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Theresa Enright • Ugo Rossi  
Editors

# The Urban Political

Ambivalent Spaces of Late Neoliberalism

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## CONTENTS

1	<b>Introduction: Locating the Political in Late Neoliberalism</b>	1
	Theresa Enright and Ugo Rossi	
	<b>Part I Theorizing the Urban Political</b>	25
2	<b>Presupposing Democracy: Placing Politics in the Urban</b>	27
	Mark Davidson and Kurt Iveson	
3	<b>Desiring the Common in the Post-crisis Metropolis: Insurgencies, Contradictions, Appropriations</b>	45
	Theresa Enright and Ugo Rossi	
4	<b>The Globalized City as a Locus of the Political: Logistical Urbanization, Genealogical Insights, Contemporary Aporias</b>	65
	Niccolò Cuppini	
	<b>Part II Materializing the Urban Political</b>	81
5	<b>Where Is the 'Organisation' in the Urban Political?</b>	83
	Crispian Fuller	

viii CONTENTS

6	Neoliberalizing Infrastructure and Its Discontents: The Bus Rapid Transit Project in Dar es Salaam Matteo Rizzo	103
7	Infrastructure, 'Seeing Sanitation' and the Urban Political in an Era of Late Neoliberalism Colin McFarlane and Jonathan Silver	123
Part III Governing the Urban Political		145
8	The 'Cooperative' or 'Cop-Out' Council? Urban Politics at a Time of Austerity Localism in London Joe Penny	147
9	The Politics of Consultation in Urban Development and Its Encounters with Local Administration Anne Vogelpohl	171
10	Precurity, Surplus, and the Urban Political: Shack Life in South Africa Yousuf Al-Bulushi	189
Part IV Re-politicizing the Urban Political		209
11	Voice or Noise? Spaces of Appearance and Political Subjectivity in the London Riots 2011 Iris Dzudzek	211
12	The Southern Urban Political in Transcalar Perspective: A View from the Squatter Movements of Belo Horizonte Felipe N.C. Magalhães	229

13 Counter Publics and Counter Spaces  
Walter Nicholls and Justus Uitermark

247

Index

269

The Globalized City as a Locus  
of the Political: Logistical Urbanization,  
Genealogical Insights, Contemporary Aporias

*Niccolò Cuppini*

The construction of the planetary scale of urbanization as a city can be seen, after all, as an attempt to investigate what aspects have to be taken into account by the physics of a political space attuned to the scale of globalization (Barrio, 2015).

INTRODUCTION

“The era of the state is now coming to an end,” famously stated Carl Schmitt in 1932 in *The Concept of the Political*, meaning that states should not be considered any more as the unique actors of the political landscape. During recent decades, although within different approaches and perspectives, many theories and empirical researches have demonstrated the deep *crisis* of the modern state’s ability to own the monopoly of the Political. The political field has progressively been *de facto* inhabited by an increasing number of new powers.

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Within this multiplication of powers, the (globalized) city is a historical-political concept we need to focus on in order to grasp some of the fundamental elements of the ongoing transition of the global present. The dispersion of many different centres of power within the global (dis)order is producing new articulations and assemblages. It is precisely within this complex vortex that the city finds a new space of political action. Contemporary cities are specific political poles beyond the state.

These considerations do not point to establishing a rigid contrast between the state and the city, but rather outline alternative entry points to an understanding of contemporary politics. The adoption of the lenses of the state has been the most widespread way to elaborate political theories, at least during the modern era. Nevertheless, these lenses become blurred when used to view the intensifying processes of planetary interconnection; in this lies the proposal of the city as an experimental *kaleidoscopic* political gaze.

Systems of production, commodity circulation, migration, communication and transport technologies and other sets of interdependent phenomena—usually mentioned under the problematic label of ‘globalization’—tend to shape a world where every single metropolis is nothing more than a neighbourhood of a unique, globalized city. In other words: we are living in a city-world, a world that has become as one city. The assumption of the globalized city as a perspective point to comprehend dynamics and tensions of the present is mainly based on two influential contemporary urban theories: The conceptualization of planetary urbanization (Brenner, 2013; Merrifield, 2013), that gives the concrete infrastructural base of the city-world; and Saskia Sassen’s framework of ‘the Global City’ (1991), that indicates the global dimension of the city. However, her conception points to a network of financial core centres, located in few cities, that lead globalization processes. The hypothesis of the globalized city on one side updates Sassen’s conception. But, on the other side, it points to something different.

