

edited by **Helga Leitner**
Jamie Peck
Eric S. Sheppard

Contesting Neoliberalism

URBAN FRONTIERS



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*For all those who, like Kathleen Sheppard,
have challenged neoliberal rule over the years
and across the world, struggling for social
and environmental justice for all*

Preface

The idea of producing a book focusing on contestations of neoliberal urbanization emerged during a joint graduate seminar taught simultaneously at Minnesota and Madison during spring semester 2003. The seminar initiated a research collaborative among the three of us, funded by the Center for German and European Studies (CGES) on both campuses, on what we had dubbed “contested urban futures.” As we saw it then (paraphrasing from the proposal to CGES):

Over the last three decades, neoliberalism and neoliberal approaches to urban governance have diffused around the world, promoting deregulation, privatization, and competition through “neo-Schumpeterian” economic policies; limiting non-market state-led provision of welfare services through “workfarist” social policies; devolving responsibility for wealth and welfare to the individual; and reorganizing state powers in pursuit of these policies. Proponents’ claims that neoliberal urban governance enhances the prospects of prosperity for all residents in any city have become increasingly contested in a wide range of forms, from grassroots activism to non-governmental organizations and progressive city administrations, to attempts to challenge neoliberal discourses through alternative knowledge production in such places as progressive policy think-act tanks and community-university activist research partnerships. Neoliberalism also operates at a range of scales, from the local to the global, and through local, interurban and transnational networks. Neoliberalization and contestation move in relation to one another, each potentially influencing and possibly transforming the other. Much has been written about how neoliberalism shapes contestation, but we know much less about how contestation may shape neoliberalism.

Although the plan for the joint seminar relied significantly on an interactive TV connection, linking the two campuses on a regular basis through the semester, we realized at the outset that face-to-face contact would also be essential. The groups of 30 graduate students and four faculty (the fourth being Greg Downey, Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, and Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin–Madison) met for the first time on a snowy January weekend in a somewhat incongruous if congenial location—Madison’s Trout Lake field station in northern Wisconsin. It soon became clear that the seminar would generate a distinctive dynamic, both by virtue of the subject at hand and as a result of the varied research interests of the participating graduate students. Whereas the Minnesota group mostly saw the seminar as an opportunity to explore the overlooked and unrealized potential for civil-society activism to *challenge* neoliberal urbanization across multiple fronts, the Madison group was more preoccupied with the nature of the neoliberal project itself, delving into “the belly of the beast,” an approach that often aligned with a more pessimistic assessment of the scope for contesting neoliberal hegemony at the urban scale. These tensions proved to be creative ones. As seminar discussions returned repeatedly to these differences in political, theoretical, and substantive orientation, it became clear to us that vigorous engagements between perspectives were far more productive—in seeking to understand how neoliberalism and contestation are coimplicated—than any attempt to declare a winner or seek a diplomatic compromise.

The seminar also revealed to us the importance of taking a broader geographical perspective than the U.S.–European comparison that the CGES proposal had initially envisioned, bringing to light a wide variety of critical scholarship on neoliberal contestation from around the world. This was one of the motivations for organizing an international conference on “Contested Urban Futures,” held on the Minnesota campus in November 2003, where over 20 additional scholars from North America, Europe, South Africa, India, and Korea joined the student and faculty seminar participants in presenting their research on contestation and neoliberalism at the urban frontier and beyond. This additional diversity revealed further levels of complexity, concerning not only the multifarious contestations of neoliberalism but also the complex and multifaceted roles of cities, as sites of as well as stakes in this process. Many of the chapters published here are based on papers presented at this conference, although we also commissioned other contributions to fill important gaps evident at the meeting (Larner and Butler, Martin, Sites).

In contrast to some of the previously published research on neoliberalism and cities (cf. Brenner & Theodore, 2002), this book first seeks to focus more explicitly on contestations in and of neoliberal urbanization—particularly those emerging from within civil society (although contestations

from within the state receive some attention; Peck and Tickell; Larner and Butler; Martin; Wainwright). In doing so, we do not make any claims about the degree to which contestation can or will challenge neoliberalism; after 3 years of debate we each retain rather different assessments. We share a conviction, however, that the trajectories, potentialities, and limits of neoliberalization cannot be understood in the absence of attention to contestation. Neoliberalism itself emerged largely through the contestation of Keynesian (and, later, developmentalist) ideologies (Leitner, Sheppard, Sziarto, and Maringanti; Peck and Tickell; Martin), and will surely itself sooner or later be replaced by something else. Dialectics of contestation are part and parcel of understanding neoliberalism's uneven ascendancy, just as a focus on the contentious politics of—or beyond—neoliberalism calls attention to the inescapably political nature of these phenomena.

Second, taking seriously the situated nature of knowledge, the book seeks to make, and sustain space for, a variety of perspectives on neoliberalism, contestation, and contemporary cities. We believe that scholarship is enriched by creating room for articulation of and evenhanded but rigorous debate between different perspectives—differences that often emerge from the social and geographic location of researchers and case studies, as well as from researchers' theoretical and political leanings. This is an issue we return to in the conclusion. The spectrum of differences included in this book is captured in our two opening chapters. An extremely broad definition of contestation enables Leitner et al. to stress its variety, pervasiveness, and potential. Peck and Tickell's focus on some of the institutional, ideational, and political dynamics of the neoliberal project itself explores a much narrower field of contestation—from the other end of the telescope, if you like. Yet, the necessity and productivity of different perspectives becomes particularly evident when theoretical deliberations are worked through detailed case studies of contestations of neoliberalism in particular places and moments in time—the focus of many of the chapters: struggles over the privatization and pricing of utilities in Cape Town, Johannesburg, and Chicago; the coopting of progressive nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in Los Angeles and Berlin; contestation of the World Trade Organization in Seattle and Cancun; urban–rural livelihood strategies in Slovakia; community-based protests and planning initiatives in Calgary and Chicago; attempts to improve day labor markets in American cities; and academic/activist knowledge production and occasional local interventions in European cities and Toronto.

Third, taking seriously the varied ways in which space matters to, while being shaped by, neoliberalism and its contestations, we focus on urban frontiers as a window into the spatiality of these processes. In this re-

spect, urban frontiers are where neoliberalism quite literally “comes to town.” In the context of an increasingly urbanized globe—Lefebvre’s “urban revolution”—cities have become crucial sites in the propagation of neoliberal projects, just as they expose some of neoliberalism’s most damaging flaws and contradictions. Yet, cities are much more than zones of ideological and institutional experimentation in this era of market-oriented politics; they are also preeminent sites of resistance and struggle; they are places in which progressive alternative visions are being forged both beyond and outside the restricted modalities of neoliberalism. But the urban frontier has an additional meaning: Urban boundaries are increasingly fuzzy, while interurban networks are increasingly diffuse and complex, such that processes of urban change routinely exceed “the city” in a variety of ways. Global cities, slums, marginalized rural hinterlands, minority ghettos, zones of accelerated resource extraction; these are all interconnected points on the shifting map of neoliberalized uneven development. Neoliberal urban governance and regimes and regressive spatial redistribution may affect “distant” rural places, just as they may draw newly mobilized groups to the centers of political and economic power to protest these effects. Contestation may generate new kinds of spatial coalitions and new scalar struggles; urban–rural, interurban, and transnational networking can be seen as both a reaction to, and as potentially transcendent of, neoliberal practices; and local struggles and policy failures may resonate at supra-urban scales. In these (and many other) ways, the emergent spatiality of urbanizing societies is bound up with the articulations between neoliberalism and contestation. The chapters that follow explore some of the varied ways in which “the urban” circulates around, constitutes, and contextualizes contestations of neoliberalism.

This book would not have been possible without a lot of help. We thank the CGES (Director Jack Zipes and subsequently Eric Weitz at Minnesota, and Klaus Berghahn and later Myra Marx Ferree at Madison) for generously supporting the collaborative as well as the conference. We are particularly grateful to CGES Program Coordinator (Minnesota) Dr. Sabine Engel for resolving financial problems, and to Sabine, Kristin Sziarto, and Anant Maringanti for local organizing that enabled the conference to run so smoothly. In addition to CGES, we also thank the Institute for Global Studies, the European Studies Consortium (through a U.S. Department of Education Title VI grant in Western European Studies), the Humanities Institute, the Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Global Change, and the departments of Political Science, Geography, History, and Sociology, all at the University of Minnesota, for their financial support of the conference. Eric Sheppard also thanks the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral

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Contesting Urban Futures

DECENTERING NEOLIBERALISM

HELGA LEITNER
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It makes a difference to our view of the world if we start by looking for the grit—taking notice of the recalcitrance, resistance, obstruction, and incomplete rule—rather than throwing them in as a gestural last paragraph after the “big story” has been told. Starting with them in mind might create a little more thinking and breathing space by lifting the dead weight of the Big Stories from our minds.

—CLARKE (2004: pp. 44–45)

Neoliberalism has become a hegemonic signifier for “best-practice” governance, diffusing from a gleam in Friedrich Hayek’s eye to become everyday discourse and practice.¹ Even *The Economist* now uses it to describe market reform. At scales ranging from the supranational to the municipal, good governance is now widely accepted as entailing “neo-Schumpeterian” economic policies favoring supply-side innovation and competitiveness; decentralization, devolution, and attrition of political governance; deregulation and privatization of industry, land and public services; and replacing welfare with “workfarist” social policies. This policy agenda has diffused over space and across scales with remarkable speed, displacing long-running and apparently deep-rooted welfare and interventionist state agendas in nations and cities alike. A neoliberal subjectivity also has emerged that

normalizes the logics of individualism and entrepreneurialism, equating individual freedom with self-interested choices, making individuals responsible for their own well-being, and redefining citizens as consumers and clients. Margaret Thatcher's notorious "there is no alternative" seems to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Cities are at the forefront of neoliberalization (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Geographic rescaling after Fordism has emphasized the supra- and subnational scales: "hollowing out" the nation-state and making cities increasingly responsible for realizing international competitiveness. Cities remain crucibles for new ideas, are where most people live and/or work, and are characterized as the scale at which state policies and practices are particularly sensitive to democratic pressure and local agendas. For all these reasons, successful implementation of neoliberal urban policy agendas has been key to neoliberalization. Many studies unravel the top-down impacts of neoliberalism on urban livelihoods and interurban development dynamics (see Brenner & Theodore, 2002b; Leitner & Sheppard, 1998). Much less attention has been paid, however, to bottom-up contestation of this agenda, within and beyond individual cities.

It may seem quixotic to attend to contestation when neoliberalism appears dominant, but it is particularly important in times such as these to pay attention to alternative visions and practices (Gibson-Graham, 1996). This chapter thus develops a research agenda for studying how neoliberalism articulates with its contestations in and beyond cities, in a way that does not presuppose the outcomes of this articulation. We begin by reviewing how neoliberalism is represented in the critical literature, noting that a focus on neoliberalization as a top-down process can inadvertently reinforce its hegemonic status. Conceptualizing contestation as more than just resistance to neoliberalism, we seek to decenter its theoretical status, among both proponents and critics. We recall neoliberalism's own beginnings as contestation embedded, then as now, in alternative political and economic projects and imaginaries, and we develop a conceptualization of the reciprocal interdependence of neoliberalization and contestation. We then draw attention to the fertile landscape of simultaneously sociocultural and spatiotemporal imaginaries (i.e., ideals, norms, discourses, ethics) and practices of contestation. We argue that close empirically grounded analysis is essential to better understand neoliberalism and to imagine and create alternative urban futures.

THEORIZING NEOLIBERALISM AND NEOLIBERAL URBANISM

Critical research on neoliberalism is dominated by regulation-theoretic political economy, representing neoliberalism as the putative successor to

Fordism. In essence, it is argued that Fordism's internal crisis catalyzed a period of uncertainty about what would follow. It was by no means inevitable that neoliberalism would emerge, as trajectories are overdetermined during moments of crisis. Yet, neoliberalism did emerge as the dominant trajectory, as a result of internal and external forces. Fordism's crisis was read as a crisis for profit-making under Keynesianism, calling for supply-side policies to revive capitalism (Harvey, 2006). The 1972 CIA-backed coup in Chile offered an opportunity to experiment with Hayek's ideas via authoritarian market reform, and for some time neoliberalism circulated primarily in Latin America. Other spatiotemporal moments of crisis offered opportunities to push market reforms: New York City's 1976 fiscal crisis; debt-induced structural adjustment beginning in 1982; and shock therapy after the dissolution of Soviet and eastern European state socialism in 1989 (Brenner & Theodore, 2002a; Peck, 2004). Within the United States and the United Kingdom, conservative governments backed by promarket think tanks normalized the ideas and practices of market rationality.

Neoliberalism in general has much in common with attempts to promote market mechanisms since the 17th century, but nevertheless is a distinct phase in the struggle between market- and state-led capitalism. First, neoliberalism promotes a significantly more limited role for the state than even most conservative programs envisioned prior to the late 1970s. During the progressive liberalism that became popular in the first world after the late 19th century, culminating with the welfare state, even conservative movements countenanced a broader vision for state-led governance than is now the case (although we should not forget the activist state-led agenda catalyzing neoliberalization; Peck & Tickell, 2002).² Second, neoliberalism's geography differs from preceding promarket initiatives. It is a global project, accepted by elites and mainstream political parties in varying forms almost everywhere around the world, and implemented at scales ranging from municipal to supranational authorities. Previous attempts were implemented in a small group of countries or forced on other dependent nation-states and localities. It has become easy to implement neoliberal policies via fast policy transfer (Peck, 2002) and to monitor it, and harder to find space for pursuing alternative imaginaries and practices.

Recently, political economic approaches have been supplemented by a focus on governmentality (Foucault, 1991). Governmentality is argued to take a particular form under neoliberalism (Foucault, 1979; Larner, 2000; Lemke, 2001; Rose, 1999). First, neoliberalism imagines the market as the inner regulator of the state rather than the state as external regulator of the market (Lemke, 2001). Second, neoliberal governmentality entails a particular kind of spatiality: government at a distance (Rose, 1999: 49). Neoliberal governmental technologies are indirect: setting targets and monitoring outcomes; transforming the ethos of governance from bureaucracy to business; giving agencies autonomy to act as long as they are accountable;

and creating calculable spaces to monitor outcomes (relying heavily on auditing, targets, and rankings). Governance remains rather unidirectional, however: Institutions, agencies, and individual citizens are expected to make their activities visible to centers of calculation, but these centers are less often required (much less enticed or persuaded) to make their activities transparent to neoliberal subjects.

Governmental technologies help construct neoliberal subjectivity. Under neoliberalism, individual freedom is redefined as the capacity for self-realization and freedom from bureaucracy rather than freedom from want, with human behavior reconceptualized along economic lines. Individuals are empowered to actively make self-interested choices and are made responsible for acting in this way to advance both their well-being and that of society. Employees are redefined as entrepreneurs with an obligation to work, to better themselves and society, rather than having a right to work. They are responsible for their own education and retraining, to build human capital, and for their own well-being and risk management by behaving prudently, instead of relying on the state. Personal and social responsibility are equated with self-esteem. In the process, "individuals no longer inhabit a single public sphere, nor is . . . citizenship conferred . . . through a singular relationship with the state. Rather, citizenship is multiplied and non-cumulative: it appears to inhere in and derive from active engagement with each of a number of specific zones of identity" (Rose, 1999: 178), or communities. Thus community-oriented policy discourses and communitarian thinking have accompanied neoliberalism.

The propagation of neoliberal discourses, policies, and subjectivities is argued to have given rise to neoliberal urbanism. The neoliberal city is conceptualized first as an entrepreneurial city, directing all its energies to achieving economic success in competition with other cities for investments, innovations, and "creative classes" (Florida, 2002; Leitner, 1990). Second, it is a city in which municipal bureaucracies, dedicated to social missions, are progressively replaced by professionalized quasi-public agencies empowered and responsible for promoting economic development, privatizing urban services, and catalyzing competition among public agencies. Decisions are increasingly driven by cost-benefit calculations rather than missions of service, equity, and social welfare (Brenner & Theodore, 2002a; Leitner & Sheppard, 2002). Third, it is a city whose residents are expected to behave responsibly, entrepreneurially, and prudently. They are made responsible for their own successes and failures, with the social obligation to make their expected contribution to the collective economic welfare alongside their hard-working fellow citizens (Isin, 1998; Keil, 2002; Larner, 1997).

This representation narrates neoliberalism as emerging to become the hegemonic contemporary form of liberal society. Analysts also point to dif-

ferences between abstract representations of neoliberalism and everyday practice, however. “Neoliberal programs of capitalist restructuring are rarely, if ever, imposed in a pure form, for they are always introduced within politico-institutional contexts that have been molded significantly by earlier regulatory arrangements, institutionalized practices, and political compromises” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002a: 14). Peck and Tickell (Chapter 2, this volume) similarly seek to distinguish between neoliberalism as an abstraction and the particular forms that emerge in particular contexts. This abstraction cannot be inferred from particular contexts, since “even the United States represents a case, rather than the model itself” (Peck, 2004: 393), but must be theorized.

While it is necessary to theorize neoliberalism in order to understand specific cases, we are concerned that keeping neoliberalism at the center of critical analysis can reify its ubiquity and power, even when the intent is critique (Barnett, 2005), as insufficient attention is paid to the multiple and complex contestations that may reify, but also rework and seek to supplant, neoliberalism. Contestation was critical to the emergence of neoliberal regimes, and remains closely articulated with neoliberalism. Hegemony cannot be mistaken for everlasting life, and neoliberalism’s demise likely will be unexpected and at the hands of its contestations.

We adopt a deliberately broad view of contestation—pushing the word to its limits in order to cast our net as broadly as possible. Resistance is conventionally seen as a response to, and thus framed in terms of, the putatively hegemonic force that it opposes. A paradox of resistance is its capacity to reify the very force that it contests (Rose, 2002). Much contestation has emerged as a direct response to neoliberalism, objecting to its imaginaries and practices and its deleterious impacts, particularly on disadvantaged groups and locations. Yet, to restrict analysis to this domain of contestation is to concede the center to neoliberalism. Even for contestations that are a direct response, many of the imaginaries and practices driving them preexisted the emergence of neoliberalism, flourish in contexts where neoliberalism is out of place, and draw strength from alternatives residing outside neoliberalism. Thus, our definition of contestation exceeds neoliberalism, including the vast variety of imaginaries and practices of all political hues that not only practice resistance but also are resilient to and rework neoliberalism (Katz, 2004).

