

WHEN CITIES BECOME EXTREME SITES FOR OUR MAJOR CHALLENGES

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Urban capabilities have often been crafted out of collective efforts to go beyond the conflicts and racisms that mark an epoch. It is out of this type of dialectic that came the open urbanity that made European cities historically spaces for the making of expanded citizenship. One factor feeding these positives was that cities became strategic spaces also for the powerful and their needs for self-representation and projection onto a larger stage. The modest middle classes and the powerful both found in the city a space for their diverse “life projects.” Less familiar to this author are the non-European trajectories of the strategic spaces for the powerful and the powerless.

It is impossible to do full justice to all the aspects of this process in such a short essay; here I limit myself to the basic building blocks of the argument. I use two types of acute challenges facing cities to explore how urban capabilities can alter what originates as hatred and as war. One is asymmetric war and the urbanizing of war it entails. The other is the hard work of making open cities and repositioning the immigrant and the citizen as above all urban subjects, rather than essentially different subjects as much of the anti-immigrant and racist commentary does.¹

CITIES AS FRONTIER ZONES.

The large complex city, especially if global, is a new frontier zone. Actors from different worlds meet there, but there are no clear rules of engagement. Where the historic frontier was in the far stretches of colonial empires, today's frontier zone is in our large cities. It is a strategic frontier zone for global corporate capital. Much of the work of forcing deregulation,

¹ I have explored the notion of urban capabilities in a range of other histories, including most recently the ‘occupy’ movements, e.g. “The Global Street: Making the Political” *Globalizations* October 2011, Vol. 8, No. 5, pp. 565–571; “Imminent Domain: Spaces of Occupation.” *Art Forum*, January 2012.

privatization, and new fiscal and monetary policies on the host governments had to do with creating the formal instruments to construct their equivalent of the old military “fort” of the historic frontier: the regulatory environment they need in city after city worldwide to ensure a global space of operations.

But it is also a strategic frontier zone for those who lack power, those who are disadvantaged, outsiders, discriminated minorities. The disadvantaged and excluded can gain presence in such cities, presence vis a vis power and presence vis a vis each other. This signals the possibility of a new type of politics, centered in new types of political actors. This is one instance of what I seek to capture with the concept of urban capabilities. It is not simply a matter of having or not having power. There are new hybrid bases from which to act. One outcome we are seeing in city after city is the making of informal politics.

Both the work of making the public and making the political in urban space become critical at a time of growing velocities, the ascendance of process and flow over artefacts and permanence, massive structures that are not at a human scale, and branding as the basic mediation between individuals and markets. The work of design since the 1980s has tended to produce narratives that add to the value of existing contexts, and at its narrowest, to the utility logics of the economic corporate world. But the city can “talk back;” for instance, there is also a kind of public-making work that can produce disruptive narratives, and make legible the local and the silenced. Here we can detect yet another instance of what I think of as urban capabilities.

These urban capabilities also signal the possibility of making new subjects and identities in the city. Often it is not so much the ethnic, religious, phenotype that dominates in urban settings, but the urbanity of the subject and of the setting, even when national politics is deeply anti-immigrant. For instance, how can one avoid noticing that when former pro-immigration mayors of large US cities become presidential candidates, they shift to an anti-immigration stance. A city’s sociality can bring out and underline the urbanity of subject and setting, and dilute more essentialist signifiers. It is often the need for new solidarities when cities confront major challenges that can bring this shift about. This might force us into joint responses and from there onto the emphasis of an urban, rather than individual or group subject and identity –such as an ethnic or religious subject and identity.

Against the background of a partial disassembling of empires and nation-states, the city emerges as a strategic site for making elements of new, perhaps even for making novel partial orders.² Where in the past national law might have been *the* law, today subsidiarity but also the new strategic role of cities, makes it possible for us to imagine a return to urban law. We see a resurgence of urban law-making, a subject I discuss in depth elsewhere (see *Territory, Authority, Rights*, ch 2 and ch 6).³ For instance, in the US, a growing number of cities have passed local laws (ordinances) that make their cities sanctuaries for undocumented immigrants; other cities have passed environmental laws that only hold for the particular cities.