The globalized city is a *process* of configuration of a new locus of the Political, an emerging political city at the global scale, due to an ambivalent and contradictory move. Effectively, the point is to contextualize the emergence of the globalized city within a paradoxical condition: On one hand, the city is affirmed everywhere, making the world a meta-city; on the other hand, it is precisely this process that is dissolving the characters and characteristics that have historically described the city and made it intelligible. The city is everywhere and disappearing at the same time.

This aporia, a productive antinomy between the evaporation of preceding equilibriums and the unstable emergence of new configurations, is inscribed into the sunset of the 'second globalization' (Baldwin & Martin, 1999), i.e. the crisis of the processes of the so-called neoliberal era. Stretched out in multiple directions, ubiquitous, the globalized city is obliterating the constitutional equilibriums in which it has been enmeshed in the last centuries. In other words, the becoming political of the globalized city is one of the vectors of crisis of 'late neoliberalism.'

The city is a contested historical becoming, an always contingent product characterized by a plurality of practices, actors and authorities. The city is the locus of the provenance of the Political. However, during the modern era, the state has dominated the city, and this explains why today the very concept of the city is confused. The re-semantization of socio-political concepts occurring during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not touch the city. Consequently, the city was not being charged by a projection of the future, while today—in a period when historical time appears to be compressed in the present, completely reversing upside down the whole theoretical architecture of the political reflection—the city finds itself on the forefront of the overall redefinition in which we are living.

This chapter sketches a new emergent political figure, the globalized city, defining its historical provenience and some contemporary profiles. The globalized city is a mosaic, a still quite obscure concept, and the attempt of this paper is to shape this political image collecting some of its tiles. Moreover, the globalized city is framed as a specific political pole beyond the state, and its definition is elaborated against the backdrop of Carl Schmitt's definition of 'the Political.'

The first and second parts of the chapter collect some theoretical and historical fragments to provide a conceptual background, and to elaborate a genealogy showing how the city has been de-politicized by an understanding of the Political based on the state paradigm. Then, it focuses on how a logistical conception of urbanization processes has been used since the nineteenth century to govern the emerging metropolis. Hidden as a technical set of tools and urban interventions, this logistical rationality needs to be emphasised and politicized to grasp contemporary dynamics at play within the globalized city. Finally, the last part of the chapter discusses an alternative definition of the Political premised on the city rather than on the state.



*Theoretical Sketches*

As Max Weber (1986) demonstrates, the city is the political form that allows an analysis of the fundamental production of forms of power. A specific traction between order and disorder, government and self-government, is constantly at play within cities. The city has never been an established and fixed 'object.' Instead, it has always been a field of tensions, a contested order. Moreover, even though we usually consider cities as spatial entities, they are, in fact, first of all temporal processes. Many different strategies, typologies, generations of cities have existed throughout history.

The city is a *political* idea. Today, the general emphasis on 'the urban' (i.e. the city considered as the *urbs*) rather than on 'the city' (i.e. the city considered as the *civitas*), signals the profound crisis of traditional paradigms to grasp what is happening on the ground within the city as a political process. The predominant focus on the built environment rather than on citizens, expresses the (unaware?) neglect by urban theorists of the political dimension. One of the main hermeneutic problems to solve is the global dimension of the city. Within different hierarchies, and to different degrees, every city is nowadays part of a *globalized city*, part of a complex urban texture that contributes to shaping the contemporary global (dis)order. However, there is a dearth of concepts, imaginaries, and concrete frameworks to endow this tendency with an adequate representation.