CONTESTATION: DECENTERING NEOLIBERALISM

Neoliberalism did not simply appear *deus ex machina*, but started life as contestation. This is far from apparent today, when its pervasive influence effectively disguises the contingencies and uncertainties of its emergence.

The forms it took, both practically and theoretically, were shaped by its places and time of origin: Britain and the United States after 1945. Circumstances at this time and in these places gave resonance to some of what came to be key arguments, but were in other ways the worst of times. Hayek's influential justification of neoliberalism published in *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) gained immediate notice in the context of expanding Soviet influence. He argued that state-led capitalism, under Keynes in Britain and Roosevelt in the United States, was the first step on the road to communism. Fears of socialism triggered intense right-wing activism to promote Hayek's agenda, notably Olin Foundation support for networks of neo-liberal knowledge production, including endowing an appointment for Hayek at the University of Chicago, but for years this sponsorship fell on fallow ground. Allied powers had won a world war and reorganized the world order in their image, through state-led planning, ushering in 20 years of organized economic prosperity. Neoliberalism had to wait three decades.

Fordism was not as dominant as it seemed during the post-1945 boom, and was contested on various fronts throughout its existence. Large corporations, big labor, and the middle class in the first world benefited from Fordism, but others were excluded: nonunionized workforces, small and medium enterprises, low-income populations (notwithstanding the mitigating influence of the welfare state, the War on Poverty was hardly won), women and people of color unable to access unionized jobs, and third world countries whose very poverty supported first world Fordism (low wages and cheap commodities from the periphery subsidized the first world Fordist social contract). The welfare state, a central piece of Fordist governmentality, became unpopular with the private sector, which construed it as a drain on national wealth; with clients, who came to resent the paternalism, surveillance, and control accompanying welfare; and with progressive social movements and intellectuals seeking to empower the least well-off. The benefits of peripheral Fordism were limited to selected industrial workers and state employees in urban industrial cities of newly industrializing countries, and disappeared alongside of import-substituting industrialization.

Such contestations were held in check, however, until Fordism ran out of steam, materially and discursively, in the mid-1970s.³ Manufacturing (including new production technologies) relocated away from the core countries and regions of Fordism, facilitated by improved telecommunications and transportation. This undermined the Fordist social contract, as Fordism succumbed to a cumulative cycle of stagnating productivity gains, falling profit rates, and declining union power. State agencies at all scales experienced an emergent fiscal squeeze that made Fordism's contradictory agendas unaffordable. At the same time, state socialism in eastern Europe was also under pressure from citizens clamoring for more choice and voice,

and the American consumer society was gaining utopian status worldwide. The OPEC “oil crisis” of the early 1970s brought things to a head, and by the late 1970s both the British Labour Party and the U.S. Democratic leadership was backing away from Fordism—only to be replaced in landslide elections by conservative regimes proffering a radical alternative.

The emergence of neoliberalism, then, was not inexorable, foreordained by its natural superiority as a body of thought (Hayek, 1944/1998) or by the logic of capital and class power (Duménil & Lévy, 2004; Harvey, 2006). It coalesced out of contestations of Fordism with which it resonated. Core elements of neoliberalism were attractive in different ways to many of those contesting Fordism. Neoconservatives saw an opportunity to promote individual liberty and responsibility. Capitalists saw an opportunity to boost profits by reducing state intervention. States saw an opportunity to address their fiscal crises. Welfare state clients were tired of being told what to do by representatives of state agencies, and had hardly experienced the welfare state as a resounding success. Nearby, residents of eastern Europe were tired of state control, and state socialism imploded under manifold visions of democratic alternatives. The market seemed liberating by comparison to their experiences with socialism, and these alternatives rapidly converged to shock-market therapy.

Third world political elites, no longer able to play first and second world interests off against one another and facing increasingly powerful neoliberalizing supranational institutions, found material opportunities in structural adjustment policies. In India, whose economy was critiqued as state-sponsored capitalism by the left and state-sponsored socialism by the right, transition from the Nehruvian model (highly regulated and protected markets and state monopolies) facilitated accumulation by sections of the bourgeoisie. Yet, in the face of the rampant dispossession that immediately followed the launching of the reforms in all sectors of the economy, the left became nostalgic about the very Nehruvian model that it had critiqued.

Neoliberal visions thus encountered fertile ground in many places for a variety of reasons. Some had to do with ideological and intellectual battles about markets versus states within the state and academia, but the contestation of aspects of Fordism by civil society was also influential (for example, in triggering working-class desertion of the Labour and Democratic parties in U.K. and U.S. elections). Neoliberal ideas had to emerge in places marked by distinct inherited sociocultural formations and contestations as well as distinct positionalities within the global system. Its global ubiquity means that neoliberalism also cannot be theorized as simply a response to Fordism: Its contestations exceeded Fordism. The corporatist regimes of continental western Europe, the state socialist regimes of eastern Europe, the developmentalist and military states of Asia and Latin America, and the monarchies and authoritarian and religious regimes of the

Middle East and North Africa each posed distinct challenges and opportunities for neoliberalization that cannot be generalized from those of previously Fordist societies. Mechanisms of change also vary, from largely internally generated (notably in the United States, Europe, and China) to externally imposed (notably countries subject to structural adjustment). The result has been considerable variation in the nature of the emergent regime, the processes driving change, and its acceptability and success.

We conclude from this analysis that it is not sufficient to study neoliberalism's rise to hegemony by theorizing neoliberalization itself. Contextualizing neoliberalism is important, but it is also necessary to examine its articulation with contestations within and beyond the state that have shaped and will continue to influence its conditions of possibility (see Figure 1.1). To date, even research on neoliberalism and contestation usually begins with neoliberalism, regarding contestations as secondary and reactive (i.e., as resistance). This has meant focusing on the articulation of neoliberalism with its direct contestations in the center of Figure 1.1 (with particular attention to the right-hand arrow). Taking the internal logic of neoliberalism as the starting point risks essentializing it. The research program we propose does not start with neoliberalism but with its articulation with contestation. This means giving the left-hand arrow in this articulation its due, in considering how resistance may also rework neoliberalism. But it also means paying attention to how contestation with other forms of capitalism (upper sphere in Figure 1.1) and interactions with other contestations of capitalism (lower sphere), sociospatial projects that may be resilient to neoliberalism, affect this articulation.

Neoliberalization and contestation, in their various guises, entail imaginaries (ideals, norms, discourses, ethics) and practices. Imaginaries and practices have spatiotemporal aspects that coevolve with their sociopolitical aspects. Space and time are not only objects of contestation but also part and parcel of political strategy. For example, neoliberalization is often framed around removing spatial barriers to capital, commodity, and communication flows and speeding up the economy (annihilating space by time to maximize capital accumulation), and harmonizing social actions in different places (adopting "good governance" everywhere). Contestation, by contrast, may seek to localize economic transactions and slow down the pace of life (the Slow Food movement), or create space for life to be lived differently in different places (Escobar, 2001).

There are two central questions to be asked about the articulation between neoliberalism and contestation: its nature and outcomes. First, articulation means that the relationship is more than a power struggle for hegemony among mutual opposites. Through their interactions with one another, both neoliberalism and its contestations are potentially reshaped. Cooptation is possible—by absorbing and redefining the imaginaries, prac-

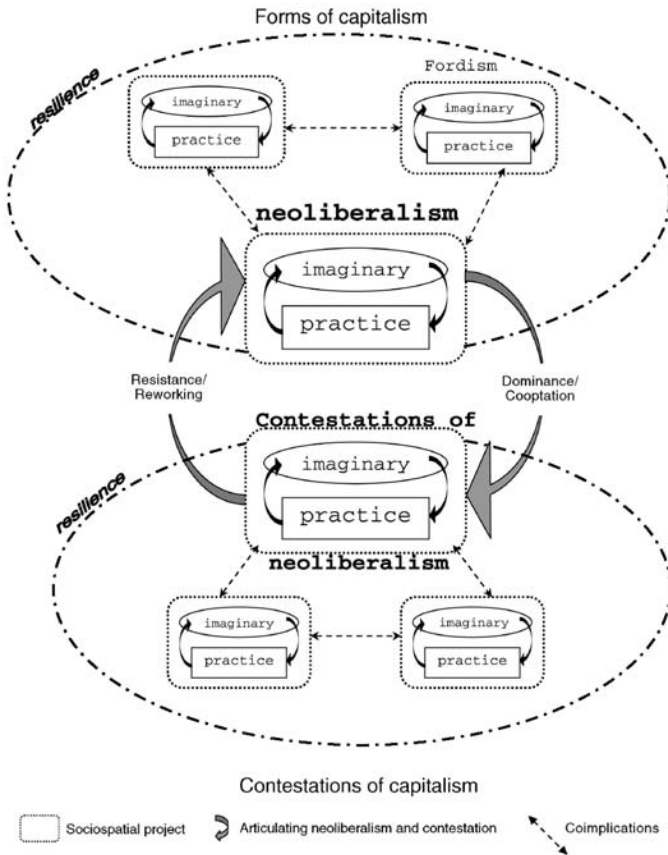


FIGURE 1.1. Neoliberalism and its contestations.

tices, and spatialities of the other. Thus, neoliberalism appropriated for its own purposes the discourse of networks, originally a critique of neoliberal discourses of market autonomy (Leitner & Sheppard, 2002). Examples also exist of contestation being transformed to the point where it seems indistinguishable from and a part of neoliberalization (cf. Eick, Chapter 13; Mayer, Chapter 5; Miller, Chapter 11; all this volume). On the other hand, each attempts to adapt and reproduce itself by learning from the successes and failures of the other, empowering itself by drawing strategically on “alien” principles and priorities. Thus, contestations may take advantage of technologies shaped under neoliberal auspices, such as the Internet (as in the well-known case of the Zapatistas), and from neoliberal strategies of consensus formation (duplicating the World Economic Forum with a World

Social Forum). Similarly, a community organization seeking to drive a polluting factory from its neighborhood, while skeptical of the market-oriented cost-benefit calculations associated with environmental impact assessments, may nonetheless undertake such an assessment when this serves its purposes. At the same time, neoliberalism has demonstrated an ability to adapt in the face of successful strategies of contestation—such as the World Trade Organization’s moving its meetings to such easily defensible spaces and places as Doha and Cancún, to minimize contestation. Given the multiple imaginaries and polyvalent practices of contestations, similar articulations and struggles can and do occur among neoliberalism’s rival contestants, not just with respect to neoliberalism. While a neoliberal-centric approach would see this as an opportunity for neoliberalism to divide and rule, attention to the complexity of interactions among rival contestants may effectively decentralize neoliberalism as just one contestant, among many, for the “hearts and minds” of society.

This leads to the second central question—that of outcomes. We do not wish to prejudice this. Neoliberalism could gain complete hegemony, be replaced by another imaginary and practice, or (most likely) ongoing contestation might occur among capitalist and noncapitalist imaginaries and practices. Contestation is inevitably reshaped and potentially compromised by having to come to terms with neoliberal norms (e.g., colonization of the lifeworld by neoliberal instrumental rationality, professionalization of grassroots organizations, or valuation of social movements in terms of their ability to raise money). Activists continually negotiate the boundary between neoliberal instrumental rationality, and the communicative rationality of everyday life that they seek to enhance and represent (see Elwood & Leitner, 1998). Such pressures are very real, but it does not follow that neoliberalization is immune to the influences of contestation. Really existing markets must be successfully embedded in the social and cultural relations of everyday life, and they require state intervention in order to function. Firms may be compelled to respond to social and cultural pressure (e.g., to reduce pollution or regulate sweatshops) to retain social legitimacy. Neoliberal states find it necessary to maintain some welfare state provisions and acknowledge human rights. In short, neoliberalization must conform to some degree with social constructions of legality, ethics, and justice to maintain legitimacy, notwithstanding efforts to redefine justice along neoliberal lines. From the analyst’s viewpoint, the research challenge here is to identify the social and historical geographic conditions that facilitate a particular outcome and to develop an understanding of when neoliberalism, or its contestants, has been transformed to the point where it is no longer recognizable as such.

Decentering neoliberalism by conceptualizing neoliberalization and contestation as coimplicated, and contestation as exceeding neoliberalism,

also entails decentering the role of neoliberalism in shaping urban change. Urban policies undoubtedly resonate with neoliberal imaginaries and practices. Yet, urban residents' own dissatisfactions with and contestations of Fordism helped create space for such a rethinking of urban policy. These imaginaries may not be satisfied by the ensuing neoliberal-inspired changes—just as the imaginaries in eastern Europe clash with the shock therapy that ensued. Residents respond to neoliberal urbanism by resisting particular initiatives but also by pursuing community livelihood imaginaries, concerns, and practices at variance with neoliberalism. Thus, cities remain more than engines of spatial competition and welfare reform, shaped also by a wide range of robust alternative imaginaries and practices. Even though certain cities are key infrastructural/institutional nodes for neoliberalization and contestation, the spatiality of their mutual articulation transcends city boundaries. Beyond the city, neoliberalism encounters a gamut of imaginaries and practices that have urban consequences. Contestations have their own histories and spatialities, involving not only localized initiatives but also interurban, local–global, north–south, and urban–rural connectivities. By recognizing these complexities, critical analysts of neoliberal urbanism can avoid reproducing and reinforcing stereotypical images of the neoliberal city also beloved of its proponents.

MULTIPLE SOCIOSPATIAL IMAGINARIES

Taking seriously the proposition that contestations exceed neoliberalism requires us also to take seriously the sociospatial imaginaries of those who may find themselves at variance with neoliberalism in their ideas of the good life and just society. To ignore these would be either to reduce contestants' actions to simple reactions to neoliberalism or to impute analysts' views of alternative imaginaries onto groups contesting neoliberalism, rather than allowing them agency in their own right. In this section, we seek to sketch out some of the multiplicity of nonneoliberal social and geographical imaginaries and their implications for further research.

If neoliberalism seeks to articulate an imaginary that equates freedom with the autonomous individual, with market rationality as the mechanism through which responsible individuals can maximize their rights and wealth, and with a borderless 24/7 world, contestations of neoliberalism draw on alternative imaginaries. These are simultaneously social and geographical, each shaping the other, and also intimately related with practices. Socially, contestations imagine alternative visions of justice, democracy, and ecology (i.e., living and working differently). In articulating these visions, contestations interpret ideas like “justice,” “freedom,” and what counts as the political “good” quite differently, placing them on either the

left or the right of the political spectrum. On the left, contestations of neoliberalism incorporate visions of justice and democratic freedoms that would develop and enhance the capacity of all citizens to share power and hence collaboratively govern themselves in all spheres of life and work (Cruikshank, 2004). They also include visions of ecology that emphasize care for the environment rather than exploitation of natural resources, translating into struggles to protect and/or decommodify resources and environments. Such imaginaries promote collective over individual interest; collaboration rather than competition; recognition and respect for diversity rather than commodification of individual identity; and care for the environment over productivity/growth/exploitation.

On the right, conservative social imaginaries value preexisting hierarchies of power, moral authority and privilege, and the rationales used to justify these (including racial superiority, religion, patriarchy, nationalism, colonialism, and Lockean liberalism). For example, conservative nationalist movements oppose neoliberal globalization because of a perceived loss in national sovereignty and identity. Or, in the United States, the Christian right and other moral conservatives contest the “liberal” in neoliberalism because of their inability to enforce a certain moral authority. They demand more, not less, state intervention into people’s lives to enforce norms of voluntarism, marriage, and sexuality. They assert that enhancing state authority is necessary because “civil society and the market are powerless to impose their own rationalities upon the corrupted will of the people. Only a strong and decisively illiberal state can work that magic” (Cruikshank, 2004: 4).

Alternative social imaginaries thus also articulate a variety of geographic imaginaries on both the right and the left. These may involve seeking to reinforce nationalist imaginaries in opposition to neoliberal globalization (conservative nationalism, in response to a perceived loss of national sovereignty and identity; or progressive nationalism, seeking to reassert national sovereignty over borders to control flows of commodities and capital or to reassert social democratic institutions). They may also involve reinforcing local identities and practices as alternatives to a neoliberal borderless world. But alternative social imaginaries are not restricted to reasserting territorial autonomy. They include alternative global imaginaries, whether through Marxism (“Workers of the world, unite!”), global feminist and environmental movements, or global religious evangelism. They also include translocal networks, such as networks of indigenous peoples, the World Social Forum, Christian missionaries, or Al-Qaeda.

Social and geographic imaginaries are mutually constitutive and intimately related to experiences and livelihoods pursued within specific historical geographic contexts. All imaginaries emerge out of particular places and times. Even seemingly global imaginaries, such as those of liberalism,

socialism, and Western feminism, in fact have *local* origins, in these cases in struggles between religion and secularism that brought about the European Enlightenment. Attempts to erase local tradition in the name of such visions of a universal European modernity have been opposed by a wide variety of imaginaries and practices reasserting the particulars of place and situated experiences, ranging from German romanticism and national socialism to anticolonial movements and postcolonial philosophies.

The multiplicity of imaginaries that may be brought to bear in contestations of neoliberalism poses complex challenges for empirical analysis. It is important to recognize that imaginaries cannot be deduced theoretically. Activism is informed both by normative understandings of “justice” or “democracy” as they emerge in particular contexts, and through individuals’ everyday experiences, past and present, in framing contestation in a particular way. First, contestations might be directed to specific negative outcomes of neoliberal policies, seen as barriers to realizing a particular imaginary, rather than the workings of neoliberalism *in toto* (Sites, Chapter 6, this volume). For example, in cities across the globe tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets to protest the effects of privatizing public services and dismantling welfare programs and workers’ rights. The primary goal of individuals participating in these protests is less to undermine neoliberalism *per se* than to combat its immediate effects on their livelihoods. In South African cities, Ashwin Desai argues that such contestations “were not merely a natural result of poverty or marginality but a direct response to state policy” (Desai, 2003: 20–21). These protests draw their imaginaries, and discourses of rights and citizenship, from the antiapartheid movement’s demands for inclusion of the black majority in the South African state. In this context, water and electricity cutoffs and evictions by the state, overwhelmingly targeting nonwhite communities, bring apartheid to mind. Deployment of these discourses by those promised inclusion, but excluded from public services priced out of reach by privatization, illustrate how elements of progressive liberalism can serve contestations of neoliberalism.

