UDPs forms part of the process of restructuring the urban form by creating areas in the city with accompanying infrastructure to service large scale development projects. These are commonly found in inner city renewal areas, or in peripheral greenfield sites in the city, drawing investment away from the established modern central business areas (see Michel and Scott, 2005, for an example of the peripheralisation of UDP development in Durban). The implementation of large-scale projects insulated from public oversight, and which exclude or favour specific spaces, and recognize or exclude specific actors, is also questioned by literature on the relations between justice and urban planning (Harvey 1973) (Fainstein 2005) (Swyngedouw and Merrifield 1996), and more particularly by the concept of *spatial justice* (Soja 2010). Focusing on the role of space in dealing with injustice, this concept is deployed at different scales (and at the articulation of these scales), both in a distributive (reallocation of services, access to urban resources), and in a decision-making process perspectives (power relations between the actors, mechanisms of exclusion, various representations and definitions of the justice, place-based movements, drawing of boundaries, political organization of space, and issues of representational space). WP2 could usefully investigate the adoption of this approach as it provides a critical perspective to investigate the implications of large-scale development projects for sustainable urban planning, democratic planning process and for addressing social and environmental issues within city planning processes.

A special issue of *Built Environment* on Arab mega-projects offers relevant insights for comparing mega-

projects in non-Western contexts (Barthel 2010). Although there are many similarities with regard to the growing importance of neoliberal urban planning with its emphasis on large-scale projects to construct 'world class' spaces, targeting consumption and affluent lifestyle, iconic architecture, etc., as well as the outcomes in terms of social segregation, there are some important differences. Firstly the presence of authoritarian states conditions the degree of involvement of various stakeholders; mega-projects tend to emanate directly from the 'throne' especially in southern Mediterranean countries. "From one country to another, the mega-projects listed as 'presidential' (in Tunisia) or 'royal' (Morocco) confer the idea that any contestation is impossible (...). *Such projects take place outside the formal framework of decision-making and are based on exemptions from and exceptions to existing planning laws*" (idem: 9, italics added). Although there may be a difference of scale, one does find in most countries some degree of exceptionalism in mega-project management and it is an aspect we will consider in our studies.

A specific feature of Arab mega-projects in the critical involvement of Gulf investors in a new trans-Arab capitalism seeking "to implement high-end urban developments (...) targeting spaces with potential for speculation and fast return on investment such as waterfronts, hyper-centres, and brownfield or greenfield sites in prime outskirts locations" (idem: 10). But this pattern may underscore a weak state, "unable to set a real strategy for its capital, but eager for bribes". Indeed, the analysis suggests that mega-projects often serve as a substitute for more comprehensive urban strategies that would plan for future growth, take into account environmental risks, etc., a critique that also applies to Western countries.

With regard to governance, there are experiments with more decentralised decision-making involving the central state, local authorities, investors and sometimes civil society: "The rise of metropolitan local authorities may become a reality, even if the political agenda differs from one country to another in this highly sensitive issue of local public institutions becoming more independent of central government and presenting strong skills. (...) this new project management does not lead to upheaval everywhere of the ways and means of decision-making. Old features of urban governance are often intertwined with new ones" (Barthel 2010).



Mega-Events

Large-scale projects are also critically analysed in connection with mega-events such as the Olympics and other sporting events, which involve massive urban restructuring (stadia, public transport, housing), and usually include beautification schemes, slum evictions, etc (Broudehoux 2007, Chalkey, Essex 1999, Heitzman, Srinivas 2005, Monclus 2003, Vinayak, Ghosh 2006, Yuen 2008). These studies are particularly relevant in the context of this project as two case studies specifically deal with mega-events: the Yamuna River front redevelopment

project in Delhi for Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Regarding the latter, the Brazilian president recently appointed the former president of the Central Bank of Brazil to chair the Olympic Public Authority, demonstrating the importance given to the event. The need to follow a rigorous schedule for such events often provides justification for suppressing public debate. The Brazilian team is closely following this mega-event and the related megaprojects, and their implications for urban policy.