Gravitating around *polis* (unity), *polemos* (war) and *stasis* (conflict, threshold of politicization; see Agamben, 2015), the globalizing capabilities of cities have been constituted and rise again over time, passing through many different historical frontiers and consequent de-generations. To define this perspective, it is useful to implement the concept of 'seeing like a city' (Amin & Thrift, 2016). Setting it in historical terms allows us to shed light on many genealogical scenes where the city emerges as a very specific order, a constantly contested one, that cannot be governed from a unique centre (Magnusson, 1996). Moreover, these genealogical scenes recur and insist (Foucault, 1977) on the globalized city concept, making it a complex asset with heterogeneous forms of centres and sources of power. Again, this point of view represents a *dislocation* in respect to the 'gaze of the state' usually adopted by political theorists. This latter conception presents the Political as absolute, indivisible, and vertical. Recalling Warren Magnusson's (2011, p. 69) words, we learn more "if we put the state under erasure and investigate what people do politically and how they are



governed as denizens of particular cities within the global city." Moreover, it is emblematic that the word 'polis' is frequently translated as 'state' and "what makes the polis recognizable for us, as a state, is that [it] is a kind of rational order, intelligible in terms of human needs and possibilities conceived in the most general terms" (Magnusson, 2008, p. 5). This kind of interpretation can also be connected to some influential Greek thinkers, who "were not comfortable with the *cityness* of the polis. They feared its disorder, its openness, its variety, and its multiplicity of contending authorities" (Magnusson, 2011, p. 117).

In the present historical moment, when sovereignty is increasingly becoming polycentric and fragmented, seeing *through* the city allows the opening up of new horizons of research, starting from the necessity of urbanising political thought and politicising urban studies. This methodology resonates with Egin F. Isin's attempt to experiment with an "exercise of critically distancing myself from the state categories of perception that have come to dominate the social sciences in the last few decades" (Isin, 2005, p. 374). Moving away from the state's analytical categories means also looking at the city not as if it is a 'container' where differences meet, but rather regarding it through the concept that the city itself generates differences. This is a crucial political point; The city is a 'difference machine', a space that constitutes 'dialogical' (meaning polemological) encounters of social groups formed and generated immanently in the process of taking up positions, orienting themselves for and against each other, inventing and assembling strategies and technologies, mobilizing various forms of capital, and making claims to that space that is objectified as 'the city' (Isin, 2002, p. 283).

The city is not the "background to these struggles against which groups wager," nor the "foreground for which groups struggle for hegemony" (ibid.). Instead, the city is the *battleground* through which social groups define themselves, impose their interests, conduct their battles and articulate rules, rights and principles. This is the intrinsic politicalness of the city. In opposition to the Political of the state, this politicalness emerges as inherently multiple, fragmented and marked by difference.

This opposition is a problem for the state, which has continuously tried to erase this political heterogeneity and its conflictual consequences as an attempt to govern and control the transformations of the city. Starting from these considerations, there is a need to find some entry points to outline acts of radical de-politicization of the city. My angle is to look at how logistics (as a concept, a set of practices and a rationality) have been

used in order to achieve depoliticization. I approach these concerns with a genealogical methodology, focusing on specific episodes and turning points in this process (Foucault, 1977).

### GENEALOGICAL INSIGHTS

The city is never static. Without the contribution of the stranger it goes into decay. Moreover, the city can persist only if it is inserted into a composite network of other cities and logistical relationships that permit the inflow of resources (food, hydraulics, raw materials and so forth). This relational, interconnected and circulating matrix of the urban system brings us to contemporary planetary urbanization, which confirms that cities arise and evolve from the merging of people, dwellings and communication routes. Following this direction, and pushing the discourse even further, it is possible to maintain that cities and globalization are nothing more than two sides of the same coin.

Michel Foucault and others have demonstrated how the application of 'ordinances of police' have been crucial to the development of the modern state (Foucault, 2009). The aim here was to organize the whole territory of the rising state as if it was big city. It is not an accident that since the sixteenth century, walls are no longer the distinctive character of the city. As Leonardo Benevolo puts it: in that period "the architecture of the city grows from the streets rather than from the edifices" (1967, p. 124). In the same period, the German geographer Georg Braun edited the *Civitates orbis terrarum*, which contains more than 500 maps of cities from all around the world. This global perspective on the city has a hidden implication: this new way of representing the city contains a radical de-politicization of the city itself. Now, the city is only a specific scale (i.e. the local) subordinated to the emerging Leviathan, as we can see from the frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes famous book. The *civitas*, the city conceived as the citizens, is evacuated from the *urbs* (the multitude of the individuals here enclosed in the body of the sovereign), and the city remains only as a concentration of houses, streets and squares. The attempt is to reduce the city to a pacified market.