Second, in some circumstances a variety of groups with distinct imaginaries may come together in a common challenge to neoliberalism, since they identify it as the common animus to their imaginaries. For example, the civil society groups, activists, and individuals participating in the anti-WTO protests from Seattle to Cancún based their collaboration on a strong shared sense of what they feel is wrong with neoliberal institutions and ideology, despite differing analyses of the primary sources of oppression and alternatives. Thus, they have not articulated a consensus on the course that political action should take: Some call for reform, whereas others envision more radical transformations of society (Wainwright, Chapter 9, this volume).

Third, neoliberalism may also be contested when it is not conceived as

the principal culprit. The principal target of contestation may be some other source of oppression or injustice, but neoliberalism may still be contested when it is perceived as facilitating these other injustices. For example, the primary aim of transnational human rights organizations collaborating in protests against structural adjustment policies in the global south might not be to undermine neoliberalism but to combat dictatorships and torture. Nevertheless, because of the way these organizations understand the imbrications of political and economic power, they work in coalition to contest neoliberal policies and neoliberal globalization, which may be implemented by and work to prop up dictators. Many progressive contestations seek to unite social groups on multiple bases in fighting against mounting inequities, dislocation and insecurities in livelihoods, environmental degradation, lack of democracy in the political process, and violations of citizenship and human rights. Furthermore, through working in coalition with one another, different social groups may come to share experiences and knowledge that results in their producing new knowledge about neoliberalism and other sources of oppression (Featherstone, 2003).

Finally, different groups contesting neoliberalism may find themselves contesting one another due to conflicts and contradictions between their respective imaginaries. Power struggles among different groups contesting neoliberalism may then result over whose imaginary should prevail. For example, both major U.S. labor unions and the Minuteman Project oppose aspects of free trade. However, the former have taken the side of immigrant workers, supporting immigration reform with family reunion, whereas the latter is a racist “civilian militia” that periodically patrols the U.S.–Mexican border to prevent undocumented migration.

All these complexities carry over when trying to make sense of the variety of practices of contestation. All those contesting neoliberalism feel that some aspect or another challenges the realization of their particular imaginary. However, the particular kinds of contestation engaged in and the diagnoses of what is to be done about neoliberalism cannot be deduced simply from the nature of a particular imaginary. Practices depend also on the context in which potential contestants find themselves (see the next section)—and can influence sociogeographical imaginaries.

POLYVALENT SOCIOSPATIAL PRACTICES

Published studies examining contestations of neoliberalism have tended to highlight two kinds of practices. Prominent cases of high-visibility direct action, such as the “battle for Seattle,” have received particular attention (Ayres, 2004; Glassman, 2001; Wainwright, Chapter 9, this volume), along with more general transnational collective action against neoliberal global-

ization, such as People's Global Action (Routledge, 2003) and the World Social Forum (Santos, 2002; Sen, Anand, Escobar, & Waterman, 2004). There have also been numerous studies of organized social movements in cities of the global south (Bond & McInnes, Chapter 8; Oldfield & Stokke, Chapter 7, both this volume) and global north (such as the living wage movement in the United States; Weldon & Targ, 2004).

Practices of contestation extend beyond these examples, however. They also include nonprofit institutions and alternative media engaged in developing and promoting alternative nonneoliberal forms of knowledge; attempts to advance noncapitalist and nonneoliberal economic and political relations, such as worker cooperatives or Local Exchange Trading Systems; struggles also within state institutions; and individual everyday practices to undermine and belittle neoliberal norms (see Scott, 1985). We cannot discuss these all here, but focus on organized collective civic actions, with particular reference to the United States and Western Europe. There is an enormous variety of such initiatives and organizations contesting neoliberalism (e.g., Table 1.1). Rather than conducting a census of these, we seek here to give a sense of the varied landscape of progressive contestations pursued by such groups and how space and place are integral to these practices. Four realms of practice in particular can be identified, recognizing that particular groups and initiatives simultaneously engage in several at once: direct action, lobbying and legislative action, alternative knowledge production, and alternative economic and social practices.

Direct action, particularly mass public protests,⁴ has been the most visible and attention-grabbing practice challenging neoliberalism during the past two decades. We are all familiar with pictures of tens of thousands of people taking to the streets to protest neoliberal policies in cities across the globe. The prevalence of such practices depends on the historical geographic context: They are a feature of everyday life in France, where citizens and striking workers crowd and occupy the streets of Paris and other cities to defy and challenge government policies. In 1995, for example, the Juppé government's economic proposals to cut and reorganize social security were met with 6 weeks of strikes, engulfing every kind of public service, and nationwide street turbulence, ending in victory for the protestors. Bolivian and South African cities also have a tradition of mass protests against, and in some cases successfully challenging, the World Bank's structural adjustment policies privatizing public utilities (Balanyá, Brennan, Hoedeman, Kishimoto, & Terhorst, 2005; Bond & McInnes, Chapter 8, this volume; Goldman, 2005). In other places this kind of action is rare and less effective, as there is little public resonance and support. In the United States, where the antiwar movement of the 1970s is now a distant and controversial memory, the Seattle anti-WTO demonstrations were an exception, with limited follow-up in other cities.

TABLE 1.1. Organizations Engaged in Contestation

Organization/network	Issues	Cities/interurban networks
ACORN	Wages, housing, education	US: industrial cities
Annie E. Casey Foundation	Families, children, community building	US: Baltimore
ATTAC	Tobin Tax, alternatives to corporate globalization	France-based, networks in 20 countries
Center for Community Change	Capacity building, policy research	US: Washington DC-based, partners across US
Center for Urban Economic Development	Impact of urban development on low-income and minority communities	US: Chicago
Center on Fathers, Families, and Public Policy	Advocacy for never-married low-income men and their families	US: Wisconsin/California
Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change	Well-being of low-income communities	US: Case Western Reserve University
City Farmer	Urban organic/sustainable food production, alternative energy, resource center	Canada: Vancouver
Colonias Project	Low-income border community empowerment, health, youth, job training	US: Texas A&M University, US–Mexico border cities
Community Indicators Project	Healthy communities, democratizing information	US: 200 urban areas
Economic Analysis and Research Network	Advocacy for low-income communities and families	US: network connecting 36 states
Economic Policy Institute	Economic policy, politics, public opinion, trade, sustainable economies	US: Washington, DC
Food Project (Boston)	Growing organic food for local consumption, youth involvement	US: Boston
Gamaliel	Community empowerment, building activist networks	US: Chicago-based national network
Heartland Labor Capital Network	Regional growth, labor participation in investments	US: Midwest, Pennsylvania, Toronto
Industrial Areas Foundation	Community empowerment, building activist networks	US: Chicago-based, networks in different states
Institute for Race Relations	Fighting racism in Europe	UK: London-based, to some extent Europe
INURA	All aspects of urban politics	International: 12 regional offices worldwide
Jobs with Justice	Wages, health education, housing, welfare	US: 40+ cities, 29 states
Kensington Welfare Rights Union	Welfare rights	US: North Philadelphia network

Labor/Community Strategy Center	Environmental justice, labor, transit for low-income communities	US: Los Angeles
Living Wage Network	Enact living wage legislation, promote living wage concept	US: Passed in 70+ cities
Louisiana Environmental Action Network	Environmental justice in Louisiana	US: Louisiana
Metro Network for Social Justice	Social justice: equity in city services, building activism, fighting police abuse	Canada: Toronto
National Law Center for Homelessness & Poverty	Law on homelessness	US: Washington DC-based, nationwide links
National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership	Democratizing information (partnering with the Urban Institute)	US: 26 partner cities
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights	Immigrant and refugee rights	US: LA-based, linking immigrant cities
Pacific Institute for Community Organization	Community empowerment for housing, education, healthcare, neighborhoods	US: Oakland
Pennsylvania Environmental Network	Environmental justice, landfills, incinerators, nuclear dumps	US: Pennsylvania
Planners Network	Progressive planning	North America: New York- and Toronto-based
Planum Association	Progressive planning	European planning institutes
Slow Food	Supporting traditional food practices and enjoyment of dining	Italy, Switzerland, Germany, US, France, Japan
Sustainable Cities Research Institute	Environmental and community issues: alternative energy, housing, credit unions	UK: Newcastle Upon Tyne
Tennessee Industrial Renewal Network	Displaced workers, community reinvestment, environmental justice, fair trade	US: Tennessee
Welfare Law Center	Welfare rights	US: New York-based, active in other states
World Social Forum	Alternatives to neoliberal globalization	Porto Alegre and many localities worldwide

Note. Organizations engaged in contestation. Source: Compiled by authors from web searches; organizational documents, bulletin boards, and mailing lists; and secondary news reports and research studies.

Lobbying and legislative actions are a much more common practice in and across US cities. Thousands of civic/grassroots organizations are engaged in struggles for living wages, job security, affordable housing, welfare provisions, immigrants' rights, securing equal access to public space, affordable housing, quality public education, alternative modes of transportation, public and environmental health, justice and conservation, seeking to address the needs of the "most visibly denuded victims of roll-back neoliberalism" (Peck & Tickell, 2002: 393).⁵ These organizations undertake letter writing campaigns, lobby state agencies and politicians, file suits on behalf of affected groups, and urge sympathetic legislators to move legislative bills, often in several cities at the same time. They also practice small-scale direct action, engaging and mobilizing citizens for street protests, and staging cultural performances such as street theater. Some, such as the living wage campaign, focus on a single problematic, whereas others address a variety of issues (Table 1.1). Some are long-standing advocacy organizations, reactivated around neoliberal urban policies, whereas others are new creations. Thus, many of the organizations addressing job and livelihood issues trace their origins to drawn-out campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s against plant closures, withdrawal of employee benefits and workplace reorganization, regrouping in the past decade to face and address the new challenges posed by neoliberal policies and the promotion of neoliberal subjectivities, forming new alliances across class and social identities in the process. For example, religion-labor alliances have reemerged independently in several U.S. cities since the mid-1990s, mobilizing people of faith in concert with progressive organized labor to advocate for low-wage workers' and immigrant workers' rights. Alliances between different civic groups are also often networked across different cities and regions, forming national organizations. Examples include Jobs with Justice (JWJ), the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), and the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF).

The production of promarket knowledge has been widely recognized as central to neoliberalization (Peck & Tickell, Chapter 2, this volume), and alternative knowledge production is equally critical to its contestation. On the one hand are think-act tanks—institutions with paid, well-qualified, and experienced staff, often linked with grassroots organizations, whose staff and activities are funded by foundations. Their scope ranges from the local and regional to the national and international scale, including such diverse institutions as the Center for Community Change, the Economic Policy Institute, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Five Boroughs Institute. The Center for Community Change serves as a resource center for grassroots organizations, for example, providing training to grassroots activists. The Economic Policy Institute serves as a professional policy analysis center. The Annie E. Casey Foundation publishes policy analyses at dif-

ferent scales for the grassroots organizations it supports. The Five Boroughs Institute produces insightful analyses of the sources of changing urban space in New York City. Some have a long-standing history as non-profit activist resource centers, now adapted to the new challenges through organizational restructuring and/or promoting new projects. Others, such as the Five Boroughs Institute, are more recent creations.

Think-act tanks provide arguments and statistics to support groups engaged in policy and legislative action, but alternative knowledge production also occurs in other domains. Under the rubric of university-community partnerships, universities and academics collaborate with community researchers and activists. One example from the United States is the Community Economy Project initiated by Julie Graham and Kathy Gibson, which has as its goal to “develop a more inclusive understanding of the economy, highlight the contribution of hidden and alternative economies, build sustainable, non-capitalist economic alternatives, and foster community in and around economic organizations” (www.communityeconomies.org). This project not only undertakes knowledge production but also fosters alternative economic and social practices.

Numerous activist groups and movements in western Europe and North America have combined alternative knowledge production with practices contesting market rationalities. For example, Slow Food, City Farmer, and community-supported agriculture seek to slow down the pace of everyday life, bringing neighbors, producers, and consumers (e.g., of food) face to face. Barter economy movements (e.g., Local Economic and Trading Systems) seek to reorganize local work—not necessarily to slow down the circulation of capital, but to create an alternative nonmonetized economy. An explicit goal of these movements is to create and promote alternative economic, social, and political spaces. They also frequently engage with the local state, however, when their practices challenge or disrupt local laws and regulations. They may demand specific amendments to local state regulations, such as changes in zoning laws for community agriculture.

SPATIALITIES OF PRACTICES

The contestation of neoliberalism is sociospatial; space is simultaneously an object of contestation and part and parcel of political strategy. Geographic research on social movements and spaces of resistances has demonstrated how place, mobility, networking across space, and scale each can play an integral role in the mobilization, practices, and efficacy of contestations. Yet, there is an unfortunate tendency in some of this literature to privilege one spatiality, thereby obscuring the significance of others. For example,

scholarship emphasizing the politics of scale—scale jumping of local groups in their efforts to contest processes of neoliberalization—masks the significance of other spatialities that help facilitate politics and political struggle, such as translocal networks' and activists' mobilities (Glassman, 2001). Privileging one type of spatiality and/or subsuming diverse spatialities under a master concept, such as scale, is problematic and insufficient. Those practicing contestation make use of multiple spatialities in complex and unpredictable ways to make new geographies, as the examples below illustrate. Thus, it is vital to theoretically and empirically investigate the simultaneity of such multiple engagements with (and imaginaries of) space, and how different spatialities are coimplicated.

Contestation frequently entails resignifying place: the strategic manipulation, subversion and transgression of everyday spaces, and the social relations they stand for, within a city and beyond. Yet, bodily mobility—activists moving across boundaries to occupy spaces—is integral to place manipulation as a political strategy. The ability of social movement participants to appear unexpectedly in surprising places ahead of attempts to contain their actions has been an effective tactic at scales ranging from street demonstrations to national revolutionary movements. For example, during the Seattle anti-WTO protests participants moved to occupy strategic locations to prevent the opening of the WTO Ministerial, a tactic that was planned and orchestrated in advance through cyber-networking and activist training camps (Wainwright, Prudham, & Glassman, 2000; Wainwright, Chapter 9, this volume). The manipulation of microspaces (albeit of a different kind) within the city has also been an important component in the repertoire of religion-labor alliances advocating for immigrants' and low-wage workers' rights in the Twin Cities. One such tactic of protest was transporting their grievances into the workplace—for example, clergy occupying a hotel lobby in downtown Minneapolis to pray in support of hotel workers before joining them on the picket line. By tapping into religious modes of expression but transporting them to secular spaces, activists subvert their meaning to create new political and social spaces (Sziarto, 2003).

Religion-labor alliances, anti-WTO movements, and other initiatives have also shown how networking across space strengthens initiatives that initially operated independently, either in individual U.S. cities or in other places around the globe. Networking prevents contestations from being contained spatially by extending them to other places. Cyber-networking, in particular, has become a key means for connecting locally and nationally focused civic organizations' and NGOs' protests, strategies, and tactics. For example, the U.S. living wage movement, from its inception in a living wage ordinance passed in Baltimore, spanned the country to create an interurban network of activists seeking to implement living wage initiatives in selected cities and counties nationwide. This inter-urban network offered

several advantages. First, it became a source of information for new local initiatives, which could draw on the knowledge, experience, and strategies developed by previously successful initiatives in other cities to enhance their own success (and thereby that of the network). Second, the passage of living wage initiatives in multiple cities made it harder for local authorities to dismiss some new living wage initiative because it would undermine that city's competitive advantage. Third, mediating national-scale institutions, particularly ACORN, sought to coordinate and standardize activities across the nodes of the living wage network (in the process, promoting their own influence at the national scale).

Extensive networking among activists across space has allowed these movements to engage in scale jumping: turning local into regional, national, and global movements to expand their power (Smith, 1992). Some scalar strategies of contestation mirror those of neoliberalization, whereas others invert them—emphasizing alternative scales or promoting alternative scalar relations. For example, the network of anti-WTO movements scaled up to the global scale, while the U.S. network of local religion labor alliances has scaled up to the national scale by forming a national organization, Interfaith Worker Justice (IWJ). Through IWJ, the movement attempts to harness power and instrumentalities at the national scale, seeking to promote linkages among religious and organized labor institutions, mobilizing people of faith and organized labor to advocate for and organize low-wage workers across the United States. Other movements seek strength by engaging in strategies of “localization.” Such strategies frequently draw on attachments to place in reaffirming the importance of local economic, cultural, and ecological visions and practices. In the wake of increased livelihood insecurity and loss of control over economic, cultural, political, and ecological space, localization strategies attempt to reconstitute local and regional worlds. This might take the form of promoting grassroots democratic and life-centered (instead of profit-centered) economic practices, as in community economy initiatives. Community agriculture and barter economy movements create alternative economic and social spaces by empowering producers and consumers to interact locally, seeking to exclude distant and larger-scale agents (nonlocal and large corporations and the nation-state).

CONCLUSION

Do we live in a neoliberal urban society? Not really: Cities remain more than engines of spatial competition, welfare reform, and neoliberal subject formation. Indeed, they have become central spaces where the hegemonic struggles over neoliberalism are now being fought: “the setting . . . also,

however, the stakes of struggle” (Lefebvre, 1991: 386). As the examples presented above have shown, there are clearly non-neoliberal social and spatial imaginaries, alternative forms of subject formation, and newly emerging practices of contestation—including alternative economic and social practices and innovative alliances across multiple axes of social difference.

Some scholars of neoliberalism are inclined to argue that these do not add up to very much in terms of challenging and undermining neoliberalization. We argue, however, that such an assessment of the efficacy of contestations reflects the abstract theoretical lens applied, which conceptualizes the reciprocal interaction between neoliberalism and contestation as asymmetrically favoring the former. While this lens has proven a useful starting point, we feel that it supports analysis that reduces contestations to simple resistance to neoliberalism. Moreover, it assesses the efficacy of contestations in terms of their success in transforming neoliberalism as a structure of authority and/or halting neoliberal policies. In our view, such a focus downplays the complex articulations of sociospatial struggles through which negotiations and reworkings of neoliberalism and its others take shape across space and time.