In my larger project I identified a vast proliferation of such partial assemblages that remix bits of territory, authority, and rights, once ensconced in *national* institutional frames. In the case of Europe these novel assemblages include those resulting from the formation and ongoing development of the EU, but also those resulting of a variety of cross-city alliances around protecting the environment, fighting racism, and other worthy causes. And they result from sub-national struggles and the desire to make new regulations for self-governance at the level of the neighborhood and the city. A final point to elaborate the strategic importance of the city for shaping new orders, is that as a space, the city can bring together multiple very diverse struggles and engender a larger, more encompassing push for a new normative order.

² One synthesizing image we might use to capture these dynamics is the movement from centripetal nation state articulation to a centrifugal multiplication of specialized assemblages.

³ The emergent landscape I am describing promotes a multiplication of diverse spatiotemporal framings and diverse normative mini-orders, where once the dominant logic was toward producing grand unitary national spatial, temporal, and normative framings (See Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, chaps. 8 and 9.)

These are among the features that make cities a space of great complexity and diversity. But today cities confront major conflicts that can reduce that complexity to mere built-up terrain or cement jungle. The urban way of confronting extreme racisms, governmental wars on terror, the future crises of climate change, is to make these challenges occasions to further expand diverse urban capabilities and to expand the meaning of membership.

CITIES AND POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY: WHEN POWERLESSNESS BECOMES COMPLEX

Cities are one of the key sites where new norms and new identities are *made*. They have been such sites at various times and in various places, and under very diverse conditions. This role can become strategic in particular times and places, as is the case today in global cities.

It is helpful to consider Max Weber's *The City* in order to examine the potential of cities to make norms and identities. There are two aspects in this work that are of particular importance here. In his effort to specify the ideal-typical features of what constitutes the city, Weber sought a kind of city that combined conditions and dynamics that forced its residents and leaders into crafting innovative responses and adaptations. For Weber, it is particularly the cities of the late middle ages that combine the necessary conditions to push its urban residents into action. Weber helps us understand under what conditions cities can be positive and creative influences on peoples' lives. For Weber cities are a set of social structures that encourage individuality and innovation and hence are an instrument of historical change. There is in this intellectual project a deep sense of the historicity of these conditions. But he did not find these qualities in the modern industrial cities of his time. Modern urban life did not correspond to this positive and creative power of cities. Weber saw modern cities as dominated by large factories and office bureaucracies, thereby robbing from its citizens the possibility of shaping at least some of the features of their cities.

A second key feature in Weber's work is that these transformations could make for epochal change beyond the city itself and could institute larger foundational transformations. In that regard the city offered the possibility of understanding changes that could—under certain conditions—eventually encompass society at large. Weber shows us how in many of

these cities these struggles led to the creation of what today might be described as governance systems and citizenship. Struggles around political, economic, legal, cultural, issues centered in the realities of cities can become the catalysts for new trans-urban developments in all these institutional domains—markets, participatory governance, rights for members of the urban community regardless of lineage, judicial recourse, cultures of engagement and deliberation.

Moving on, cities emerge once again as strategic sites when our global era begins, a trend that is counterintuitive but has by now been extensively documented (Sassen 1991/2001; 2012). Today a certain type of city—the global city—has proliferated across the world and emerged as a strategic site for innovations and transformations in multiple institutional domains. Several of the key components of economic globalization and digitization concentrate in global cities and produce dislocations and destabilizations of existing institutional orders that go well beyond cities.⁴ Further, some of the key legal, regulatory and normative frames for handling urban conditions are now part of national framings—much of what is called urban development policy *is* national economic policy. It is the high level of concentration of these new dynamics in these cities that forces the need to craft new types of responses and innovations on the part of both the most powerful and the most disadvantaged, albeit for very different types of survival.

In contrast, from the 1930s up until the 1970s, when mass manufacturing dominated, cities had lost strategic functions and were not sites for creative institutional innovations. The strategic sites were the large factory at the heart of the larger process of mass manufacturing and mass consumption. The factory and the government were the strategic sites where the crucial dynamics producing the major institutional innovations of the epoch were located. My own reading of the Fordist city corresponds in many ways to Weber's in the sense that the strategic scale under Fordism is the

⁴ Emphasizing this multiplication of partial assemblage contrasts with much of the globalization literature that has tended to assume the binary of the global versus the national. In this literature the national is understood as a unit. I emphasize that the global can also be constituted inside the national, i.e. the global city. Further, the focus in the globalization literature tends to be on the powerful global institutions that have played a critical role in implementing the global corporate economy and have reduced the power of the state. In contrast, I also emphasize that particular components of the state have actually gained power because they have to do the work of implementing policies necessary for a global corporate economy. This is another reason for valuing the more encompassing normative order that a city can (though does not necessarily) generate.

national scale—cities lose significance. But I part company from Weber in that historically the large Fordist factory and the mines emerged as key sites for the making of a modern working class and as a syndicalist project; it is not always the city that is the site for making norms and identities.