It is possible to focus on the development of this synthetic genealogy within the ongoing acceleration of historical processes that characterizes the European cities of the nineteenth century. At this point, the expulsion of the nobility from the cities has occurred, and new subjects have moved in. This city is ideologically constructed by its new 'bosses' as a market, a



place of pacified exchange where 'free economic interaction' is realized. This purpose is achieved within a Hobbesian contrail. The *Encyclopédie* of the Enlightenment states that "[i]n order to define the city more precisely [...] it is [first of all] a walled settlement, which contains several quarters, streets, public places and other buildings." The citizens here are definitively erased from the concept of 'city.' This depoliticizes the city, hiding the new political rule intrinsic to the new forms of production and trade, now distributed on the planetary scale. Expunging the citizens also implies the strategic removal of social and political conflict from the city, relegating it to 'the countryside' or the 'colonies' (which are, within this discourse at least, the same thing).

### LOGISTICAL URBANIZATION

However, something changed during the nineteenth century. A combination of different processes, usually labelled as the 'industrial revolution,' also led to what many have termed an 'urban revolution.' Masses of people moved from the countryside to the city, and the city became (again) a conflictual arena. In fact, most major European cities were scenes of insurrection in 1848. The state needed to regain its sovereign order over the city. Two centuries before, the question was how to urbanize the territory. Now the aim was to 'territorialize' the city, or to make the city a more ordered territory.

The nineteenth century metropolis grew as a *response* to social conflict. It was a dialectical and conflictual system, and it is impossible to comprehend this metropolis without focusing on power's claims expressed in it by the inflow of an increasing number of poor people and the growing working class.

The conventional example of this is the work of Baron Von Haussmann in Paris between 1853 and 1869. He destroyed all traces of the traditional city, considered to be a *disturbance* for the possibility of *smooth* circulation. The city itself became the locus in which to apply a series of transformations driven by infrastructural reasons (e.g. big routes for commodity circulation), for social reasons (e.g. the expulsion of the poor from the city centre), for military reasons (e.g. against the possibility of erecting barricades) and for economic reasons (e.g. the city needing to be place of commodity valorisation). This tangle of different processes and rationalities is in fact what we nowadays call logistics. We have to keep in mind that the metropolis, that is to say the modern city constructed during the nineteenth century, *is* a logistical place. All the interventions of Haussmann, taken

here as an example of a broad logic/rationality, were driven by the vector of circulation. While Haussmann's project was the expression of a conservative politics, Idelfonso Cerdà, an influential theorist of urbanization in that same period (1867), was a liberal and a progressive. He elaborated the concept of *vialidad* (circulation) as the core vector of the new cities. Urbanization was seen by Cerdà as a project to unify humanity in a single global society interconnected within a global *urbe*.

Cerdà's frequent reference to the sea in describing the *urbe* (*'mare magnum'*) is a crucial model for constructing a fluid space whose power lies in its transcending of limits—a political quality Cerdà saw as a historical duty for modern society to fulfil. The urban was to be a space of administered circulation whose connectivity would undermine all firm spatio-political boundaries. Instead, the infinite and mobile qualities of space experienced in the early modern Atlantic voyages would reemerge in the endlessly expansive process of *'urbanización'* (Adams, 2015).

So, be it from this perspective based on the idea of a rational planning or through the violent intervention of the French State, the metropolis must be a place of circulation and connection. The old city was seen as an obstacle to that project. Therefore, since the beginning of the modern city this *logistical logic* shapes the urban fabric.