The conceptual framework proposed in this chapter views this articulation as a complex, unpredictable spatiotemporal process in which neoliberalism is just one of an ever-changing variety of capitalist and noncapitalist imaginaries and practices that are at stake. It does not resolve into some final outcome, such as neoliberalism; nor is it completely arbitrary. Its tendencies, never fully realized, must be analyzed concretely, taking into account the specific historical geographic context. It follows that any assessment of the implications of contestations for neoliberalism must also examine how the process of articulation plays out on the ground. The effects of particular contestations on neoliberalism are difficult to predict. Some contestations—such as the battle for Seattle and antiprivatization struggles in Bolivia and South Africa, or antisweatshop and living wage initiatives—are more obvious, forcing observable, albeit temporary and often local, adjustments to neoliberalization. Others are less visible, with effects that are more difficult to discern. They may not result in policy change but may create new knowledge and awareness, for example, informing residents of the global north about the negative impacts of WTO policies on the livelihoods of people in the global south. Others again, such as community economy practices, may not see fit to challenge neoliberalism directly at all. Nevertheless, the cumulative implications for neoliberalism of such articulations, including complex interactions among different contestations, cannot be extrapolated from short-term assessments. Revolution often occurs when least expected, suggesting that we should be wary of predictions that neoliberalism as we have known it is here to stay.

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NOTES

1. “Neoliberal” was apparently coined by ordo-liberals in Germany after 1945 to refer to the social market. Over their objections, Hayek resignified it to mean a promarket, minimalist state vision for capitalism, seeking (inaccurately) to represent Lockean private property liberalism and neoliberalism as proper or “classical” liberalism (Ebenstein, 2001; Friedrich, 1955; Gray, 2000).
2. Liberalism and neoliberalism and their geographies are famously slippery. Liberalism varies from Lockean private property liberalism, to progressive liberalism, to alternatives celebrating the freedom to pursue multiple ways of life. Thus, neoliberalism is not the natural heir of liberal principles, and liberalism is not a universal set of ideas and norms (Gray, 2000). Beyond Europe, liberalism became the imperial norm against which those colonized could be constructed as backward and incomplete. Within Europe, others challenge the secular and progressive narratives associated with Enlightenment thought.
3. Hayek, though laughed out of British economics in the 1930s, went on to win the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1974, counterbalancing the award offered to progressive Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal. More than 25% of subsequent awardees have taught at or held a doctorate from the University of Chicago.
4. The term “direct action” includes a vast array of activist tactics, including mass protests, street theater, strategic pranks, adversary visits, website jamming, etc. Here we focus on mass protests, but see below on how direct action may be used in combination with other activist practices.
5. Peck and Tickell (2002: 38) identify two phases of neoliberalization: roll-back neoliberalization, characterized by the “destruction and discreditation of Keynesian-welfarist and social-collectivist institutions”; and roll-out neoliberalization, characterized by “neoliberalized economic management and authoritarian state forms.”

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Conceptualizing Neoliberalism, Thinking Thatcherism

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GROUNDING NEOLIBERALISM

In this chapter, we prepare some of the groundwork for thinking about the relationship between neoliberalism and contestation by looking closely at the (or a) “nature of the beast.” More than an academic exercise, there are significant lessons from history (and geography) in stories of the ascendancy of neoliberalism, which we argue was politically produced in (and across) a range of “local” settings before it acquired a more diffuse ideological form in synthesis with multiple sources of state and social power. We later illustrate some of these arguments by drawing on a case study of one of the foundational moments of neoliberalism the rise of the London think tanks and their interdigitation with the nascent project of Thatcherism. We do this not as part of some spurious effort to define the birthplace of neoliberalism, but to call attention to some of its “domestic” characteristics—as an elite intellectual project (increasingly) closely intertwined not only with state power but also with some of the key circuits of financialized capitalism; as a makeshift family of practices and policies held together by “strong discourses” of market rationality and competitive progress; as a relatively opportunistic ideology, powerfully shaped by both the crises it purports to resolve and by the (de)regulatory dilemmas generated by its own failures, limits, and contradictions.

This, then, is not the neoliberalism of the flat-earth globalization school, some new “reality” toward which every earthly polity must inexorably tend (see Friedman, 2005). Neither is this neoliberalism the functional outcome of the logic of an integrating global market, or for that matter unfettered corporate power, even though in many contemporary accounts it is afforded just such “atmospheric” qualities. It may well be true that neoliberalism’s market nostrums have achieved a form of intellectual dominance, if not hegemony, but this does not mean that its attendant project has correspondingly attained the status of socioeconomic sustainability or political invincibility. There is also a need to move beyond conceptions of the contestation of neoliberalism that draw implicitly on the David-and-Goliath imagery of local civil society *versus* corporate globalism, even if such metaphors do usefully highlight nontrivial asymmetries of power. Just as there is growing recognition that neoliberalism is anything but a hermetically sealed monolithic structure (Larner, 2003; Peck, 2004), so it must also be acknowledged that there are few clean dividing lines between this project and its “others.” After all, neoliberalism itself emerged through, and has been substantially shaped by, contestation, with Keynesian economists, public-sector workers, antiprivatization campaigners, and traditional and social-democratic conservative politicians, among others. Its subsequent mutations seem to have blurred these lines even further—witness, for example, the vigorous debates around the alleged cooptation of pragmatic labor unions, World Bank-funded NGOs, or community-based service providers. This also means that the terrain of politics has been remade in complex ways during the course of the neoliberal ascendancy, with implications not only for oppositional movements but also for competing currents within conservative politics, such as neoconservative militarism or compassionate conservatism. Just as contestation is not unproblematically “exterior” to neoliberalism, so neoliberalism itself is a multifaceted hybrid, more Hydra than Goliath.

In part a deliberate counterpoint to some of the other chapters in this volume, this chapter delves deeply into the neoliberal project itself. Its objective is not to anoint more or less promising forms of anti-neoliberal politics but to focus on some of the salient features of the neoliberal ascendancy, in a way to hold up a mirror to the explorations of contentious politics that follow. As such, it pursues the argument that conceptions of neoliberalism matter and that they matter politically too. More specifically, we respond to Larner’s (2003: 510) call for more clearly specified analytical treatments of the contingent character of neoliberal projects, including “a more careful tracing of the intellectual, policy, and practitioner networks that underpin the global expansion of neoliberal ideas, and their subsequent manifestation in government policies and programmes.” Taking a step in this direction, this chapter comprises two parts: first, we elaborate a

conception of neoliberalization as a socially produced, historically and geographically specific, crisis-driven, conjunctural, and definitionally incomplete phenomenon; and second, we shed some light on a specific but suggestive aspect of this wider process of neoliberalization—the particular role of neoliberalism’s “organic intellectuals” in shaping and sustaining the Thatcherite project. Thus, an objective of the chapter is to bring neoliberalism to earth, to draw attention to some of the ways in which neoliberalism was, and remains, a grounded, politically constructed project, with deep roots in (some) local political economies, notwithstanding the compellingly *transnational* nature of many of its characteristics and connections.

THEORIZING NEOLIBERALISM

Neoliberalism is a distinctive political–economic philosophy that took meaningful shape for the first time during the 1970s, dedicated to the extension of market (and market-like) forms of governance, rule, and control across—tendentially at least—all spheres of social life. A decisive (and here, defining) moment in the historical evolution of neoliberalization occurred with the capture of state power, most vividly with the 1973 coup in Chile and the ascendancy of the so-called Chicago boys (economists under Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago), but more significantly with the ground-shifting elections of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States. In their various ways, these vanguard regimes took momentous steps to construct, in the name of economic liberalization, a capital-centric order in which the impediments to accelerated finance-oriented accumulation were minimized or removed. This meant that the early stages of the neoliberal program were characterized by acts of institutional reaction and political repression. In the United Kingdom, for example, the restoration of a unilateral “right to manage” presupposed the effective decapitation of the labor movement; the maintenance of a high interest-rate policy induced a painful shakeout of domestic manufacturing capacity; the shift to market-oriented economic policies called for the abolition of corporatist institutions; enlarging the scope of competitive forces necessitated the privatization of nationalized industries together with the deregulation of other sectors; the extension of financial markets entailed the transformation and internationalization of the City of London (the so-called Big Bang of 1987); and intensifying competitive relations in the labor market were predicated on the sustained erosion of social entitlements and workplace protections. In Thatcherite discourse, these efforts were part of the wider program of “rolling back the frontiers of the state” in order to enlarge the space for private enterprise, competition, and individual liberty.

Neoliberal politicians developed a new repertoire of governmental

practices, including privatization, selective “deregulation,” contracting out, and so forth, the aggregate purpose and cumulative effect of which was not, of course, to roll back the state *in general* but to roll back (and restructure) a *particular kind* of state. In most of the advanced capitalist countries, this entailed a sustained onslaught against various national and local forms of the Keynesian welfare state. As Mrs. Thatcher once rather more pointedly put it, “We have done more to roll back the frontiers of socialism than any previous Conservative Government.”¹ So, while the utopian rhetoric of neoliberalism is focused on the liberation of competitive markets and individual freedoms, the reality of neoliberal programs is that they are typically defined by the tasks of dismantling those alien state and social forms that constituted their political inheritance.

The Keynesian consensus of the post-World War II period was, in retrospect, a broad and variegated one, the Bretton Woods framework at the international level sustaining a variety of “national Keynesianisms,” including advanced welfare states and corporatist negotiation in northern Europe, import-substituting industrialization in Latin America, and a comparatively liberal settlement in the United States (see Tickell & Peck, 1992). Given that the initial impetus for the neoliberal counterrevolution came from the critique, and subsequent partial dismantlement, of these regimes, it follows that the emergent geographies of neoliberalism were no less differentiated. Even though the various neoliberal transformations that have taken place in the past three decades reveal many commonalities—such as an underlying ideological faith in the market, a performative deference to international economic circumstances and constraints, and the widespread adoption of governmental techniques like privatization and monetary restraint—they all necessarily bear the strong imprint of national and local political histories, institutional contexts, and cultural frames of reference. Fourcade-Gourinchas and Babb (2002: 573) conclude their comparative analysis of Britain, Chile, Mexico, and France, for example, by arguing that

While four very different countries all underwent a neoliberal transition as global conditions changed and they faced a series of sometimes dramatic balance of payments crises, they came into the new environment with strikingly different institutional and cognitive legacies. The legitimacy of the market was constructed through the interplay between national and international dynamics. . . . The rebirth of the liberal creed certainly was a normative process, but it was not “normal” in any way. If policy elites in Chile, Britain, Mexico, and France, all acted out of a common belief that they had to make their economies more market and free-trade oriented, their understanding of why abiding by this “norm” was warranted and how the norm should be implemented varied considerably across nations.

Changes in material conditions shaped but again clearly did not (pre)determine these political transformations. In the post-Bretton Woods era, the “weight” of international financial activity has increased significantly, as have the reach and resources of transnational corporations, both of which have contributed to a significant “real” exteriorization of economic flows and capacities, from the perspective of the national state (see Dicken, 2003). To be certain, the strength of the ensuing policy imperative is routinely and effectively exploited by neoliberal politicians, whose interests—in tight money, low taxes, balanced budgets, and low inflation—substantially overlap with those of the international financial community. (As Mrs. Thatcher was fond of saying, “You can’t buck the market!”) While Keynesian politics were typically interiorized, focused on the regulatory needs of national economies and attuned to domestic constituencies, neoliberal politics tend to be more exteriorized, in terms both of their orientation to a globalizing and financializing economy and of their deference to offshore policy audiences. And the rupture between these two economic rationalities was marked by the effective exhaustion, from the 1970s, of the capacity of Keynesian systems to contain the costs and consequences of rising inflation, falling profits and productivity, and growing social expenditures. Neoliberalism was birthed in these conditions of macroeconomic instability and institutional crisis, its central narrative of market deference representing both an accommodation to and a rationalization of a new set of economic “realities.”

Far from providing a functional(ist) resolution to these crisis conditions, early-stage or “roll-back” neoliberalism was very much a creature of the crisis (Peck & Tickell, 1994, 2002). With significant and enduring consequences, its favored strategies heaped the burden of economic adjustment on the working class, the unwaged, the social state, and (even) on domestic manufacturing capital, while failing to initiate generalized and sustainable economic development. The style of neoliberal politicians, particularly under such crisis conditions, has been aptly characterized as “necessitarian” (Munck, 2003). On the face of it, hard choices called for decisive actions from conviction-driven politicians. But the barely concealed *reality* of “actually existing” neoliberal restructuring programs is that they were always pragmatic and opportunistic, that they involved muddling through and experimentation, that the targets for urgent “reform” were selectively identified, and that reform imperatives were translated in contextually specific ways (Brenner, Peck, & Theodore, 2005). Neoliberalism was not implemented by some *deus ex machina*, coherent, complete, comprehensively conceptualized, and ready to go. Its central precepts, policy priorities, and preferred strategies may well have been hashed out in such diverse settings as the University of Chicago’s economics department, meetings of the Mont Pelerin Society, the editorial pages of *The Economist* and the *Wall Street*

Journal, and in countless think tank reports, but these evolved dramatically, and often in unanticipated ways, when neoliberals gained (state) power. Early experiments with strict monetarist economics, for example, which had been a cornerstone of neoliberal thinking in the 1970s, largely failed, being superseded by a more flexible and pragmatic commitment to low inflation and public-expenditure restraint by the mid-1980s (Wilks, 1997). Documents like the 1979 Conservative manifesto in the United Kingdom certainly have their programmatic elements, but the dominant motifs were as much those of *restoration*—of stability, common sense, fairness—as they were of radical transformation (see Figure 2.1). Meanwhile the commitment to privatization, from a party that would later pioneer the practice, was tepid in both the 1979 and 1983 manifestos (see Brittan, 1984; Feigenbaum, Henig, & Hammnet, 1998).

The politics of this kind of roll-back neoliberalism may have been transformative, but in so many ways they were also incrementalist and pragmatic, consumed as they were by the challenge of dismantling vulnerable elements of the extant Keynesian-welfare settlement, while maintaining both credibility and consent. In this sense, neoliberalism is revealed as more of a *restructuring strategy* than an alternative governing ideology (Brenner et al., 2005). This was reflected in the character of actually existing neoliberalisms at the time, in which neoliberal impulses were variously interleaved with, subsumed under, and blended with a range of “late-Keynesian” state formations. In this respect, roll-out neoliberalism coexisted in an unhappy marriage with its antecedent others, as a kind of unsettled hybrid.

The subsequent metastasization of neoliberalism, during the 1990s and beyond, may have deepened the commonalities and connections between various (local and national) neoliberal projects, but it certainly has not produced a simple convergence toward a singular neoliberal norm. Rather, the topographical complexity of the neoliberalized landscape has become, if anything, more pronounced. Neoliberal impulses and imperatives have become increasingly widespread and, in many contexts, normalized. But everywhere they are enmeshed, blended, and imbricated with other forms of governance; nowhere does neoliberalism exist in “pure” form, since the contradictory project of market making is necessarily dependent on auxiliary and “external” sources of support and regulation (Peck, 2004). The neoliberal conceit is that state withdrawal is a necessary and sufficient precursor to the (re)animation of markets, which are seen to be spontaneous and naturally occurring phenomena. In reality, deregulation and privatization led to many and varied outcomes, equilibrating markets being perhaps the rarest; state-sanctioned monopoly or various forms of regulated competition were more typical. No matter what it says on the bottle, neoliberalization rarely involves unilateral acts of state withdrawal.

Foreword

For me, the heart of politics is not political theory, it is people and how they want to live their lives.

No one who has lived in this country during the last five years can fail to be aware of how the balance of our society has been increasingly tilted in favour of the State at the expense of individual freedom.

This election may be the last chance we have to reverse that process, to restore the balance of power in favour of the people. It is therefore the most crucial election since the war.

Together with the threat to freedom there has been a feeling of helplessness, that we are a once great nation that has somehow fallen behind and that it is too late now to turn things round.

I don't accept that. I believe we not only can, we must. This manifesto points the way.

It contains no magic formula or lavish promises. It is not a recipe for an easy or a perfect life. But it sets out a broad framework for the recovery of our country, based not on dogma, but on reason, on common sense, above all on the liberty of the people under the law.

The things we have in common as a nation far outnumber those that set us apart.

It is in that spirit that I commend to you this manifesto.

Margaret Thatcher

Our Five Tasks

[T]oday, this country is faced with its most serious problems since the Second World War. What has happened to our country, to the values we used to share, to the success and prosperity we once took for granted?

During the industrial strife of last winter, confidence, self-respect, common sense, and even our sense of common humanity were shaken. At times this society seemed on the brink of disintegration. . . .

It is not just that Labour have governed Britain badly. They have reached a dead-end. The very nature of their Party now prevents them from governing successfully in a free society and mixed economy. . . .

Our country's relative decline is not inevitable. We in the Conservative Party think we can reverse it, *not* because we think we have all the answers but because we think we have the one answer that matters most. We want to work *with the grain* of human nature, helping people to help themselves—and others. This is the way to restore that self-reliance and self-confidence which are the basis of personal responsibility and national success. . . .

Our five tasks are:

1. To restore the health of our economic and social life, by controlling inflation and striking a fair balance between the rights and duties of the trade union movement.
2. To restore incentives so that hard work pays, success is rewarded and genuine new jobs are created in an expanding economy.
3. To uphold Parliament and the rule of law.
4. To support family life, by helping people to become home-owners, raising the standards of their children's education, and concentrating welfare services on the effective support of the old, the sick, the disabled and those who are in real need.
5. To strengthen Britain's defences and work with our allies to protect our interests in an increasingly threatening world.

This is the strategy of the next Conservative government.

FIGURE 2.1. Extracts from the British Conservative Party's General Election Manifesto, 1979. From www.conservative-party.net/manifestos/1979/.

In this sense, at least, neoliberalism shares a great deal with its 19th-century forebear, *laissez-faire*.

There was nothing natural about *laissez-faire*; free markets could never have come into being by merely allowing things to take their course. Just as cotton manufacturers—the leading free trade industry—were created by the help of protective tariffs, export bounties, and indirect wage subsidies, *laissez-faire* was enforced by the state. . . . [E]ven those who wished most ardently to free the state from all unnecessary duties, and whose whole philosophy demanded the restriction of state activities, could not but entrust the state with the new powers, organs and instruments required for the establishment of *laissez-faire*. (Polanyi, 1944: 139–141)

The ultimate paradox of 19th-century liberalism, for Polanyi, was that the rhetoric of liberty, free markets, and minimalist state intervention was awkwardly accompanied not only by an “enormous increase in continuous, centrally organized and controlled intervention” but further engendered a spontaneous countermovement toward containment and social protection: “*Laissez-faire* was planned; planning was not” (1944: 140, 141).