With globalization and digitization—and all the specific elements they entail—global cities do emerge as such strategic sites for making norms and identities. Some reflect extreme power, such as the global managerial elites, and others reflect innovation under extreme duress: notably much of what happens in immigrant neighborhoods. While the strategic transformations are sharply concentrated in global cities, many are also enacted (besides being diffused) in cities at lower orders of national urban hierarchies.

It is worth noting that Weber's observation about urban residents, rather than merely leading classes, is also pertinent for today's global cities. Current conditions in these cities are creating not only new structuration of power but also operational and rhetorical openings for new types of political actors which may long have been invisible or without voice. A key element of the argument here is that the localization of strategic components of globalization in these cities means that the disadvantaged can engage new forms of contesting globalized corporate power. Further, the growing numbers and diversity of the disadvantaged in these cities takes on a distinctive "presence."

Critical in this process is to recover some of the differences between being powerless and being invisible or impotent. The disadvantaged in global cities can gain "presence" in their engagement with power but also vis-à-vis each other. This is different from the 1950s to the 1970s in the U.S., for instance, when white flight and the significant departure of major corporate headquarters left cities hollowed out and the disadvantaged in a condition of abandonment. Today, the localization of the most powerful global actors in these cities creates a set of objective conditions of engagement. Examples are the struggles against gentrification which encroaches on minority and disadvantaged neighborhoods, which led to growing numbers of homeless beginning in the 1980s and struggles for the rights of the homeless; or demonstrations against police brutalizing minority people. Elsewhere I have developed the case that while these struggles are highly localized, they actually represent a form of global engagement; their globality is a horizontal, multi-sited recurrence of similar struggles in

hundreds of cities worldwide.⁵ These struggles are different from the ghetto uprisings of the 1960s, which were short, intense eruptions confined to the ghettos and causing most of the damage in the neighborhoods of the disadvantaged themselves. In these ghetto uprisings there was no engagement with power, but rather more protest against power. In contrast, current conditions in major, especially global, cities are creating operational and rhetorical openings for new types of political actors, including the disadvantaged and those who were once invisible or without voice.

The conditions that today make some cities strategic sites are basically two, and both capture major transformations that are destabilizing older systems organizing territory and politics. One of these is the re-scaling of what are the strategic territories that articulate the new politico-economic system and hence at least some features of power. The other is the partial unbundling or at least weakening of the national as container of social process due to the variety of dynamics encompassed by globalization and digitization. The consequences for cities of these two conditions are many: What matters here is that cities emerge as strategic sites for major economic processes and for new types of political actors.

What is being engendered today in terms of political practices in the global city is quite different from what it might have been in the medieval city of Weber. In the medieval city we see a set of practices that allowed the burghers to set up systems for owning and protecting property against more powerful actors, such as the king and the church, and to implement various immunities against despots of all sorts. Today's political practices, I would argue, have to do with the production of "presence" by those without power and with a politics that claims rights to the city rather than protection of property. What the two situations share is the notion that through these practices new forms of political subjectivity, i.e. citizenship, are being constituted and that the city is a key site for this type of political work. The city is, in turn, partly constituted through these dynamics. Far more so than a peaceful and harmonious suburb, the contested city is where the civic is getting built. After the long historical phase that saw the ascendance of the national state and the scaling of key economic dynamics at the national level, the city is once again today a scale for strategic economic and political dynamics.

⁵ See Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008) chapters 6 and 8.

But what happens to these urban capabilities when war goes asymmetric, and when racisms fester in cities where growing numbers become poor and have to struggle for survival? Here follows a brief discussion of two cases that illustrate how cities can enable powerlessness to become complex. In this complexity lies the possibility of making the political, making history.

The urbanizing of war.

Today's urbanizing of war differs from past histories of cities and war in modern times. In the Second World War the city entered the war theater not as a site for war-making but as a technology for instilling fear: the full destruction of cities as a way of terrorizing a whole nation, with Dresden and Hiroshima the iconic cases. Today, when a conventional army goes to war the enemy is mostly irregular combatants, who lack tanks and aircraft and hence prefer to do the fighting in cities.