9

Visioning / Imagineering

In most cases, mega-projects are an integral part of a strategic plan, a “*projet urbain*” (Pinson 2009) or a “vision” document, a detailed blueprint aimed at creating a particular kind of city and, often, marketing it to international investors. This visioning process will form a central part of our research. Such “**imagineering**” (Paul 2004) and “**worlding**” (Roy 2009) processes, which tend to involve transposing generic ‘solutions’ and strategies, have been critically analysed in the literature. Waterfronts for example, a common type of mega-project, have been developed in cities of the North and South (e.g. Cape Town waterfront) often as a component of urban renewal of central historical precincts in the city (Hoyle, et al, 1988).

Authors like Paul remind us that the realization of the development agenda takes place in the urban built environment, through city building, in both the literal and metaphorical sense:

Land use and capital investment as well as image creation and/or preservation—both increasingly integrated through the enactment of “symbolic and concrete imaginations” (Short & Kim, 1999: p. 101) in the cityscape—are the core elements in building physical manifestations of the city’s (desired) global qualities and infusing festivals, sporting events, buildings, parks, squares, roads, even whole neighborhoods, with symbolic meaning. This constitutes the “imagineering” (Archer, 1997; Rutheiser, 1996) of the world city, a political as well as economic project in which particular actors, classes and coalitions pursue their own visions of global status and connectivity (Paul 2004: 573).

In **India**, several large cities have prepared vision statements (e.g., Vision Mumbai, Master Plan for Delhi 2021), usually with the help of international consultancy firms, a process contested for its opacity and lack of imagination. These studies provides a good starting point: Bangalore (Goldman 2010); Delhi (Dupont 2011), Mumbai and Hyderabad (Kennedy 2004; Kennedy and Zérah 2008).

In **South Africa** as part of the aforementioned IDP processes all municipalities have sought to document their goals and programmes. The eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality (Durban) makes the following statement: “By 2020, eThekweni Municipality will be Africa’s most caring and liveable city... To realise this vision, we believe there are basic elements that all citizens, the business community and visitors must have:

- Ease of movement in the city.
- A safe environment in all parts of the municipal area.
- Access to economic opportunities.
- Resources to afford what the city offers.
- A clean and green city.
- Homely neighbourhoods.
- Access to services, in particular municipal, health and education services.

With delivery of these, the people of eThekweni should be able to:

- Live in harmony.
- Be proud of their city.

- Feel protected.
- Feel their basic needs are being met.

Achieving the vision means addressing the key development challenges by making key interventions.” (<http://www.durban.gov.za/durban/government/policy/vision> accessed on 10 June 2010)

The intentions set out are clearly aimed at seeking to position the city as cognisant of its competing obligations. An analysis of supporting documents identifies that the Municipality sees itself as a central driver of development processes and that the use of catalytic type large scale urban projects will be central to not only overcoming problems of poverty but also in terms of repositioning the city’s economy to grow and create jobs. Especially with the recent World Cup a cursory analysis of the city’s recent budgets reflects significant portions of capital expenditure being allocated to these mega-projects and these interventions are given some prominence in relevant documentation. For instance, in the Economic Development Strategy it is stated:

The strategy provides a framework within which to develop partnerships with business and society to drive economic initiatives, and guidance to maintain high quality core infrastructure that serve key economic nodes in the EMA. The EDS seeks to improve the business environment within key economic nodes to encourage growth and further investment. It provides the framework for the identification and development of catalytic projects, which act to initiate development in key sectors and priority areas. (eThekweni Municipality, 2008: 5)

One of the most systematic critiques of the visioning/ imagineering processes, which tend to be formulaic, has been offered by Robinson (2008) who advocates that all cities should be interpreted rather as ‘**ordinary cities**’, a product of unique social, political and economic conditions and history. She suggests that as cities create their visions of the future for the whole city, city management has to contend with a wide range of different demands. The focus of this approach is thus on ‘diversity’ rather than ‘specialisation’ in the visioning process. Rather than ranking the city and visioning its future based on a narrow sphere of economic activities (pro-growth projects), the emphasis is on capitalizing on the broad range of social and economic networks and economies that circulate through the city. This brings forward “much more of the city and its diverse economy into view” (Robinson, 2008, 75) in planning for the future. Robinson, (2008, 74) contends that

within this approach “the benefits of supporting the generalised agglomeration economies of a city as opposed to specialized globalising clusters, emerge as important”.