The neoliberal ascendancy of the past three decades has also been associated with a series of paradoxical and contradictory “double movements.” Projects like privatization, devolution, deunionization, and deregulation involved significant *extensions* of state power, together with the construction of new bureaucracies and modalities of government; “restructured” services, perhaps most notably welfare, have often proved no less expensive to run, while licensing new and often invasive forms of regulation; programs of liberalization, for example in the labor market, have given rise to new (or intensified) problems of government (such as contingent employment, insecurity, and endemic low pay) and new state responses (like mass incarceration and tax-credit regimes), while triggering new forms of oppositional politics partly predicated on the remade terrain (for example, living-wage campaigns, service sector unionization drives). Only rhetorically does neoliberalism mean “less state;” in reality, it entails a thoroughgoing *reorganization* of governmental systems and state–economy relations. Tendentially, and more and more evidently as neoliberalism has been extended and deepened, this program involves the *roll-out* of new state forms, new modes of regulation, new regimes of governance, with the aim of consolidating and managing both marketization and its consequences. As a market-building project, then, neoliberalization involves the simultaneous and iterative roll-back of institutional and social forms (especially those associated with Keynesianism) together with the roll-out of restructured institutional and state forms. Summarized in Table 2.1, these interconnected moments of the neoliberalization process define it as a *de-structively creative* social order.

TABLE 2.1. Roll-Back and Roll-Out Neoliberalization: Stylized Features

	<i>Roll-back neoliberalization</i> ... the destructive and deregulatory moment	<i>Roll-out neoliberalization</i> ... the creative and re-regulatory moment
Mode of intervention	State withdrawal	Governance
Market regulation	"Deregulation"	Experimental re-regulation
Political style	Ideological conviction	Pragmatic learning
Change agents	Vanguardist politicians	Technopols
Ideological program	Explicitly programmatic	Institutionally embedded
Front line	Economic policy	Social and penal policy
Taxation	Selective givebacks	Systemic regression
Monetary policy	"Cold-bath" monetarism	Prudence
Public expenditure	Cuts	Fiscal responsibility
Labor-market regime	Mass unemployment	Full employability
Employment relations	Deunionization	Flexibility
Social policy	Retrenchment	Workfare
Financial regulation	Liberalization	Standards and codes
Development ethos	Structural adjustment	Social capital

Among other things, this makes delimiting and defining neoliberalism perplexingly difficult, just as there is rarely a clear dividing line between the project and its "others." If liberalism was substantially defined by its antipathy to mercantilism, neoliberalism is substantially defined by its antipathy to Keynesianism (Peet et al., 2003). If the project of neoliberalization has been sustained, and its contradictions managed, by the selective incorporation of various "flanking mechanisms" like community governance, social capital, and the social economy (Jessop, 2002), then there is a sense in which these "outsides" of neoliberalism are inescapably on the "inside," that neoliberalization is partly constituted by and through its "others." Like the idealized market to which it pays homage, neoliberalism cannot stand alone. As a *restructuring ethos*, it is inevitably grafted onto other state forms and social formations.

These conditions might give license, of course, to sprawling and ill-disciplined conceptions of neoliberalism, just as they might induce others to question the utility of neoliberalism as an analytical construction. It is a methodological fact of life, however, that neoliberalism *only* exists in such hybrid "messy" forms, that its (temporal and spatial) edges are always blurred, and that its essence and purpose are routinely misrepresented. An appropriate response, we would argue, involves two steps: First, the necessary, tendential, and recurrent features of neoliberalization must be identified through abstraction; and, second, this process should be informed by concrete research on the projects and programs of actually existing neoliberalism in its multifarious guises. In terms of the first of these steps, suffice it to say that

neoliberalization is a destructively creative process, involving the extensive restructuring of institutional forms in the service of the contradictory objective of marketization. This is also a historically specific process, the dissolution of (largely Keynesian) state and social forms being accompanied by the roll-out of new rounds of institutional and discursive practice. So, neoliberalism is an evolving, dynamic, and productive order, one that was initially consumed by the task of dismantling and deregulating its Keynesian predecessor, but which is increasingly absorbed by the challenge of managing the contradictions of state-assisted marketization itself.

While the real abstraction of neoliberalism is associated with a number of tendential features (such as an orientation to financial over productive capital, to profit restoration over demand maintenance, to market distribution over social redistribution), these are unevenly and contingently realized in *particular* neoliberal formations. Concretely, no two pathways toward neoliberalization are the same; neither should they be understood as variants of some ostensibly paradigmatic transition like Thatcherism. Moreover, there should be no expectation of convergence on a standardized neoliberal “norm.” The topography of neoliberalization is always shifting. The points on this landscape that constitute “cases” are no more or less than historically and geographically specific conjunctures in which neoliberal features necessarily and inescapably coexist with other state and social forms. But this does not mean that the topography is random or formless. Rather, it is deeply structured by geopolitical relations, such that there are identifiable command centers, zones of experimentation, annexes, sites of concerted resistance, outposts, and relay stations. One such prominent marker on the map of neoliberalization, to which our attention now turns, is London—a city with a distinctive role in shaping the ideological topography of the market revolution.

THINKING NEOLIBERALISM

Gramsci argued that every class has its own “organic intellectuals,” the functions of which include organizing and systematizing the knowledge, aspirations, and objectives of the social formation of which they are part. This intellectual strata may be organized in various ways—for example, drawing on the clergy, or universities, or the labor movement—but in this institutionally variegated sense tends to play a particularly important role in directing and mediating social forces during periods of turbulence and contestation.

One of the most important characteristics of any social group that is developing towards dominance is its struggle to assimilate and conquer “ideo-

logically” the traditional intellectuals, but this assimilation and conquest is made quicker and more efficacious the more the group in question succeeds in simultaneously elaborating its own intellectuals. . . . [T]he elaboration of intellectual strata in concrete reality does not take place on the terrain of abstract democracy but in accordance with very concrete traditional historical processes [while] varying . . . over the “economic” territory. (Gramsci, 1971: 10, 11)

The neoliberal ascendancy has been particularly distinctive in these respects, not least because it was to spawn its own unique institutional-intellectual form—the think tank. A handful of conservative and pro-market think tanks, organizations dedicated to the development and dissemination of new policy knowledges, had been in operation since 1940s and 1950s, principally in Britain and the United States, though both their number and their political influence mushroomed after the mid-1970s. Most accounts of the market counterrevolution since the 1970s accord a significant role to think tanks (Béland & Waddan, 2000; Cockett, 1994; Denham & Garnett, 1999; Mickelthwaite & Wooldridge, 2004; Smith, 1991; Yergin & Stanislaw, 1998). This is not to suggest that the neoliberal ascendancy can be reduced to the flawless execution of some prescient (if not predestined) intellectual blueprint. Rather, the history of free-market think tanks reveals the inescapably socioinstitutional, deliberative, and iterative nature of the market revolution—the challenge of translating foundational ideas into circulating policy knowledges, fit for governmental practice; the need for sociospatial proximity to key political decision makers, indeed, somewhat paradoxically, to the state; the significance of a favorable political-economic and institutional context for the effective diffusion of market ideas; and the importance of perpetually refining policy rationales, priorities, and practices in the light of experience, of “learning by doing.” Finally, and echoing the way in which Gramsci talked about the marked urbanization of the intellectual stratum during the age of industrialization, the spatial traces of the neoliberal ascendancy reflect the nodes and networks of an increasingly financialized and transnationalized economy.

The genealogy of neoliberalism can and should be traced along multiple political, institutional, and economic pathways, many of which were transnational in origin from the outset. One of the better documented of these concerns the training of the Latin American economists under Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s (many of whom were funded by an exchange program with the Catholic University in Santiago), who went on to engineer a monetarist revolution in Chile after the 1973 coup (see Valdez, 1995; Dezalay & Garth, 2000). Less well known but no less significant was the chain of events that followed an encounter between F. A. Hayek and a recently demobilized Royal Air Force

pilot, Antony Fisher, at the London School of Economics in 1945. Impressed by Hayek's paean to market liberalism, *The Road to Serfdom*, Fisher was moved to seek advice from the author on how he might play a role in the struggle against socialism and totalitarianism. The meeting reportedly established the direction of the young man's life, Hayek advising against the pursuit of elected office as a "waste of time"; the world would really be changed, he insisted, by "second-hand dealers in ideas" capable of translating philosophical principles into workable policies (Frost, 2002: 39–40). Hayek was convinced that if he and his fellow intellectual outcasts were to gain any traction, they had to learn from the formative role of the Fabians in the transition to socialism: The precursor to this transition was a *prior* change in the (elite) intellectual climate, *after which* socialism mutated into a popular working-class movement. The subsequent rise of socialist states then institutionalized forms of collectivist/interventionist expertise, compartmentalizing policy knowledge and enabling a new class of technocrats to derive rents from their specialist know-how of particular fields of governmental activity (Hayek, 1944/1998). Lacking this specialist knowledge, advocates of market solutions were often at a tactical disadvantage to their socialist–technocrat interlocutors. Countering the rising tide of collectivism would therefore require concerted intellectual and institutional effort, since the task was no less ambitious than producing new kinds of politically efficacious expertise.

Inadvertently channeling Polanyi, perhaps, Hayek's conviction was that the death of planning would have to be planned, his own contribution to which was the formation of the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947 as "a kind of dispersed worldwide academy of uncompromising liberal scholars . . . a mobile, almost phantom academy" (Harris, 1997: 24). Antony Fisher's enduring contribution to this plan was the establishment of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in 1955 with a fortune made through the application of Fordist principles to the farming of chickens. Frustrated, apparently, by the IEA's failure to break through to the mainstream British politics in the 1960s, Fisher subsequently redirected his energies to North America, playing a germinal role in establishing the Fraser Institute in Vancouver (in 1974), the Manhattan Institute (in 1977), the National Center for Policy Analysis in Dallas (in 1983), and the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, in Washington, DC (in 1981), the latter with a mission to propagate free-market think tanks throughout the world. While Fisher later lost his fortune in an ill-advised turtle-farming venture, his influence on the Thatcher governments (through the IEA) and on the status of free-market ideas in dozens of countries around the world (via Atlas) is difficult to overestimate (see Smith, 1991; Cockett, 1994). Oliver Letwin, a British Conservative member of Parliament, certainly succeeded in coming very close, however, when he argued in the London *Times* that "without Fisher, no IEA; without

the IEA and its clones, no Thatcher and quite possibly no Reagan; without Reagan, no Star Wars; without Star Wars, no economic collapse of the Soviet Union. Quite a chain of consequences for a chicken farmer!" (quoted in Frost, 2002: xviii).

While this linear interpretation may have a certain appeal, it does not come close to capturing the complex processes by which elite opinion, political rationalities, and policy parameters were gradually transformed. While free-market think tanks frequently pay homage to the "power of ideas," celebrating Hayek's insistence on the courage of utopian conviction, at the same time they are ultimately more concerned with securing policy outcomes than merely winning arguments. While acknowledging the importance of deftly (re)articulating fundamental principles, the director of the London-based Adam Smith Institute places equal emphasis on practice: "The policy-makers who give effect to free market ideas resemble engineers more than they do second-hand dealers. They have to devise the policy machines which put those good ideas to use."²

This has been a long-term process. The IEA had been active for almost two decades, but continually outside the policy mainstream, when it was finally joined by the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) in 1974. If the IEA had "a large claim to be the inventor of 'Thatcherism' " (Young, 1990: 86), the CPS was the organization that carried this philosophy to the heart of the Conservative Party. Under the leadership of Keith Joseph and Margaret Thatcher, the CPS articulated more doctrinaire interpretations of conservative thought and strategy than the mainstream of the party at the time, generating tensions with the leadership. The first director of the CPS, Alfred Sherman, would be one of the Thatcher's most important intellectual mentors during her rise to power, his contempt for Edward Heath and the pragmatic orientation of the postwar conservatism being no less defining that his loathing for socialism. Prior to this time, Thatcher's explicit commitment to free-market thinking had been somewhat "episodic"—she was "remembered as only an occasional visitor" to the IEA in the 1960s (Young, 1990: 86)—but it would harden considerably during the politically turbulent 1970s. At last, political and economic conditions were propitious: Solutions to stagflation seemed beyond the Keynesian repertoire, pay and price controls were visibly failing, and frustration with business-as-usual responses was building.

The challenge was to construct a political narrative that presented a compelling way out of the crisis. This was the protoneoliberals' moment. Selected as leader in 1975, in the wake of Heath's general election defeat, Thatcher incrementally developed the intellectual foundations of Thatcherism during her 4 years in opposition. Here, she found allies as much outside the party as within. Significant in this respect was the establishment of the Adam Smith Institute (ASI). ASI had been formed in the United States

before relocating to London in 1979—drawing on many of the same trans-Atlantic affinities and connections that Fisher had first exploited. (Stuart Butler, who with his brother Eammon and collaborator Madsen Pirie established ASI, is currently Vice President of the Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC.) ASI emulated Heritage's *Mandate for Leadership* policy prospectus (widely acknowledged as the blueprint for the Reagan administration's program) in its Omega Project, which focused on making policy proposals "as practicable as possible" for the Thatcher government (Cockett, 1994: 305). Subsequently styling itself as a "do tank," ASI would develop (and commercialize) expertise in the delivery of privatization and contracting-out programs and in the establishment of "internal markets" in state bureaucracies. Another "Fisher think tank," the Social Affairs Unit (SAU), was created in 1980 with a promise to do for sociology what the IEA had done for economics (Frost, 2002: 153), completing an influential triumvirate of independent think tanks that worked alongside the party-aligned CPS. Under this influence, the Conservative Party largely shed its historical image as the "stupid party." Desai (1994) argues that the think tanks played a crucial role in organizing and articulating this ascendant project of the "theoretical Right," proselytizing and disseminating its policy positions and elaborating their (shared) rationale:

[The Thatcherite think tanks] were not intellectual originators but served to collect, distill and preserve certain strands of ideas and to diffuse them more widely, not least as detailed interventions in current policy debates. They operated in a common environment, a distinct sub-universe which was not only geographically close to, but also had close links with, the political, journalistic and financial worlds of London, being located within the two or three square miles that contain Westminster, Whitehall, the City, and Fleet Street. . . . It was a world in which market theories, libertarianism, anti-communism and, more often than not, right-wing authoritarianism, all dwelt together. Its intellectuals, journalists, politicians, civil servants, committed businessmen, and "young Turks" jostled in the prevailing air of evangelical proselytising zeal, self-righteousness and (by the mid-eighties) euphoria. (Desai, 1994: 31–32)

Thatcher herself never failed to acknowledge the work of the IEA and the CPS. In the summer of 1979, she would say to Fisher (whom she would later put forward for a knighthood): "You created the atmosphere which made our victory possible" (quoted in Blundell, 2003: 42).

The London think tanks were focused on the task of transforming *elite* opinion rather than public sentiment, which in turn called for a distinctive "locational" strategy—in close sociospatial proximity to the (highly centralized) British state and at the interstices of the principal circuits of economic knowledge in the city, which linked the financial community, the

broadsheet press, and the financial media. As a well-placed figure in the think tank movement recalled:

The idea was to influence policy directly. . . . We did a survey in about 1980 of who was “on market.” We identified 660 candidates. A pity it wasn’t 666—I could have lived with that number! But these were, you know, influential backbench committee chairmen and staff, obviously ministers, civil servants, . . . political editors, commentators, resident writers, and so on. The whole lot came to 660 and that was our total market.³

The arguments for monetarism, for example, which was to become de facto Treasury policy in the early 1980s, were pressed nowhere more forcefully than by Samuel Brittan of the *Financial Times* and City of London analyst Gordon Pepper (see Brittan, 1988; Pepper, 1998), with unstinting support from the editorial pages of the *Economist*, *The Times*, and the *Daily Telegraph*. Various fed and recirculated by the think tanks, these efforts were “crucial to the transformation in the intellectual climate” by the late 1970s (Cockett, 1994: 188). It has long been recognized that the City of London’s dense and reflexive networks of financial expertise have been critical in sustaining its role as a command center, as a space of innovation, and as a site of narrative authority in the internationalizing financial system (Thrift, 1994). The ideological project of neoliberalism—which more than coincidentally tends to favor externally oriented and financialized capital—drew upon and extended many of these same cosmopolitan networks, combining them in a tightly bound circuit of metropolitan elites.

While the think tanks were located within a few minutes’ walk of Downing Street, the Treasury, and the Bank of England, the economic philosophies that they were circulating were certainly not of local origin; they were largely *imports*, from the United States and, ultimately, from Austria. Although the northern British city of Manchester can lay claim to be the home of liberal free-trade economics (aka *Manchesterism*) as a practical discourse (see Sheppard, 2005), the “neoliberal theories of the British New Right, pre-eminently those of Hayek, Friedman and the Virginia Public Choice School, in their contemporary forms at least, were imports” (Desai, 1994: 41). The IEA and the ASI, in particular, played a key role in *translating* these offshore theoretical languages into digestible domestic policy practices, in so doing deliberately stretching the envelope of the politically feasible. The logical coherence of these “alien” nostrums contributed to the distinctive narrative force of the British strand of neoliberalism, which mutated into Thatcherism in fusion with the no less distinctive, uncompromising political style of Thatcher herself (see Jessop, Bonnett, Bromley, & Ling, 1988). In this respect, Thatcherism represented a radical break both with previous strands of conservative thought in the country and with the faltering Keynesian consensus (see Hall, 1993).

Paradoxically, the radical nature of this rupture etched certain historical continuities onto the British variant of neoliberalism, since the political and institutional legacies of the country's social contract established both the terrain and the impetus for the Thatcherite onslaught, structuring its subsequent politics in a significant and ongoing fashion. The control of inflation was quickly established as the fundamental macroeconomic objective, even if the costs included deep recession and mass unemployment, a move straight from the monetarist playbook. This represented an effective inversion of the Keynesian practice of reflation through public expenditure, though one rendered fortuitously practical by the massive revenue streams from North Sea oil and from an (opportunistically) expanded program of privatizations (Jessop et al., 1988; Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002). The advent of mass unemployment, however, drew the Conservatives into extensive labor-market programming, against their instincts, which increased public expenditure pressures while "delaying" systemic welfare reform (Peck, 2001). The neoliberal job-market offensive was instead focused on an escalating series of battles with labor unions in nationalized industries and the public sector, a costly campaign for which the Conservatives claimed an electoral mandate.