There is a second point that must be taken into account: the link between logistics, infrastructures, the concept of frontier and the transformations of urban spaces. Modern logistics evolves following new necessities of moving people and goods through new modern spaces: the state-space, colonies, Atlantic routes and so forth. Modern logistics is linked to the global market and to the movement of armies through continental spaces. In that context a set of specific knowledges, practices and infrastructures was developed. In the second half of the nineteenth century, these tools and logics, developed in continental and oceanic spaces, are applied within the space of the city. There is, somehow, a specific resonance from 'the colony' to the metropolis (using metropolis here in its double meaning of 'mater polis' and 'modern city'). The work of the historian Frederick Jackson Turner provides an emblematic insight of this dynamic. At the end of the nineteenth century Turner (1921) elaborated a famous theory about the relevance of the *frontier* for the American history, for its democracy and the vitality of its society. Turner was afraid that the frontier had ended. One of the most symbolic event that sustains the idea of the closing of the frontier happened in 1869, the same year of the dismissal of Haussmann. In that year, in Utah, two lines of the railroad



were finally connected. The East and the West coast were now welded by this train line, the first transcontinental railroad. This immense work, made possible thanks to a sort of public-private partnership, is the infrastructure that connects the new nation and, paradoxically, also 'closes' it. But what is suggestive is that in those same years this new technology (the railway) started to be applied to a totally different context: the city. The first line of a subway was introduced in London, and all the most important cities started to construct their own inner railway. The logistics, the movement of people and commodities within the city (and also the perception of time and space), was completely revolutionized.

After the entrance of the railway to the city, the frontier follows. After the Second World War the imagery of wilderness and frontier was applied less frequently to the plains, mountains and forests of the West—now handsomely civilized—and more often to US cities back East. As part of the experience of postwar suburbanization, the US city came to be seen as an 'urban wilderness.' It was, and for many still is, the habitat of disease and disorder, crime and corruption, drugs and danger (Smith, 1996, p. 5). Neil Smith here describes the ideological foundation of the phenomenon of gentrification. But in the context of so-called globalization, national and international capitals alike confront a global 'frontier' of their own that subsumes the gentrification frontier. This link between different spatial scales, and the centrality of urban development to national and international expansion, was acutely clear in the enthusiastic language of supporters of 'Urban Enterprise Zones,' an idea pioneered by the Thatcher governments in the 1980s, and a centerpiece of 1990s urban privatization strategies (17).

Again, the logic of the zone, a typical colonial logic, is now applied to the city. But here there is a shift from the past. The emphasis on (capital) circulation is accompanied by the necessity of new bordering capabilities. Far from the linear marks of Cerdà and from the *grand boulevards* of Haussmann, urban texture increasingly becomes complex, rhapsodic, and heterogeneous. Recently, Saskia Sassen has expanded the concept of the city as a frontier zone:

The global city is a new frontier zone. Deregulation, privatization, and new fiscal and monetary policies create the formal instruments to construct the equivalent of the old military "fort". The city is also a strategic frontier zone for those who lack power, and allows the making of informal politics. [...] The [...] transformation of the city in a frontier zone [...] far from making

this a borderless world, have actually multiplied the bordered spaces that allow firms and markets to move across conventional borders. Cities are therefore one of the key sites where new neoliberal norms are made and where new identities emerge. (2015, p. 295)

The nineteenth century metropolises have been the spur that sustained and pushed the process of the 'first globalization'—the vertiginous increase of the international interchanges between the last three decades of the nineteenth century and the first world war. The contemporary scenario seems somehow to propose again some nodes that marked the end of that cycle of globalization: a political crisis, linked to the limitless growth of inequalities, and therefore leading towards the crisis of legitimacy of political systems. The link between the metropolis and the first globalization has been repeated by the nexus between global cities and the second globalization. The disruption of this nexus is precisely what is at stake at this present moment.

### THE POLITICAL AND THE CITY

Pierre Manent (2010, p. 19) maintains that "politics is the origin of Western world, and therefore the city. The movement of the West begins with the movement of the city." This movement acts in criss-crossing the city, carves it with a gesture that goes beyond the city itself. This movement is internal and external, is class struggle and war, bringing into question the viability of such a binary definition of these dividing lines. Moreover, this movement produces political energy, an energy that is the guarantee of its freedom and autonomy and the threat of a constant internal and external hostility at the same time. This is the destiny of the city: a permanent search of a political form swinging between freedom and dissolution.