A similar approach is being advocated by social activists in Peru, who calls on city governments to pursue appropriate growth strategies that cater to a low-income urban economy. “Urban informality is a strategic element in the development of a low-income urban economy. The design of future urban policies should begin by accepting, promoting and modernizing this sector. These policies should consider the basic requirements of the poor- the need to increase incomes and to reduce expenditures.” (Miranda 1994). In particular, the importance of informal commerce or street vending is underscored as a major source of livelihoods; this is the case in India also. In addition to providing work to unskilled rural migrants, street vending absorbs workers who cannot find employment in the formal sector either for lack of skills or opportunities. In India for instance, although the economy is growing fast, work in the organized sector is shrinking; one study found that 30% of street vendors in Ahmedabad and 50% in Mumbai and Kolkata had previously been employed in the formal sector (mainly textile factories) (Bhowmik 2003).

These approaches suggest **alternatives** to strategies premised on global competition buttressed by megaprojects; such alternative policies would focus on promoting the local economy including activities in the informal sector. In many developing economies small enterprises, including household industries, contribute very significantly to GDP, exports, and employment. Carefully designed policies can target SMEs and help them improve their performance (skill development, access to quality infrastructure and credit, marketing assistance, etc). Starting in the 1990s, there has been abundant literature on industrial districts and clusters showing that SME based production can be an effective strategy for both developed and developing countries. Selective inputs, including from local governments, can improve cluster performance, whose competitiveness usually rely on joint action among competing firms. Other alternative policies include a livelihoods approach to target local development efforts toward the urban poor (Rakodi and Lloyd-Jones 2002). Using spatialised knowledge to better target policy interventions to concentrations of urban deprivation can serve as a starting point for improving the various assets of low-income households (human, financial, physical, social) (Baud et al. 2008).

Implementation of Large-Scale Projects: Examining Impacts at the Micro and Metropolitan Scales

The study of the implementation of large-scale projects will be conducted in collaboration with researchers from other workpackages (WP 3-6), specialised on specific themes such as urban inequality, substandard settlements, environmental risks and costs, fiscal decentralisation and participatory budgeting and integrated forms of urban sustainable development. We briefly outline some key research questions and working hypotheses.

Mega projects are symptomatic of **metropolisation** processes. The concept of metropolisation addresses the trend of accumulation of values in the largest cities by looking at its spatial outcomes: new locations of capital, mostly in the periphery, specific spatial and architectural forms - enclaves, spatial trends that are reinforced - namely segregation (Lévy and Lussault 2003). By questioning the built environment as well as governance issues, it offers a useful framework to consider the consequences of megaprojects at all scales. It especially highlights the development of new peripheral centralities (e.g. edge cities) whose exocentric location challenges the existing metropolis, its administrative boundaries and the way it is managed; it also unravels the complex dynamics triggered off at the local scale by such new locations. In that sense it offers an interesting perspective to address the various impacts of megaprojects by considering all scales as embedded and intersected.

From a spatial point de view, the way capital is invested in megaprojects differs according to the activity and economic sector and evolves over time. Export-oriented zones or corporate campuses, for instance, are manifestations of precisely defined moments of capitalism, a fact that is reflected in the built form. Taking the example of the IT sector in India, Rolee Aranya distinguishes three different “generations” of locations and built forms in the metropolitan area of Bangalore, the big IT parks and corporate campuses located in the outskirts of the city corresponding to two different stages of the coming of age of the Indian IT sector, but also to two different contexts in terms of urban development (Aranya 2008). It highlights the relevance of locating the megaproject as a spatial form in its broader economic and spatial environment, as well as an architectural form: where is it located in the metropolitan area? Which built form was selected? Were other options (in terms of location and built form) available in the same city/country for this kind of activity? These questions need

to be raised as they may highlight hidden agendas (e.g. redeveloping and beautifying an area, extracting the land value of areas belonging to powerful actors).