The intellectual rationales for this broad-ranging and shifting policy offensive came not from the universities—where, if anything, the climate of opinion was hostile—but from the think tanks, often in close association with a tight circle of "on-market" policy activists inside government. One of Thatcher's organizational innovations, from which Tony Blair would later learn, was the creation of the No. 10 Policy Unit, a critical interface between the Prime Minister's Office and the think tank community. As one of the leading protagonists recalled, Margaret Thatcher

. . . in effect privatized the policy-making process. She took a trolley around the CPS, the IEA, the Adam Smith Institute, and others, and put packets in her basket. [She then] decided which ones to do and which ones not to do. She disenfranchised the [pre-existing policy networks] because, previously, policy had been made within departments by the senior civil servants. . . . It gave her access to a much wider range of intellectual background.⁴

This implied some opening up of the policy "market," as the various products of the think tanks—pamphlets, reports, policy briefs, occasionally books—were purposely circulated through the public sphere in order to generate conversation across different segments of the policy community, and in the press. These were not "backstairs" briefings:

Thatcher liked our stuff, but . . . we didn't go in for private meetings in Downing Street. We did all our stuff publicly, in the public domain. We published, we sent the stuff out, had it raised in Parliament. . . . If you do it to a

minister behind a curtain, to quote that lovely historical phrase, and the minister stands up and introduces the policy, people think, "He's gone mad! What is this strange view of things?" If you do it in public over weeks, people are prepared for it—journalists and whatever. By the time the minister gets around to the idea, it's already familiar. He's won part of the battle of public acceptance. . . . It's better to do it through the public domain.⁵

Characterized by the one interviewee as the "nutcracker" approach, the free-market think tanks would utilize a range of "insider" and "outsider" strategies to press their issues and positions, including briefings for well-placed journalists, lobbying of key advisors, conventional press launches, and placing parliamentary questions, often through members of the No Turning Back group of radical Conservative backbenchers. The style was vanguardist, always extending the zone of feasible intervention, emboldening ministers. As a think tank director explained, "We were all outriders; we were the motorcycles grouped in front of the official car."⁶

The positioning of the free-market think tanks "in front" of a reforming government both reflected and helped define the neoliberal project in Britain during the 1980s. They purposefully shaped the "maximum agenda" for the Thatcherite project (Desai, 1994: 35), including many policy proposals that for one reason or another were deemed impractical or impolitic. The prosaic processes of government were consequently acted out against an ideologically defined universe of favored policies, all of which were sutured, in one way or another, to the evolving free-market agenda. In a Gramscian sense, the organic function of the think tanks was to *organize*, extend, and give direction to the inchoate elements of the Thatcherite program in a manner that called for "active participation in practical life, as constructor, organiser, 'permanent persuader' and not just a simple orator" (Gramsci, 1971: 10). And these, as Gramsci also emphasized, are always historically situated endeavors predicated on a certain institutional terrain. In after-Fordist Britain, the task of envisioning Thatcherite futures was inescapably and dialectically conjoined with a critically reconstructive narration of what was a very British Keynesian crisis.

Particular constructions of the crisis effectively foreshadowed, for the Thatcherite think tanks, immanent solutions. So the abuse of union power set the scene for a program of restrictive industrial relations legislation; the scourge of inflation was to be tackled by restraining the money supply, social welfare spending, and working-class wages, mass unemployment being a "price worth paying"; the permissiveness of the benefits regime was to be reined in by eligibility restrictions and work-enforcing measures; failures of public bureaucracy became a portable rationale for contracting out, privatization of nationalized industries, the creation of internal markets, the imposition of private sector management systems, and so forth. These acts of ideological and institutional "reconstruction" are, in Gramsci's terms,

“already under way in the very moment of destruction” (1971: 168). Or, as Stuart Hall (1988) put it: “What the ‘Thatcher revolution’ suggests is that good ideas [or] ‘Big Themes’ don’t fall off the shelf without an ideological framework to give those ideas coherence . . . a perspective on what is happening to society now, a vision of the future, a capacity to articulate these vividly through a few clearly-enunciated these or principles, a new conception. In short, a political strategy” (p. 271).

The think tanks were not, of course, the only authors of this strategy, but they were certainly among its principal institutional interlocutors, helping as they did to translate and mediate an elite narrative of neoliberal transformation—with a small but well-connected set of advocates in the City of London business community and in the financial media—into a program of government.

This program was not, in itself, ever fully realized or indeed fully coherent. But the ideology underlying this partial and contradictory transformation was certainly coherent, at least in its own idealized terms. In contrast, for example, to the policymaking style of the Blair governments, which have sought to represent, with the aid of bourgeois sociology, the pragmatic adoption of “what works” as a post hoc principle of government (Giddens, 1998), the free-market think tanks proudly touted their principled consistency, which at times, of course, led them to diverge even from the Thatcher administrations (Cockett, 1994; Denham & Garnett, 1999). As the director of a free-market think tank said of his left-leaning contemporary adversaries, like Demos and the Institute for Public Policy Research: “They are not *ideologically* left wing, as we are ideologically free market. . . . They don’t have an ideological vision of the future; it’s pragmatic. [But] they do come up with some creative thinking.”⁷

The Thatcherite think tanks were ideological in the sense that they were committed to a utopian vision of a free society, with liberated markets both reflecting and realizing individual choice and entrepreneurial effort, backed up by a minimalist government and the rule of law. The flip side of this positive vision, however, is an enduring set of antipathies toward statist and collectivist impulses, the near-paranoid fear of which contributes to the sectarian antiestablishment ethos among the conservative think tanks, for all their favorable positioning in the circuits of power (see Dezalay & Garth, 2000). Even today, the free-market intelligentsia is loath to declare victory, always sensing a socialist resurgence around the corner. Marking the celebration for the Mont Pelerin Society’s 50th birthday, for example, one of the founders of the IEA observed that “sober rejoicing over the undoubted spread of market ideas did not banish anxieties about the persistence of overblown government . . . [and] the remorseless growth of collectivist welfare” (Harris, 1997: 24).

Similarly, the current director of the IEA, in a preface to a reprint of Hayek’s *The Intellectuals and Socialism*, observes that New Labour’s ex-

punging of the “s word” only makes the endless struggle against collectivism and bureaucratization more problematic:

The struggle has become more difficult as policy makers have become less and less willing to identify themselves explicitly as socialists. . . . [The] “s” word . . . was not mentioned in the Labour Party’s election manifesto. . . . Socialism survives, however, by transmuting itself into new forms. State-run enterprises are now frowned upon, but the ever-expanded volume of regulation—financial, environmental, health and safety—serves to empower the state by other means. (Blundell, 1998: 3)

These arguments reflect some of the enduring—and perhaps necessary—illusions of (neo)liberal thought. They resonate strongly with Polanyi’s reading of the wave of market-restricting legislation in the 1870s and 1880s, which economic liberals of the time interpreted as an “anti-liberal conspiracy” or “collectivist countermovement,” when in fact it represented a series of pragmatic and in some senses spontaneous *reactions* against “the weaknesses and perils inherent in a self-regulating market system” (1944: 145). In other words, what is misinterpreted as an always-incipient socialist counterrevolution is in fact the double movement in action, the self-protective recoil of society against the prior excesses of market liberalization. The myth is arguably a necessary one, for 19th-century liberals and contemporary neoliberals, because it sustains the productive fiction of a foiled market utopia, as well as the belief that liberal freedoms represent the natural and underlying state of society, albeit one periodically stifled by bouts of interventionism. A 21st-century Polanyi would no doubt locate the Blair project—of selective social amelioration and moralizing dirigisme, founded upon the unstable base of a neoliberalized economy—at some point in the reflexive macroinstitutional upswing of a later double movement. New Labour therefore appears less as an alternative to Thatcherism than an extension and elaboration of this British variant of neoliberalism—a project predicated upon, animated by, and perhaps mired in the contradictions of late neoliberalism. It is in this sense that Blair’s Third Way might appear to be the “best shell” for globalized free-market capitalism (Hall, 2003).

If Blair’s version of the Third Way can be understood as a contextually specific form of roll-out neoliberalism, the winding path from the Keynesian consensus, through monetarism and the selective rolling back of the state to New Labour’s projects of “modernization,” was punctuated by moments of overreach, compromise, crisis, and pragmatic opportunism. The awkward task of the think tanks was to remain one step removed from, but at the same time connected and relevant to, the vacillations of government, charting a more strategic course and acting as a kind of ideological conscience for the easily distracted political class. This task is never complete, of course, for what is perceived as the specter of coercive regula-

tion is an ever-present one. But, while free-market intellectuals criticize the Blair government on many grounds, they appear to acknowledge that the underlying commitment to broadly liberalized economic management is a genuine one. This, then, is one measure of the extent to which viable “mainstream” alternatives to market-oriented regulation have splintered and receded over the past three decades—including, most conspicuously, the implosion of the Keynesian paradigm as an intellectual and governmental project. At the end of the Thatcher decade, Colin Leys remarked that “for an ideology to be hegemonic, it is not necessary that it be loved. It is merely necessary that it have no serious rival. And is this *not*, nowadays, roughly the situation with Thatcherism?” (1990: 127). Ten years later, Leys (2001: 216) concluded that the result of Thatcherism was to “reshape British politics along neoliberal lines,” the Keynesian era of politically controlled markets having given way to an unstable phase of “market driven politics.” In many respects, unease with the Blairite project may be greater among intellectuals on the left than those on the right. Ralph Harris of the IEA, for example, sketched the “major landmarks in the worldwide retreat from socialism” at the beginning of the Blair era in the following way:

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Reagan and Thatcher as trailblazers for radical market reforms around the world hardly require elaboration. But can the Mont Pelerin Society claim part of the credit? Americans can best judge the influence of the many MPS members surrounding President Reagan. From Britain I have no quiver of doubt that Margaret Thatcher’s central reform of trade unions, state industries, monetary policy, and much else owed a great deal to the advisors and members of Parliament directly instructed in market analysis by IEA publications shaped by Mont Pelerin principles. But the decisive role was played by our academics and journalists who helped transform public opinion on the market alternative to the failing collective consensus. Final proof of the Iron Lady’s success was displayed in the recent British election, when “New Labour” won a landslide victory only by explicitly renouncing socialism and boasting it could make the “dynamic market economy” work better than the tired Conservatives could. (1997: 24)

While the Blair governments have subsequently lapsed in ways that unsettle the free-market right, their sustained commitment to low inflation (what Blair calls the “essential prerequisite” for sound economic management), and the embrace of appropriate supply-side measures, has not been seriously questioned (see Graham, 1997; Coates & Hay, 2001; Moran & Alexander, 2000). Yet, in light of the free-market intelligentsia’s disinclination to declare victory, Harris’s assessment of New Labour is certainly a telling one. It reveals the extent to which certain neoliberal premises—such as a permanent anti-inflationary stance, a preference for flex-labor markets and liberalized trading relationships, an aversion to deficit spending, an orienta-

tion to the financialized capitalism of the City, and so on—have become relatively settled features of the British political economy. While there is continuing, if sporadic, contestation of some of the *outcomes* of these policies, their intellectual and ideological foundations are less often subjected to challenge, either in elite or mainstream circles.

Furthermore, the stall-out of the European constitution project in 2005, the new political dynamics created by the ascension of a group of market-oriented member states, and the continued travails of the French and German “social models” all suggest that neoliberal impulses are becoming more salient and pervasive, though by no means uncontested, features of the European political-economic landscape. None of this, of course, means that roll-out neoliberalism is a predestined, unidirectional, singular, and unstoppable project, but as the dominant—if not hegemonic—force in contemporary economic politics, the dynamics and contradictions of this form of late neoliberalization will continue to frame the terms of engagement. This is not to declare futile the extant cluster of progressive alternatives to neoliberalism, the continued vibrancy of which remains a likely medium-term prospect, given that very material and pressing ecological, economic, and social pressures seem set to aid, rather than impede, their rise. But at the present time these alternative projects tend, understandably, to be formulated defensively rather than offensively. Moreover, they must function on a terrain largely structured by neoliberalism. Progressive local experiments, for example, may help to broaden the repertoire of alternatives to neoliberalism, but their diffusion is impeded by the competitive structuring of interlocal relations. Ultimately, capitalizing upon islands of resistance and progressive reinvention will necessitate changes to the “rules of the game” itself, along with quite different forms of macroregulatory framing. But one of the lessons of Thatcherism, as Stuart Hall has persistently argued, is that deliberate, ambitious, and in a sense “offensive” ideological projects are not only necessary but, under the right circumstances, realizable. If nothing else, the experience of the Thatcherite think tanks, and the project that they helped *construct*, reveals the importance of the “power of ideas.” Recall that, in the early years of this project, it was the free-marketers that were regarded as utopian outsiders, if not cranks.

CONCLUSION: NEOLIBERAL CONSTRUCTIONS

We have argued here for the importance of recognizing the constructed and institutionally specific nature of neoliberal projects while at the same time acknowledging their shared embeddedness in particular readings of market theory. That the concrete outcomes of these projects of ideological restructuring are less than coherent and comprehensive is no denial of their pro-

grammatic intent and inspiration. The evidence for this is compelling, not least in the concerted and strategically oriented interventions of the London-based think tanks, which drew to considerable effect on the “bounded density” (Desai, 1994: 32) of their interactions with governmental, media, and financial elites. While undeniably drawing upon transnational currents, what would later become identified as “Thatcherism” was in many respects a local construction. If neoliberal rationalities today have the quality of a dispersed form of “commonsense” (Bourdieu, 1998), it should not be forgotten that some of the origins of this intellectual paradigm lay with a small but highly charged network of maverick political economists operating in exceptionally close physical and political proximity to a centralized and crisis-torn British state. This network had, of course, been no more than a marginal dissenting presence through the years of the Keynesian consensus, and its ascendancy must likewise be recognized not so much as a self-evident proof of their ideational righteousness as a reflection of their learned—and shrewd—capacity to exploit the crises of the 1970s.

The organic intellectuals of Thatcherism prosecuted their project, *inter alia*, by fostering new institutional forms like the think tank and the attendant machinery of profoundly centralized decision making; by maintaining a sectarian adherence to a clearly articulated belief system even while accommodating to the vagaries of practical governance and electoral politics; and by developing a somewhat open and adaptive mode of policy formation based on systemic experimentation within broadly neoliberal parameters. These features call attention to the character of the British path to neoliberalism—as an intellectually founded but, at the same time, pragmatic and mutative project. Certainly, this cannot be reduced to a politically successful articulation of the regulatory “needs” of an incipient post-Fordist economy (see Hall & Jacques, 1991), though it has been decisively articulated with the more prosaic forms of after-Fordist economic restructuring in the United Kingdom. On numerous occasions, but most vividly in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the limitations and contradictions of this flawed economic model threatened to unhinge the Thatcherite project, perhaps terminally (see Jessop et al., 1990; Peck & Tickell, 1994). In retrospect, this period—between the “Lawson boom” of the late 1980s and the sharp recession that followed—bore the hallmarks of a conjunctural rather than structural crisis in the British form of neoliberalism, a mid-course adjustment between the Thatcherism-proper of the 1980s and the more generic, adaptive *Thatcherismus* that followed, through the floundering corrections of the Major years to the more purposive program of New Labour. As Jessop et al. (1990) argued at the time, Thatcherism-under-Thatcher was “more adept at rolling back the frontiers of the social-democratic state and the gains of the post-war settlement than at rolling forward a new state” (p. 98). Following the period of combative and conviction-driven deregulation—

epitomized by the public sector cutbacks and industrial relations conflicts of the 1980s—the subsequent roll-out phase would be more pragmatic than principled. And it would call for, and sustain, quite different circuits and modalities of social expertise: The image of the free-market think tanks as motorcycle outriders during the buccaneering 1980s, *stretching the vocabulary of the politically feasible*, progressively gave way to the cautious second-guessing, focus-grouping, market-testing, and post hoc rationalization of incrementalist policies from the Blairite think tanks of today, *explicating the terms of the politically deliverable*.

The sprawling terrain of the neoliberalized polity means that it is impossible to draw clear lines of distinction between neoliberalism and its others. As a (more or less successively) reactionary, reactive, opportunist, mutable, experimental, diffuse, and destructively creative order, neoliberalism necessarily internalizes, absorbs, and symbiotically adjusts with its others, the spatially and temporally variegated form of actually existing neoliberalism stemming in substantial measure from these often incongruous hybridizations. Among other things, this accounts for the analytically and politically slippery nature of neoliberalism, which can appear at the same time to be practically ubiquitous while existing in no two places in the same form. Hence, the need for historical geographies of the project, and its programs, that are sensitive to this constructed and contextual, diffuse, and diffusing form. While the ideological project of neoliberalization did not pulsate outward in a unidirectional manner from its structurally privileged centers of persuasion, like London, Chicago, and Washington, DC, these cities nevertheless played decisive but only faintly understood roles in the production of neoliberalism. Here, the project exhibited an “indigenous” quality that—initially at least—it lacked in the various zones of imposition, comprador sites, and translation centers that have increasingly become bound into the transnational webs of metastasized neoliberalization. In this sense, there is a nontrivial part of this project that was politically constructed—*made*—in London. Whether it can be *unmade* at the urban scale remains an open question.

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NOTES

1. Margaret Thatcher, speech to the Conservative Party Conference, October 8, 1982. Accessed at www.margaretthatcher.org.
2. Madsen Pirie, accessed at www.adamsmith.org/biog/archive/000894.php.

3. Think tank director, interviewed by the authors, London, April 2003.
4. Interview with senior officer, conservative think tank, London, April 2003.
5. Interview with senior officer, conservative think tank, London, April 2003.
6. Interviewed by the authors, London, April 2003.
7. Interviewed by the authors, London, April 2003.

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Mexico's Neoliberal Transition

AUTHORITARIAN SHADOWS IN AN ERA OF NEOLIBERALISM

PATRICIA MARTIN

The scholarly discussion of contemporary Latin American development has focused mainly, up until now, on the political economy of adjustment, upon the mechanisms of democratic transition and consolidation, or on the relationship between the two. . . . Much less attention has been given to the recent and current manifestations of conflict, violence, repression and terror, their consequences, and their social, political, and cultural preconditions.