The city arises and develops through conflict, through the strenuous attempt to recompose the terms of this tension—a tension that, nevertheless, is unsolvable. "The city in its history is the never-ending experiment to shape the contradiction" (Cacciari, 2004, p. 7); it is a path determined by a field of contrasting forces which become constitutive elements of its own reality. This means that cities are places of constant production of friends and enemies, and cities are theatres of their clashes, alliances and positioning. Here lies the aforementioned concept of the *politicalness* of the city.



The friend/enemy distinction is one of the main criteria that Carl Schmitt proposes, originally proposed in a 1927 essay, in describing the Political: "It is possible to bring back political actions and reasons to a specific political distinction, the one between friend (*Freund*) and enemy (*Feind*). It offers a conceptual definition, namely a criterion, not an exhaustive definition nor an explanation of its content" (1932, p. 108). The friend/enemy dyad indicates the extreme degree of intensity of a union or a separation, an association or a dissociation, and it is precisely around the hegemony over the definition and application of this criteria that the modern era has defined itself through its main political subject, the State. To put it in a very simplified way: state-building is a strategy to gain legitimate control over the Political, expelling it from the urban texture and de-politicizing the city as such. Modernity is the creation of an international system where states are the only subjects who can play the Political.

Consequently, since the early twentieth century, social and political theorists have considered the state as the insurmountable horizon of modern politics: "in the concept of the political [im Begriff des Politischen], the concept of the state is already implied" (Jellinek, 1922, p. 108). Against this background, Schmitt inverted this paradigm: "the concept of the state presupposes the concept of the Political" (1932, p. 19). Schmitt is *de facto* disclosing the end of the modern epoch and re-opening the possibility of political figures *beyond* the state (Mezzadra, 2011).

If during modernity the state has been able to conquer "the monopoly of the Political," today, after being hit by an 'excess of the Political' (Ricciardi, 2013, p. 79), it is under a crossfire of many different forces, showing (again) the existence of a distinction between 'stateness' and 'the Political.' However, it is necessary to clarify a point: this disconnection does not entail a step backwards of the Political to other defined political bodies. The forms of the political bond are subjected to an impressive transformation, where the Political indeed appears as dispersed. Basically, this Political is no longer a Schmittian Political, which was dominated by an imperative to reduce every conflict to two counterparts.

The historical disjunction between 'the Political' and the city is nowadays finding new complex articulations. Unlike the state-centred metropolis of the nineteenth century, the contemporary globalized city sees the progressive withdrawal of the (social) state, while there is simultaneously the localization of many global actors (enterprises, networks, migrations and so forth) within it. These facts are generating multiple tensions,

creating a productive aporia: On one hand, the coexistence of processes of dissolution of the preceding urban order; on the other hand, global power is expressing itself through the city, making it an alternative locus of the Political, maybe even more powerful than the state.

Today we still are within this long process of evaporation of the political architecture of modernity, maybe at one of its extreme margins. The world is no longer structured as a rigid system of scales centred on the state. Global, continental, state, metropolis, local, are all geographical dissolving frameworks. On one side, there is the scenario depicted by planetary urbanization theories (i.e. the urban as a 'matter' that is furnishing the globe and giving shape to whole society), and on the other side, the image of the world as one city. Logistics is the analytical perspective that could connect these two conceptions, or, to put it better, the logistical politics of urbanization are the hidden side of the rise of globally-integrated urban production networks, which are intricately linked to the transformation of economic geographies. "Just-in-time production has recreated the city in its image," Boris Vormann writes, and as commodities "are shipped from their point of production to the point of sale, they pass through and depend on the urban hubs and bottlenecks of international trade, in turn reshaping the physical layout and the multiscale governance logics of global- and mega-cities" (Vormann, 2017).

Logistics simultaneously improves the traffic of flows and constantly traces new bordered spaces—which are, it is important to note, always contested. Logistics connects, shakes and inverts the different scales of the modern world. The paradigm of logistics applied to the city has created a new urban habitat, a contemporary battlefield, that circulates worldwide. Moreover, logistics exemplifies the concept of governance as a process of de-constitutionalization of the categories of the Political (like the progressive elision of the concepts of civil and military or of public and private; Cowen, 2014). Logistics commands the restructuring processes of frontier spatiality and is the organizing principle of heterogeneous territorialities. Logistics synchronizes times and spaces of capital accumulation and organizes these processes in an holistic and strategic way, veiling this political processes with technicality.