Elsewhere (2012b) I examine the question as to whether cities can function as a type of weak regime. The countries with the most powerful conventional armies today cannot afford to repeat Dresden with firebombs, or Hiroshima with an atomic bomb—whether in Baghdad, Gaza or the Swat valley.⁶ They can engage in all kinds of activities, including violations of the law: rendition, torture, assassinations of leaders they don't like, excessive bombing of civilian areas, and so on, in a history of brutality that can no longer be hidden and seems to have escalated the violence against civilian populations.⁷ But superior military powers stop on this side from pulverizing a city, even when they have the weapons to do so. The US could have pulverized Baghdad and Israel could have pulverized Gaza. But they didn't.

It seems to me that the reason was not respect for life or the fact that killing of unarmed civilians is illegal according to international law. It has more to do with a vague constraint that remains unstated: the notion that the

⁶ Even if the nuclear threat to cities has remained hypothetical since 1945, cities remain highly vulnerable to two kinds of very distinct threats. The first one is the specialized aerial attack of new computer-targeted weaponry, which has been employed “selectively” in places like Baghdad or Belgrade.

⁷ See, for example, Juan Cole, “Gaza 2008: Micro-Wars and Macro-Wars,” Informed Comment, 4 January 2009, <http://www.juancole.com/2009/01/gaza-2008-micro-wars-and-macro-wars.html>; Arvind Rajagopal, “Violence, publicity, and sovereignty,” SSRIC Blog, 26 November 2008, <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2008/12/15/violence-publicity-and-sovereignty/>.

mass-killing of people in a city is a different type of horror from allowing the deaths of massive numbers of people year after year in jungles and in villages due to a curable disease such as malaria. I would posit that pulverizing a city is a specific type of crime, one which causes a horror that people dying from malaria does not. The mix of people and buildings—in a way, the civic—has the capacity to temper destruction. Not to stop it, but to temper it. So it is not the death of human beings as such. It is people in the context of the city. It is the collective making that is a city, especially in its civic components.

Over and over history shows us the limits of power.⁸ It would seem that unilateral decisions by the greater power are not the only source of restraint: In an increasingly interdependent world, the most powerful countries find themselves restrained through multiple interdependencies. To this I add the city as a weak regime that can obstruct and temper the destructive capacity of a superior military power. It is one more capability for systemic survival in a world where several countries have the capacity to destroy the planet.⁹ Under these conditions the city becomes both a technology for containing conventional military powers and a technology of resistance for armed insurgencies. The physical and human features of the city are an obstacle for conventional armies—an obstacle wired into urban space itself.¹⁰

⁸ A separate source for unilateral restraint is tactical: Thus theorists of war posit that also the superior military force should, for tactical reasons, signal to its enemy that it has not used its full power.

⁹ Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008) chapter 8. And, from a larger angle than the one that concerns me here, when great powers fail in this self-restraint we have what Mearsheimer has called the tragedy of great powers. See John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003).

¹⁰ This dual process of urbanization of war and militarization of urban life unsettles the meaning of the urban (Graham 2010). Marcuse (2002) writes that “the War on terrorism is leading to a continued downgrading of the quality of life in US cities, visible changes in urban form, the loss of public use of public space, restriction on free movement within and to cities, particularly for members of darker skinned groups, and the decline of open popular participation in the governmental planning and decision-making process.” Second it questions the role of cities as welfare providers. The imperative of security means a shift in political priorities. It implies a cut or a relative decrease in budgets dedicated to social welfare, education, health, infrastructure development, economic regulation and planning. These two trends, in turn, challenge the very concept of citizenship (Sassen 2008, chapter 6). See Stephen Graham, *Cities under Siege: The New Military Urbanism*, (London: Verso, 2011); Peter Marcuse, “Urban Form and Globalization after September 11th: The View from New York,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional*

CITIES AS FRONTIER SPACES: THE HARD WORK OF KEEPING THEM OPEN

The preceding section signals that if the city is to survive as a space of complexity and diversity—and not become merely a built-up terrain or cement jungle—it needs capabilities to transform conflict. It will have to find a way to go beyond the fact of conflicts, whether they result from racisms, from governmental wars on terror, or from the future crises of climate change.¹¹

This implies the possibility of making new subjectivities and identities. For instance, often it is the urbanity of the subject and of the setting that mark a city, rather than ethnicity, religion, or phenotype. But that marking urbanity of subject and setting do not simply fall from the sky. It often comes out of hard work and painful trajectories. One question is whether it can also come out of the need for new solidarities in cities confronted by major challenges, such as violent racisms or environmental crises. The acuteness and overwhelming character of the major challenges cities confront today can serve to create conditions where the challenges are bigger and more threatening than a city's internal conflicts and hatreds. This might force us into joint responses and from there onto the emphasis of an urban, rather than individual or group, subject and identity—such as an ethnic or religious subject and identity.