—KRUIJT AND KOONINGS (1999: 3)

On page 27 of the September/October 1998 issue of the *North American Report on the Americas* (NACLA) a startling pair of photographs can be found that accompany an article titled “The Mindfields of Memory,” written by Elizabeth Jelin. On the left-hand side is an image of the Punta Carretas prison in Montevideo, Uruguay, a site in which political prisoners systematically suffered torture during Uruguay’s military dictatorship (1973–1984) (Jelin, 1998: 27). On the right-hand side is a more recent image of the same location, picturing the prison’s 1994 transformation into an upscale shopping mall.¹ Jelin offers this as an example of the ways in which the histories of state repression, dictatorship, and torture have been erased from the landscape in locations throughout Latin America, a process that deeply complicates contemporary struggles for democracy.² While this is undoubtedly the case, these paired images also offer provoca-

tive insight into the pathway leading to neoliberalism's emergence in the region. The images frame, in other words, not only the concerted erasure of a particular (authoritarian) history but also the related and concerted movement toward a distinct yet particular (neoliberal) future. As such, they imply a profound link between authoritarianism, violence, and neoliberalism in Latin America, in which the first two elements provided potent groundwork for the emergence of the third.

That such a linkage exists should come as no surprise. Yet, as I will argue in this chapter, such a politicized interpretation of the emergence of neoliberalism in Latin America has remained somewhat muted in much of the academic work that has examined recent economic transformations in the region. Rather, these discussions draw on a strongly economic narrative that rests upon the failures of import substitution industrialization, the impact of the debt crisis, and the role played by multilateral institutions in order to explain Latin America's turn toward neoliberalism. In such analyses, Latin America's deep engagement with authoritarian regimes of governance is relegated to a very faint background. Such analyses, I contend, not only are analytically incomplete but also shorten our understanding of the political horizons articulated through neoliberalizing processes in Latin America and beyond. Thus, this chapter explicitly presses the boundaries of the definition of neoliberalism by placing its emergence within a terrain already marked by the political dynamics of struggle.

This chapter seeks to engage with the political contexts that have shaped Latin America's transition to neoliberalism. In order to accomplish such a task, I open up the terrain of "transition" in order to present an alternative reading of *how* neoliberalism came to be the successor to import substitution industrialization (ISI) in Latin America. I argue that the political closure and repression afforded by Latin American authoritarianism and Cold War geopolitics played a crucial role by providing a political bridge between ISI and neoliberal economic policies and practices. In this way, a set of "strategic" geographies enabled key neoliberal footholds to materialize on the landscape. Later, as the debt crisis emerged, neoliberal policies then rolled forward on these landscapes of violence where, in the shadow of authoritarianism, the local institutional and social bases that might have presented an alternative path through the economic crisis of the 1980s were severely undermined.

To explore these dynamics in a grounded manner, I refract these arguments through an examination of neoliberalism in Mexico, a country renowned for both a "soft" version of authoritarianism and a rapid and comparatively early engagement with neoliberalism (Demmers, 2001; Haggard & Kaufman, 1995). I provide a brief national overview of the patterns of authoritarianism, violence, and political closure that predated the emer-

gence of neoliberalism. As I will argue, neoliberalism as a project was inserted into, or grafted onto, an earlier expansive conflict over visions of politics and social order that had violent expression in the dirty wars of the 1970s. The chapter then turns to a closer comparative analysis of two local contexts in Mexico, Oaxaca (in the state of Oaxaca) and Monterrey (in Nuevo León). Following the language of Radcliffe (2005: 324), I argue that state-sponsored repression and violence have been repeatedly “layered into” these two local contexts. The resulting manner in which oppositional political struggle in both locations was “pinned down” created new political anchors allowing neoliberalism to materialize. Such a perspective, in turn, offers a multidimensional, multiscaled context for neoliberalism’s expansion throughout the Mexican economy and society.

Ideally, such an argument also provides an advantageous vantage point for analyzing the presences, absences, and forms of resistance to neoliberalism in contemporary Mexico, and Latin America more broadly. The emergence of movements like the Zapatistas in Chiapas speaks not only to contemporary economic circumstances but also to a long legacy of multiscaled, at times clandestine, political struggle that can only be understood in relationship to authoritarian politics (Collier, 1994). Their strong and popular appeal to the notion of civil society speaks, furthermore, to a deep disillusionment with formal Mexican politics (Collier, 1994; Gilbreth & Otero, 2001). In this vein, tracing the shape and legacy of authoritarianism offers a historicized and politicized reading of the continuities and transformations in oppositional politics in Mexico.

Reframing an understanding of neoliberalism in this manner shifts our understanding of the temporality and geography of neoliberalism’s rise in Latin America by suggesting neoliberalism in Latin America did not, in a straightforward manner “follow” or flow from reforms and ideas generated in the north. Rather, the neoliberalization of Latin American societies grew out of particular localized contexts, which then reverberated, reinforced, and interacted with political economic shifts in the global north.

This chapter extends the research I conducted in Mexico in 2000, during which time I examined the intersection of the processes of globalization and democratization in Oaxaca, and Monterrey, respectively. For part of the research I conducted a series of open-ended interviews with individuals working in a range of public institutional settings, including political parties, government offices, the media, the Catholic Church, civil society organizations, and unions. In these interviews the number of individuals, particularly those working in positions of opposition, who mentioned acts of violence and repression perpetrated against them or their organizations was quite striking. This chapter seeks to bring the implications of the words and contexts they described at least partially into view.

THEORETICAL CONTEXT

Since the beginning of the 1980s, Mexico, and Latin America more broadly, has been in the throes of what Duncan Green (1995) has called a “silent revolution.” This revolution has been marked by the swift transformation away from economic policies centered on import substitution industrialization toward ones guided by neoliberal principles. As is well known, neoliberal advocates offer a utopian vision, positing unfettered capitalist development as the basis for the ultimate expression of individual freedom, national economic growth and prosperity, and pacific global exchange and interdependency. Neoliberalism’s contemporary reach in Latin America reflects the manner in which the economic philosophy has become a “the new normalcy” (Overbeek & van der Pijl, 1993: 2), settling into multiple geographic contexts and a multilayered set of institutions and governance regimes.

Yet, as recent work in critical geography has emphasized, there are significant analytical gaps between the all-encompassing discourses of neoliberalism, which cede governance, power, and utopia (or dystopia) to the global market, and what Brenner and Theodore (2002) call “actually existing neoliberalism” (cf. Larner, 2003; Peck, 2004; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Perreault & Martin, 2005). Such perspectives argue that neoliberalism is not some kind of natural exterior force but rather exists in relationship to specific actors, institutions, languages, and practices. Accordingly, neoliberalism has specific historical and geographical trajectories (Peck, 2004); the analytical focus then shifts to *how* neoliberal practices have rolled forward in places and across scales. In practice, then, multiple context-specific neoliberalisms can be identified; these context-specific forms of neoliberalism demonstrate its hybrid, experimental, and amalgamated nature (Larner, 2003; Peck, 2004). Coming to terms with neoliberalism’s differentiated, uneven, and contradictory expressions in this manner offers needed insight into how neoliberalism has rolled forward so successfully. While neoliberalism is everywhere “hybrid,” the commonalties and differences of localized expressions of neoliberalism should be examined within a transnational frame in order to bring into view further understanding of neoliberalism as a general political economic project (Peck & Tickell, 2002).

This chapter explores such perspectives, particularly in its concern for opening up the terrain of “transition” to neoliberal economic orders in Latin America. In questioning both the pathways and the inevitability of neoliberalism’s emergence, and in explicitly linking authoritarianism with neoliberalism, I present the argument that neoliberalism offered a key political and ideological response to the political conflicts and crises encased in Latin American authoritarianism and Cold War geopolitics. In turn, Latin American authoritarianism and Cold War geopolitics literally “made” so-

cial and institutional space for neoliberal practices and policies. In the wake of authoritarian violence and the concomitant deinstitutionalization of the left, neoliberalism rapidly became the idiom—the practices and ideas—that wove together a new set of economic, political, and cultural relationships throughout Latin America.

REFRAMING NEOLIBERALISM'S RISE IN LATIN AMERICA

Even in critical readings of neoliberalism's rise in Latin America, the transition away from import substitution industrialization (ISI) toward neoliberalism draws on a now deeply etched portrayal, which depicts neoliberalism's rise as almost inevitable: the outcome of the "exhaustion" of ISI and a response to the debt crisis.³ Green (1996: 109), for example, describes the "exhaustion of the previous model of import substitution" and then points to the international confluence of the debt crisis and "the neoliberal assault on Keynesianism" in the global north. Gwynne (1999: 75) writes in turn that "the paradigmatic shift in political economy can be attributed to . . . the debt crisis that started in 1982." In his view, the neoliberal shift was not ideological; rather, "Latin American governments decided . . . to respond in highly pragmatic ways to the contingencies of crisis." Chase (2002: 1) argues that "the source of neoliberal policies can be traced to the international economy, and especially to the piling up of foreign debt by Latin American countries in the early 1970s."

The overall narrative resonance between these perspectives points to a deeply ingrained yet false dichotomy between ISI and neoliberalism. This dichotomy pivots temporally around 1982, the year the Mexican government announced a default on its international loan payments. In this dichotomy the former is typically associated with protectionism, state intervention, nationalism, and populism; economic liberalization and formal democratization typically characterize the latter. Without a doubt such representations are instructive and offer insight into key dimensions of both ISI and neoliberalism. Yet, they also have important, albeit unintended, discursive effects. To begin with, they shut down the terrain of "transition" itself to critical inquiry, masking the patterns of continuity that cut across this period of transformation. Such accounts cede, furthermore, explanatory power to mechanistic workings of the global economy and imply that political formations—such as formal democracy—naturally flow from economic change. Finally, such accounts diminish the ways in which political, economic, and cultural models of society in Latin America have been sites of active multiscalar political struggle throughout the 20th century. Indeed, adequately specifying the uneven temporality and geography of these struggles in tandem with the rise of neoliberal policies may move us closer to a

more adequate understanding of the origins, nature, and effects of contemporary political-economic change.

In order to animate a discussion of the political dimensions and origins of neoliberalism, I argue that Pinochet's Chile of the 1970s rather than of Mexico of the 1980s provides an alternative watershed era through which to frame neoliberalism's rise in Latin America. In 1975, 2 years after the violent coup that ousted the democratically elected Salvador Allende, the Pinochet regime began administering neoliberal economic "shock treatment." It remains quite curious that numerous accounts of neoliberalism's rise in Latin America gloss over such a striking first public appearance. Projecting an account of neoliberalism through such a lens draws attention to the political struggles and asymmetrical violence that shaped the institutional context for the dramatic transformation in economic policies. In such a context, neoliberalism's rise was not strictly about economic policy, but was part and parcel of a larger search for a politics of order. Using Chile as a central moment points, furthermore, to the significance of economic and geopolitical transnational networks through which political and economic policies and practices traveled, north and south, in a period that spans the shift from ISI to neoliberalism. I expand on these three points below.

Multiple projects and struggles over the meanings of development and modernity characterize 20th-century Latin American history. The uneven functional and geographical extension of the state in Latin America produced conditions in which the shape of people's lives oscillated between the punitive and potentially emancipatory promises of modernity. On such unstable political terrain, recurrent social struggles challenged and reworked the meanings of nationalism, citizenship and inclusion (Grandin, 2004). In this light, the electoral victory of the Chilean socialist Salvador Allende in 1970 formed part of a broader pattern of region-wide popular political mobilizations that brought the left to power in Guatemala in 1954, the Dominican Republic in 1963, and Nicaragua in 1984 (Petras, 1997). Such movements sought to transform national political economies by weaving together a politically powerful and potentially revolutionary combination of active citizenship and socialism.

To an ever-increasing degree, nonetheless, Cold War geopolitics overlaid and profoundly recast these struggles, violently and recurrently shutting down the sphere of the political as a venue for change, particularly for the left (Grandin, 2004). As a result, in the period before neoliberalism came fully into vogue in Latin America, the state became politicized to an extreme "apocalyptic" degree, particularly during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Lehmann, 1990: 48). While economic policy was part of what was at stake, across the region the "national interest" and "freedom and the preservation of western-Christian civilization" were of central pressing

concern (Koonings & Kruijt, 1999: 10; see also Weiss Fagen, 1992). In the face of popular mobilizations, Latin American authoritarianism, with active U.S. support, marshaled a range of discourses to justify the imposition of militarized order. These included the language of disease, illness, and contamination, in which the national body had to be cleansed of revolutionary and even reformist activism (Weiss Fagen, 1992). The boundaries of masculinity and femininity were also recast. Democratic pluralism, *dirigiste* state forms, and more radical alternatives represented the terrain of the effeminate, an ever-expanding sphere of corruption and immorality (Franco, 1992; Lehmann, 1990). Within such a politicized atmosphere, neoliberalism offered a strongly distinguishable antistatist vision of society, in which "economic liberty (was) more fundamental than political liberty" (O'Brien & Roddick, 1983: 107). In Chile, the "Chicago boys" (Latin American economists trained at the University of Chicago), strongly influenced by the political vision of Friedrich Hayek, offered discursive legitimacy to the military dictatorship and in turn attempted to transform citizens into consumers (Silva, 1994, 1999).

From the vantage point of the 1980s and 1990s, the manner in which Pinochet's Chile embraced neoliberal reform may appear exceptional; yet, this early emergence of neoliberal reform reflected an established and wide-reaching set of transnational institutional linkages organized around the development and promotion of neoliberal thought. These most famously connected the Economics Departments of the University of Chicago and the Catholic University in Santiago, Chile. Yet, these connections wove together institutions and students throughout Latin America reaching from Monterrey, Mexico, to Cuyo, Argentina (Valdés, 1995). Reflecting this, both Argentina and Uruguay also experimented with neoliberal reform in the 1970s (Weiss Fagen, 1992). Such patterns raise provocative questions about the manner in which neoliberal visions and military networks intertwined in and beyond Latin America, providing a context through which "neoliberalism" as a discourse began to gain visibility in Latin America.⁴

Through the 1970s such transnational economic networks offered an incipient but organized alternative to ISI as an economic platform; yet, arguably it was the violence that Cold War authoritarianism spawned that tipped the scales in neoliberalism's favor. Geographically mobile anticommunist violence spanned the coup in Guatemala (1954), bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in the southern cone (1960s–1970s), and the Central American armed conflicts of the 1980s. In the name of anticommunist violence, the institutionalized basis for a range of political-economic projects was forcefully eliminated. Strategic uses of public and private terror sought to reorganize civil society by eliminating all forms of collective action and by dismantling mediating institutions between citizens and the state (Franco, 1992; Weiss Fagen, 1992). On such a distorted landscape, neoliberal dis-

courses then sought to bind privatized people together through the utopia of the market and the “clean” promises of consumerism, fully dismantling any connection between socialism and democracy.

The ubiquitous neoliberalization of Latin American economies and politics throughout the 1980s and 1990s was not a natural or inevitable outcome. In fact, it can be argued that the celebrated convergence of neoliberalism and formal democratization has effectively hidden sets of political, social, and economic relationships distorted by authoritarianism and violence (Grandin, 2004). None of this is to deny that economic crisis did not play an important role in propelling forward the move to neoliberalism (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002). The economic figures that help to describe the “lost decade” in Latin America are indeed staggering (Green, 1995). Rather, it is to suggest that neoliberalism held crucial footholds in Latin America that would only be expanded in the years to come. As neoliberal policies traveled between Santiago, London, and Washington, the violence that accompanied such travels all but ensured the collapse of alternative economic projects. Rather than a clearly bounded temporal and geographical transition, neoliberalism gained hegemonic status through a multisited overlapping sequence of ideological and lived confrontations that had deeply political origins and implications.

MEXICO'S DOUBLE TRANSITION

There exists an imperious need to fully maintain the principle of authority.

—GUSTAVO DÍAZ ORDAZ, President of Mexico,
1962–1970 (quoted in Krause, 1999: 708)

Mexico's path through neoliberal reform is well known (for overviews see Demmers, 2001; Martin, 2005; Otero, 1996). Over the span of more than 20 years and almost four presidencies, the Mexican economy has been placed on an ever more entrenched path of neoliberal reform. Such a path included early austerity and stabilization measures, which in turn gave way to liberalization and deregulation policies, symbolized by Mexico's entry into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986 (Demmers, 2001; Green, 1995). Neoliberal reform reached a spectacular apogee, nonetheless, during the presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988–1994). Guided by the language of social liberalism (O'Toole, 2003), his administration oversaw the privatization of hundreds of government enterprises (Demmers, 2001). In addition, he initiated the negotiation of NAFTA and reformed Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, which brought an end to land reform and allowed the privatization of communal land hold-

ings. Despite severe economic and political crises in 1994, Salinas's successors have continued to pursue neoliberal reform. The neoliberal revolution finally gained full international legitimacy in 2000 with the election of Vicente Fox, the opposition candidate from the right-leaning party Acción Nacional.

As elsewhere in Latin America, neoliberalism's emergence in Mexico lies within the overlapping contexts of increasing economic crisis and protracted political struggle spanning the late 1960s through the 1980s. Active political struggle against Mexican authoritarianism, and the violence that such political struggle provoked, were defining characteristics of the time period. This dynamic was made evident in the mass killing of student protestors at the Plaza de Tlatelolco on the eve of the Olympic Games in 1968. Mexican historian Enrique Krause (1999: 688) frames this event in the following manner: "During one of the greatest decades of change in the history of the Western world, the demand for order and authority by one of the most rigid governments in Mexican history . . . would confront, with mounting intensity, the claim by young people to freedom and independent judgment." The democratization of politics was of immanent concern to the student protestors, presenting a fundamental challenge to political authority (Babb, 2001; Krause, 1999; Pansters, 1999); this was interpreted in turn as an affront to the order and authority of the nation (Hellman, 1978).