The literature documents how the implementation of large-scale projects can entail risks of aggravating socio-spatial exclusion, both at the time of the establishment of the project (land acquisition, displacement of population) and as a result of the created infrastructure (reduction of employment opportunities, environmental destabilization) (see for example Gellert & Lynch 2003). The increasing **specialization** of urban spaces (strictly commercial or industrial, strictly residential) that is fostered by megaprojects has been identified as one of the factors leading to urban **fragmentation** (May et al. 1998). The term ‘fragmentation’ has been hotly debated (Navez-Bouchanine 2002), and some authors are inclined to limit its use to instances of splintering of material networks (separate networks for water, electricity provision, privatized transport network, toll roads) (ibid) (Jaglin 2001). This corresponds to a large extent to the way megaprojects are currently designed as self-contained (e.g. economic zones, townships) and self-sustained, especially in metropolises of the South, where public infrastructure and services do not cover basic needs. In that sense such enclaves that are located in the metropolitan area but whose territory and functioning are separate, question the political, economic, material, financial viability of the urban body as a whole. The consequences of spatial fragmentation have not been very documented in this context at the micro scale, through the study of both displacement processes (displacement of livelihoods, of population) and resilience (how do local populations cope with it) in the implementation of a megaproject.

Writing about American cities in the mid-1970s, but with surprising contemporary relevance, Molotch insisted on the liabilities of the growth agenda with regard to lower class residents in particular who bear the higher costs resulting from these policies including for utilities and other public services, and to the environment (air pollution, traffic). He vigorously refuted the claim that growth creates employment, calling it the “key ideological prop” for the growth machine (1976: 320). Other authors also highlight the ‘regressive

distributional effects' of policies pursued by the dominant urban regimes, which "tend to reinforce and extend an extreme level of material deprivation among certain citizens, which is ultimately incompatible with a condition of political equality" (Imbroscio, 1997: 10). In the literature on US cities, examples of policies with adverse effects include regeneration projects that displace inner city residents, largely minorities, or reduce neighbourhood employment opportunities and economic policies that promote skilled employment, thereby penalising relatively less educated groups.

To assess the social and environmental costs of megaprojects, as well as to criticize the instrumentalization of the green agenda, the concept of **environmental justice** is used in Brazil (Acselrad et al. 2004). The concept was forged in the 1980s in the work of Robert Bullard and others, based on studies showing that toxic waste dumps and polluting industries in the US were concentrated in areas inhabited by African Americans. The movement gave visibility to the relationship between environmental degradation and social injustice¹⁵. To Otília Arantes (2000) strategic planning and urban marketing of mega-projects, especially major cultural and entertainment infrastructure and equipment, reflect the logic of competitiveness. Thus, according to the Arantes, gentrification is not an unintended consequence of the logic of urban investment, on the contrary, gentrification is a key component for revitalization, urban redevelopment and upgrading.

Some mega-projects, such as special economic zones or industrial townships in India, often have either a built-in residential component or an impact on residential development in the immediate surroundings. The worldwide real estate bubble during the 2000s fuelled this trend and the evolution towards "mixed use" projects (including commercial activities, services and residential space) and private cities projects. However, although they are

functionally mixed-use, they are rarely socially mixed: such residential projects are essentially upscale ones, targeting privileged sections of the society. They are **enclaves**, characterized spatially by restriction of access and gating (though the term "**gated communities**" may not be relevant to all types of enclaves e.g., new "integrated townships" and "private cities"). There is a scarcity of research on this issue in developing countries, except for the dense production on Latin America. The C2S research project offers an opportunity to bridge this gap. The literature on gated communities in the 1990s mainly documented the spread of this phenomenon throughout the American continent (North and South) (Blakely & Snyder 1997, MacKenzie 1994). The literature on developing and emerging countries that has developed in the 2000s remains largely descriptive and focused on these enclaves themselves, not addressing the issues that are reinforced in that context: segregation and its consequences for local populations in terms of livelihoods, fragmentation and the viability of local democracies, fiscal sustainability, governance issues. As a whole this literature does not really address the specificities of cities of the South: either the analysis remains limited to the investigation of a "global" form, or it addresses directly the metropolitan and national scales, bypassing the local one. Herein lies considerable scope for research.

Robbins (Robbins 2005) provides an analysis of impact dimensions deemed important by the Municipality in Durban, South Africa in some of its large scale projects and examines the extent to which these might be seen as "pro-poor". He concludes that, "the experience of Durban's capital spending for economic development purposes has, to a large degree, lacked in intent to impact meaningfully and directly on the lives of the poor." (Robbins, 2005: 70). A subsequent analysis of the City's broader economic development programmes beyond this period with a specific focus on employment reveals that direct employment impacts have not received sustained attention in major economic development projects but have begun to be noted in socially-oriented public-works infrastructure activities (Robbins 2010).

15 Cf. http://www.justicaambiental.org.br/_justicaambiental/

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