One important instance in the making of norms concerns immigration. What must be emphasized here is the hard work of making open cities and repositioning the immigrant and the citizen as urban subjects that inevitably, mostly, transcend this difference. In the daily routines of a city the key factors that rule are work, family, school, public transport, and so on, and this holds for both immigrants and citizens. Perhaps the sharpest marking difference in a city is between the rich and the poor, and each of these

Research 26, no. 3 (2002), 596-606; and Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), chapter 6.

¹¹ See, for example, Peter Marcuse, "Urban Form and Globalization after September 11th: The View from New York," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 3 (2002), 596-606.

classes includes both immigrants and citizens.¹² It is when the law and the police enter the picture that the differences of immigrant status versus citizen status become key factors. But most of daily life in the city is not ruled by this differentiation.

Here I address this issue from the perspective of the capacity of urban space to make norms and make subjects that can escape the constraints of dominant power systems—such as the nation-state, the War on Terror, the growing weight of racism. The particular case of immigrant integration in Europe over the centuries, the making of the European Open City, is one window into this complex and historically variable question.

In my reading, both European and Western hemisphere history shows that the challenges of incorporating the “outsider” often became the instruments for developing the civic and, at times, for expanding the rights of the already included. Responding to the claims by the excluded has had the effect of expanding the rights of citizenship. And very often restricting the rights of immigrants has been part of a loss of rights by citizens. This was clearly the case with the Immigration reform act passed by the Clinton Administration in the US, which showed that a Democratic Party legislative victory for an “immigration law” had the effect of taking away rights from immigrants *and* from citizens.¹³

Anti-immigrant sentiment has long been a critical dynamic in Europe’s history, one until recently mostly overlooked in standard European histories.¹⁴ Anti-immigrant sentiment and attacks occurred in each of the major immigration phases in all major European countries. No labor-receiving country has a clean record—not Switzerland, with its long admirable history of international neutrality, and not even France, the most open to immigration, refugees, and exiles. For instance, French workers killed Italian workers in the 1800s, having accused them of being the wrong types of Catholics.

¹² See, for example, Smith, M.P., and A. Favell. *The Human Face of Global Mobility: International Highly Skilled Migration in Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific*. Special Issue of *Comparative Urban and Community Research* Vol. 8. 2006.

¹³ See Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights*, chapter 6; see also chapters 4 and 5 for a diversity of other domains besides immigration where this holds.

¹⁴ This section is based on research in two previous works: Saskia Sassen, *Guests and Aliens: Europe’s Immigrants, Refugees and Colonists*. New York: New Press, 1999; Saskia Sassen, *A Sociology of Globalization* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007) chapter 5.

Critical is the fact that there were always, as is the case today, individuals, groups, organizations, and politicians who believed in making our societies more inclusive of immigrants. History suggests that those fighting for incorporation succeeded in the long run, even if only partially. Just to focus on the recent past, one quarter of the French have a foreign-born ancestor three generations up, and 34 percent of Viennese are either born abroad or have foreign parents. It took active making to transform the hatreds towards foreigners into the urban civic. But it is also the result of constraints in a large city; for instance, to have a sound public transport system means it is not feasible to check on the status of all users and also have a reasonably fast system. A basic and thin rule needs to be met: Pay your ticket and you are on. That is the making of the civic as a material condition: All those who meet the thin rule—pay the ticket—can use the public bus or train, regardless of whether they are citizens or tourists, good people or not-so-good people, local residents or visitors from another city.