## CONCLUSIONS

The so called "logistics revolution" (Vahrenkamp, 2012) is one of the main vectors that allow the structuring of what is usually called globalization—that is the second cycle of powerful increase of exchanges and of economical



interconnections on the global scale. The logistical policies that lead this second globalization have transformed the political and infrastructural aspect of the planet. Seeing from a satellite, the writing that humanity has traced on earth does not describe state boundaries. What results is rather the frenetic growth of logistically interconnected urbanized areas. To grasp the troubled geographies of the contemporary *imago mundi* we need to adopt new lenses.

The logic of just-in-time and localization drives a global urban politics that is no longer commanded by state actors nor by the holders of specific scientific knowledges. We assist a tendency towards a becoming-hub of the city. Cities are organized as new large dispositifs for the immediacy of consumption—an inclination inscribed in metropolitan historical development that today is enlarging to unprecedented intensities. This logistical logic is completely redefining streets, buildings and everyday life, and it is a productive observatory point to try to decode the actual hieroglyphic of global urbanization. However, it is necessary to make explicit and to advise some caution within this perspective. There is a risk of assuming the imaginary of a smooth urban space of flows that can be perfectly managed by software and new technologies. Certainly, logistical apparatuses shape the *nouvelle raison du monde*, but they are not autopoietic systems. The new designers of the urban, although within technical lexicons and imaginaries, are bearers of a concrete politics of the city, that is, needless to say, constantly contested, contrasted and counteracted by a myriad of different subjects, either within the logistics sector or in the different dwelling practices of metropolitan spaces.

The dream, the fantasy of a logistical government of urban processes, incessantly clashes against the conflictual matrix of the urban substance. If every city is nowadays part of a globalized city—caught in the tension between localness and becoming part of a unique global world city, is precisely because they are crossed and constituted by contradictory phenomena. These entities in metamorphosis that we still call cities are connected through the infosphere, moulded by global dynamics like gentrification, marked by multiple conflicts, are loci of transit and destination for migrants, monotonous landscapes of cars, chains of multinational shops and supermarkets, architectural gestures in sequence, places of a continuous circulation of imaginaries and signs (from cultures to ideas, arriving to the tags that scar the walls of every city of the world). Furthermore, the globalized city is the coming scenario of a planetary civil war in bits and pieces, molecular, diffuse, of a low intensity, it is the locus of the incessant production of new hostilities as well as friendships, pacts and alliances. The globalized city—this bizarre political dough of terrestrial, maritime and aerial “logics” (Schmitt, 1942)—seems to be on the edge of a twofold

process. On the one hand, it carries its global traits of de-politicization to the extreme (with its becoming-hub); while on the other hand, it seems that the city is surrounded by the twilight aura that is leading to the dusk of the second globalization and to a planetary stasis.

If the second globalization has been prompted by neoliberal rationality, the profound ambivalences described so far point to this late neoliberal moment as a transitional phase. The coming years are probably the time when many of the ongoing tendencies here discussed will intensify their effects. The clash between the constant growth of urban poverty and inequalities and the logistical and financial logics of networked value extraction are going to make more explicit the lines of politicisation of the logistical production of the *urbs*, in front of an increasingly divided *civitas*. The emerging globalized city displays a contrast between the de-politicization via technicalization of the production of the urban, on one hand, and the specific tension over autonomy of the city on the other. This friction materializes a claim of power on the globalized city, a contested and continuous production of encounters and clashes, of friendships and hostilities, that demonstrate the need to rethink the urban Political.

Therefore, this chapter has given a backdrop to the ways in which the state has historically de-politicized the city, focusing on the logistical techniques of urban government and production. Then, it has been described how the global expansion of the metropolis tends to re-activate an historical character of the city, its specific Political aspect which is defined, far from the Political of the state, as multiple, unstable and irreducible to a synthetic and binary form. The world is becoming a unique city, a globalized city shaped by the tension between a planetary logistical urbanization and the rising of a worldwide *stasis*, and within these dynamics a new complex locus of the Political is emerging.

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