Europe has a barely recognized history of several centuries of internal labor migrations. This is a history that hovers in the penumbra of official European history, dominated by the image of Europe as a continent of emigration, never of immigration. Yet, in the 1700s, when Amsterdam built its polders and cleared its bogs, it brought in workers from northern Germany; when the French developed their vineyards they brought in Spaniards; workers from the Alps were brought in to help develop Milan and Turin; as were the Irish when London needed help building water and sewage infrastructure. In the 1800s, when Haussmann rebuilt Paris, he brought in Germans and Belgians; when Sweden decided to become a monarchy and needed some good-looking palaces, they brought in Italian stoneworkers; when Switzerland built the Gothard Tunnel, it brought in Italians; and when Germany built its railroads and steel mills, it brought in Italians and Poles.

At any given time there were multiple significant flows of intra-European migration. All the workers involved were seen as outsiders, as undesirables, as threats to the community, as people that could never belong. The immigrants were mostly from the same broad cultural group, religious group, and phenotype. Yet they were seen as impossible to assimilate. The French hated the Belgian immigrant workers saying they were the wrong type of Catholics, and the Dutch saw the German protestant immigrant workers as the wrong types of Protestants. This is a telling fact. It suggests that it is simply not correct to argue, as is so often done, that today it is more difficult to integrate immigrants because of their different religion, culture

and phenotype. When these were similar, anti-immigrant sentiment was as strong as today, and it often led to physical violence on the immigrant.

Yet all along, significant numbers of immigrants did become part of the community, even if it took two or three generations. They often maintained their distinctiveness, yet were still members of the complex, highly heterogeneous social order of any developed city. At the time of their first arrival, they were treated as outsiders, racialized as different in looks, smells and habits, though they were so often the same phenotype, or general religious or cultural group. They were all Europeans: but the differences were experienced as overwhelming and insurmountable. Elsewhere I have documented the acts of violence, the hatreds we Europeans felt against those who today we experience as one of us.¹⁵

Today the argument against immigration may be focused on questions of race, religion, and culture, and this focus might seem rational—that cultural and religious distance is the reason for the difficulty of incorporation. But in sifting through the historical and current evidence we find only new contents for an old passion: the racializing of the outsider as Other. Today the Other is stereotyped by differences of race, religion, and culture. These are equivalent arguments to those made in the past when migrants were broadly of the same religious, racial, and cultural group. Migration hinges on a move between two worlds, even if within a single region or country, such as East Germans moving to West Germany after 1989, where they were often viewed as a different ethnic group with undesirable traits. What is today's equivalent challenge, one that can force us to go beyond our differences and make what it is that corresponds to that older traditional making of the European civic?

CONCLUSION: WHERE WE STAND NOW

The major challenges that confront cities (and society in general) have increasingly strong feedback loops that contribute to a disassembling of the old civic urban order. The so-called “War on Terrorism” is perhaps one of the

¹⁵ See Saskia Sassen, *Guests and Aliens: Europe's Immigrants, Refugees and Colonists* (New York: New Press, 1999); for a more general discussion, see Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

most acute versions of this dynamic— that is, the dynamic whereby fighting terrorism has a strong impact on diminishing the old civic urban order. Climate change and its impacts on cities could also be the source of new types of urban conflicts and divisions.

But I would argue that these challenges do contain their own specific potential for making novel kinds of broad front platforms for urban action and joining forces with those who may be seen as too different from us. Fighting climate change may well force citizens and immigrants from many different religions, cultures and phenotypes to work together. Similarly, fighting the abuses of power of the state in the name of fighting terrorism, can create similar coalitions bringing together residents who may have thought they could never collaborate with each other, but now that there is a bigger threat to civil rights that will also affect citizens, not only immigrants, novel solidarities are emerging.

The spread of asymmetric war and climate change will affect both the rich and poor, and addressing them will demand that everybody join the effort. Furthermore, while sharp economic inequalities, racisms, and religious intolerance have long existed, they are now becoming political mobilizers in a context where the center no longer holds—whether this is an imperial center, the national state, or the city's bourgeoisie.

These developments signal the emergence of new types of socio-political orderings that can coexist with older orderings, such as the nation-state, the interstate system, and the older place of the city in a hierarchy that is dominated by the national state. Among these new types of orderings are global cities that have partly exited that national, state-dominated hierarchy and become part of multiscalar, regional, and global networks. The last two decades have seen an increasingly *urban* articulation of global logics and struggles, and an escalating use of urban space to make political claims not only by the citizens of a city's country, but also by foreigners.

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http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/11/28/the_fp_top_100_global_thinkers?page=0,33