Like the coup in Chile, this public display of violence points to broader semisubmerged social and political processes that extend both forward and backward and backward in time, ultimately shaping the context in which neoliberalism has taken hold in Mexico. Student mobilization in the 1960s echoed, for example, wide-ranging union activism of the 1950s among teachers, telephone operators, and railroad workers. Their demands for greater union democracy and autonomy similarly met with repression and violence (Ruiz, 1992). Under the sway of Cold War anticommunist politics, Mexico witnessed, furthermore, a hardening of authoritarian rule that strategically closed down sites for nonviolent dissident political action. Within this trajectory, the Tlatelolco massacre served as a prelude to a secret, still poorly understood Dirty War in the 1970s (Doyle, 2003; Krause, 1999; Scherer García & Monsiváis, 2004). The national archives containing documents related to this period of state-sponsored violence were only opened in 2002; preliminary investigations assert that this conflict deinstitutionalized the left (Scherer García, 2004) and produced a legacy of fear and a series of strategic silences that contributed to the depoliticization of society (Doyle, 2003; Monsiváis, 2004).

Recent scholarship emphasizes that key roots of neoliberal policy can be found in political and economic struggles and realignments of the 1970s. Adam Morton (2003) persuasively argues, for example, that the Echeverría

government (1970–1976) responded to a crisis of political legitimacy with a sweeping set of neopopulist economic policies financed through foreign borrowing. This populism alienated an influential sector of Mexican capitalists who began publicly to promote alternative economic policies by extending already existing “proto” neoliberal economic spaces, including the *maquiladora* sector. Important fractures appeared within the Mexican government during this time period, as well (Babb, 2001). The ministry of finance and the Banco de Mexico were increasingly at odds with the direction in which the president was taking economic policy. By the late 1970s a technocratic elite, embedded in transnational educational networks, held increasing sway within the Mexican state. With the onset of the debt crisis in 1982, these technocrats were poised to put new policies into place, fully discrediting state-led developmentalism (Babb, 2001).

As both Morton and Babb acknowledge, a crisis in political legitimacy spurred the contingent transformation of the Mexican political economy in the 1970s. Reflecting the charged atmosphere that characterized Latin America at the time, ideological and political polarization deeply inflected this crisis, drawing entrenched lines around competing projects for the Mexican nation (Basáñez, 1983; Hellman, 1978). Thus, Echeverría’s attempts to restore social peace rested on a revived language of revolutionary nationalism in which he attacked the private sector as “unpatriotic” and “un-Mexican” (Hellman, 1978: 150). He maintained, furthermore, a cordial relationship with Salvador Allende, joining him in denouncing American imperialism. Conservative critics of Echeverría responded, in turn, by condemning him as a threat to Mexican “freedom” and for allowing “crime and terror” to thrive (Hellman, 1978: 167). Under Echeverría national policies drifted gradually to the right, ceding greater power to the Mexican military and increasing repression of political dissidents.

Though opposed in multiple ways, these competing visions of Mexican development shared a common disdain for popular and social activism in Mexico. This commonality provided strategic political continuity even as Mexico underwent a deep economic transformation. Alongside the lived confrontations discussed above, which repeatedly undermined the capacities of leftist organizations to propose an alternative path through crisis, the strategic nexus between authoritarianism and neoliberalism succeeded in discursively sequestering “the political” in Mexico as well. Emergent neoliberal discourses framed the crisis of the 1970s as the result of misguided and irresponsible economic policy, placing politics outside of the interpretive frame. Accordingly, Mexican policy shifts in the 1980s prioritized economic reform over political reform (Golob, 1997) and reconstructed a notion of citizenship and nationhood around the marketplace (O’Toole, 2003). With these discursive moves, neoliberalizing practices effectively hid the political conflicts that shaped the context of transition, at the same time disrupting and recasting collective memories of social struggle.

LOOKING AT AUTHORITARIANISM AND NEOLIBERALISM FROM THE LOCAL LEVEL

The national pattern of violence, manipulation, and political repression that has encased neoliberalism's emergence in Mexico exists in a geometry of power, interlocking in particular ways at the local level. Patterns of violence at the national scale are repeated numerous times and in more mundane ways at local scales. As Knight (1999: 118) argues, "Mexican political violence appears less extreme and significant, but that is partly because it is more discreet, anonymous, prolonged and quotidian. It involves numerous small, often local, acts of violence, rather than massive, centralized campaigns of repression." These small events remain lodged in local landscapes, overlapping and combining with shifts in economic policy. The political effects of such "small" moments of violence, their continuation rather than their closure, become more obvious when economic transformations in Mexico are examined from a local level.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Martin, 2005), neoliberalism has interacted in a highly differentiated manner across the north and the south of Mexico. In the south, neoliberal policy, as portrayed in large-scale development projects such as the Plan Puebla–Panamá, promises the most recent route to development while seeking in particular to displace transnationalized indigenous peasantries into livelihoods and locations linked to maquiladoras, ecotourism, and the urban service sector. In the north, neoliberalism has been structured through an expansion of the maquiladora sector as well as a deep and widespread engagement with globalized commercial and consumption practices. The global image that such practices inspire rests on increased local economic inequality as the economy shifts from manufacturing to finance and service industries.

The substantive differences in these neoliberal trajectories and languages demonstrate the degree to which the neoliberalization of Mexico has been a spatially segmented and multifaceted process, deepening already entrenched regional differences across Mexico (Martin, 2005). The production of such difference, I contend, plays a substantial role in explaining neoliberalism's "deep insertion" (Radcliffe, 2005: 236) in Mexico. Yet, this pattern of regional difference has also emerged out of the political conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s as well as a contemporary rescaling of authoritarianism to the local level (Snyder, 1999). To explore this terrain, I now examine the process of political and economic transition through the lens of two localities in Mexico, Oaxaca, and Monterrey, respectively. Using excerpts from interviews I conducted as a framing device, I argue that these local political economies have been mobilized along distinct paths over the past three decades. Authoritarian politics have shaped these trajectories, furthermore, providing strategic political continuity even as overarching economic policies have shifted.

Social Mobilization and State Repression

Yes, we experienced repression. They set police dogs on us when we staged protests or marches. Once the judicial police detained seven or eight of us; we were disappeared for 48 hours. No one knew where we were. They accused us of being guerrillas. It was a very traumatic experience. Now I talk about it more easily, but I want you to know that at the time we didn't tell anyone what happened. (political activist, Monterrey, 2000)

It was a very large movement. Approximately 6,000 or 7,000 hectares are invaded and more than 6,000 people participate. The land was taken on July 29th, 1975. That same night the army forcibly removed the squatters. More than 3,500 people are put into trucks and taken like cattle to a military encampment. (member of the Partido de la Revolución Democrática [PRD], Oaxaca, 2000)

These two quotes come from individuals I interviewed who recounted formative moments in their own political histories. The quotations vividly depict the politicized atmosphere of the 1960s and 1970s in Mexico as a whole. The first comes from an individual who, during the 1960s, worked in a garment factory in Monterrey. By her own account, she was engaged in organizing factory workers to demand improvements in a range of working conditions. At the time, federal police detained and disappeared her for 2 days, accusing her of being a *guerrillera*. This recounting points to the “discreet,” almost quotidian, nature of state-sponsored violence in Mexico. The second quote, in turn, which describes a well-known political confrontation, provides insight into the political environment in Oaxaca during the mid-1970s. During a period of widespread popular unrest, thousands of people invaded and attempted to take possession of land on the outskirts of Oaxaca City. Reflecting trends at the national level, such forms of social mobilization met increasingly with police and military repression.

In both Oaxaca and Monterrey, patterns of recurrent social mobilization and social conflict resting on a backdrop of uneven modernization characterized the 1960s and 1970s. There were strong parallels in terms of the institutions, demands, practices, and ideologies that shaped conflict in each location. In both Oaxaca and Monterrey, a range of leftist philosophies informed dissident activity. For example, the professed goal of a prominent student-worker coalition in Oaxaca was to “achieve the socialist transformation of the country” (Martínez Vásquez, 1990: 133). An organization in Monterrey called *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Liberty) that spearheaded similarly large land invasions drew political inspiration from Maoist philosophy. In both locations, activists strongly animated the boundaries of the political through strikes, marches, and building and land occupations. Across Mexico, therefore, dissident activity presented a com-

mon challenge to the success of the “Mexican Miracle” as a development model while actively questioning authoritarian political structures. This form of political challenge elicited an increasingly open repressive response characterized by a complex mix of cooptation and coercion.

Pinning Down Social Actors

In terms of real politics, we see that this is a state where the right, or conservatism, is the priority. The left has been practically destroyed here. Yet initiatives emerge. We are a hope. When they tried to annihilate us—they put a bomb in my office to kill me—they couldn’t do it, because we are very rooted here. They can’t eliminate us. Of course, I have four penal accusations against me, but I am sure that if they put me in jail people will knock down the walls of the jail. But what I am saying is that there is a very strong conservatism. There is no left. (local political activist, Monterrey, 2000)

Here it is believed that if a child lives to 3 years, that child has succeeded in living. The first 3 years is a very symbolic phase. We were told so many times that we weren’t going to survive—so, for me, I shared this symbolic view. We survived very difficult phases in the first and the second years. We were going to celebrate our third anniversary. Four days before, I arrive, and there is no office, there are no documents—all there was, was a telephone on the floor. Well, it was very difficult, because our organization is supported through voluntary efforts. Three years of work disappeared in one night. (local political activist, Oaxaca, 2000)

The two interview excerpts above offer insight into contemporary patterns of political intimidation in Monterrey and Oaxaca, respectively. The events that they describe, an office break-in and bomb scare, may seem exceptional or sporadic from the national level. Yet, they clearly speak to the difficulty and potential danger that political activists face. State-sponsored violence conditions the degree to which local organizations, and by extension “ordinary” citizens, are able to advocate for either political or economic change (Hellman, 1978). In the nonheroic spaces of the everyday, this “layering-in” of ordinary violence has accompanied a reconfiguration of the local political economies of both Oaxaca and Nuevo León, where increasingly divergent development paths have evolved on an uneven political terrain.

In Oaxaca, the 1970s remained a turbulent period. Acting through the power of the state governor, the federal government attempted to bring social conflict to an end through a variety of means that included the expansion of police powers, the direct intervention of the army, the use of state resources to coopt independent organizations, the dissolution of independent unions, and the immediate dispersal of new land seizures. Despite such

measures, unrest continued throughout the decade, forcing the governor to resign in the late 1970s. In subsequent years the federal government shifted tactics by pairing political repression with a substantial increase in state spending. Thus, in direct contrast to neoliberal austerity measures enacted at the national level, the capacities of the local state expanded in the 1980s as money flowed into housing, education, infrastructure, and development projects. In a certain manner, therefore, the nationalist neopopulism of the 1970s migrated to, scaled down, and became firmly embedded at the subnational level in Oaxaca (Snyder, 1999), carrying with it little tolerance for political dissent. Social conflict and open violence has been geographically mobile since the 1970s. During the 1980s, the municipality of Juchitán in the isthmus of Tehuantepec was a particular political flash-point; in the contemporary era, violent conflict has escalated in rural areas, and indigenous groups and the human rights activists who defend them remain prominent targets of state repression.

The state of Nuevo León, a historic center of entrepreneurial power in Mexico, has cut a distinct transitional path through political and economic crises. As in Oaxaca, political mobilization assumed various expressions in Nuevo León during the 1970s. These included land invasions, unrest in the university, union mobilization, as well as urban guerrilla activity. Yet, in the early 1970s, the kidnapping and death of noted businessman Don Eugenio Garza Sada and the successful invasion and appropriation of lands by *Tierra y Libertad* succeeded in galvanizing the more conservative elements of Nuevo León society (Nuncio & Garza, 1992). Entrepreneurial leaders from Nuevo León waged a multiscaled political and economic campaign. They demanded the roll-back of populist fiscal reform at the national level and called for the return of law and order in Monterrey and a strong response against the activities of urban guerrillas (Pozas Garza, 1995). Through cycles of political conflict since that time, Nuevo León has become an entrenched bastion of support for neoliberal policy reform at the national level. The erasure of a dissident history in Nuevo León has occurred alongside the repression and practical exclusion of popular movements (see the first quotation, above).

Looking through the lenses of Oaxaca and Nuevo León, the ideological conflicts that politicized the national state in the 1970s have been geographically mobile and continue to live on in an active political geography that pits the north against the south. While the neopopulism of the south and the economic liberalism of the north represent substantially different projects of economic development, they rest on a common history of the authoritarian demobilization of socialist-inspired activism. This evolving political landscape offered, in turn, a set of subnational political anchors that have enabled neoliberal policies to roll forward at the national level, substantially uncontested.

The Shape of Citizenship

I am going to refer to a very specific case of Nuevo León, because there are still, currently, two or three Mexicos, right? Mexico of the north, Mexico of the center, and Mexico of the south. So, what I am going to say that is valid for the north is not valid for all of Mexico. I believe that among the people of the north there is greater participation, they are more politicized in certain ways. According to statistics, the population of Nuevo León has a higher level of literacy, in comparison with the center and the south. Yes, there is a greater citizen pressure. (member of the Partido Acción Nacional [PAN], Monterrey, 2000)

What is troubling—and I see this as a function of preparation and intellectual development—I can speak of, and I say it with much fear, there is a Mexico of the north and a Mexico of the south. I am afraid that my brother to the north sees as less my brother to the south, and as a result my brother to the north might say, “You know what, you go your way and I’ll go mine.” (business leader, Oaxaca, 2000)

The political and economic crises of the past 30 years in Mexico have fractured a sense of nationhood and mobilized a deep sense of regional difference, as reflected in the two quotations above. As I have argued, this regional difference and political fragmentation reflects the geographical entrenchment of competing development projects and authoritarianisms that are in turn linked to the political crises of the 1960s and 1970s. Yet, as clearly demonstrated in the perspectives of the individuals quoted above, differing levels of development—expressed here as educational or intellectual preparation—most often frame the way in which regional differences in Mexico are understood. This habitual insistence on an economic and developmental interpretation obscures the histories of political conflict that have also contributed to the production of regional geographies of difference.

Drawing on a range of repertoires, neoliberal policies and practices have drawn out, exacerbated, and recast this understanding of difference, positing levels of integration into the global economy as a central explanatory mechanism of development. Within this reading, the northern reaches of Mexico, including Nuevo León, have become new models of development while the poverty of places like Oaxaca remains an abiding problem. Nuevo León, home to flexible labor regimes, transnational consumption practices, and high-tech educational initiatives, has become a cosmopolitan center of neoliberal modernity in Mexico. Oaxaca, in turn, represents almost a blank slate, inviting large-scale development negotiated through a neoliberal engagement with ethnic difference. Such large-scale development plans, which privilege economic development, accommodate the mediations of a neopopulist state.

Over the past 30 years, the social, political, and economic worlds of Nuevo León and Oaxaca have been pulled through the particular localized nexus of authoritarianism and neoliberalism in different ways. The complex mix of political repression *and* the new languages of neoliberal globalization have shifted the interpretive worlds of each location. Under the weathered retreat of nationalism, a transregional notion of social citizenship that seeks to actively integrate social and political rights has splintered. In Oaxaca, state-level populism pays lip service to the importance of economic rights and development, while the authoritarian political environment continually shuts down the possibility of contesting how development should best proceed. In Nuevo León, by contrast, the process of formal democratization at the state level has mobilized a particular notion of political citizenship. Yet, strategic threats of violence and the practices of erasure and exclusion, particularly in the media, have effaced a collective memory of social activism. In each location, therefore, along distinct yet equally politicized paths, the emergence of an institutionalized basis for a local alternative to neoliberal governance has been thwarted.

CONCLUSIONS

Neoliberalism's emergence in Latin America was not simply the result of economic crisis and shifts in the global economy. Neoliberalism developed in relationship to a series of widespread and recurrent social conflicts as well. While part of what was at stake was economic policy, neoliberalism also presented an antistate, antisocial, highly individualistic vision of politics that fundamentally weakened political avenues for challenging authoritarian patterns of decision making. As deep antagonisms increasingly shaped the political realm in Latin America, neoliberalism, a clean new utopia, offered an idiom for escaping the "diseases" and tumult of Latin American social insurgency.

In the 1990s the apparently concomitant spread of formal democracy and economic liberalism defined a compelling global future in Latin America. Yet, the absence of substantive alternatives to this vision has also been quite telling, for it points not only to an ideological crisis on the left but also to the legacy of asymmetrical "hot" wars waged against a wide range of social insurgencies. These conflicts led to mass deaths, the dissolution of institutions and social networks, and the effacement of collective memories. If neoliberalism exists in relationship to social and institutional networks and practices, as recent scholarship seeks to demonstrate, then the same analytical tools should be used to trace the histories and geographies—the lived possibilities—of alternatives to neoliberalism, as well.

Given its historical status as a postrevolutionary regime, Mexico has

long been held as an exceptional case in Latin America. Nonetheless, I believe that authoritarianism and social conflict played a similar and important role in establishing the context for neoliberalism's emergence in that country. Our understanding of the Dirty War in Mexico in the 1970s remains incomplete (Doyle, 2003), and Latin American geopolitics certainly influenced worldviews and policy choices within Mexico. Furthermore, as I have attempted to demonstrate here, patterns of authoritarianism at the national and subnational level played an important role in underpinning neoliberalism's emergence. Despite similar forms of social unrest and political conflict, the political contexts of Oaxaca and Monterrey have diverged markedly since the late 1960s. In Oaxaca, authoritarian populism has rolled forward, while in Monterrey political repression has accompanied the incremental rise of a neoconservative/neoliberal elite. In each location and in different ways institutional networks of political insurgency were dismantled, diminishing the significance of the rift that these political movements opened in the sphere of politics. In this light, regional differences in Mexico are not just a marker of strategies and conditions of development but also the product of historical and ongoing political struggles. Contemporary analyses of neoliberalism, which have remained largely untethered from these histories of conflict, can only be strengthened by (re)engaging such contextual legacies.

NOTES

1. The shopping mall has a website: www.puntacarretasshopping.com.uy/html/home/index.asp.
2. For further discussion of memory, landscapes, and state repression in Latin America see Jelin (2003).
3. The following paragraphs draw on Perreault and Martin (2005: 194–196).
4. Gill (2004) offers an exploration of the links between U.S.-mediated transnational military networks and the spread of an “American way of life” in Latin America.

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The Places, People, and Politics of Partnership

“AFTER NEOLIBERALISM”
IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

WENDY LARNER
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Since 1999 New Zealand’s fifth Labour¹ government has moved away from the “more-market” approaches that predominated in the preceding two decades. In the area of social policy a commitment to “social development” is now espoused. This new approach is based on an explicit rejection of neoliberalism (Clark, 2002), and the stated aspiration is to develop a new approach to social policy. Integral to the realization of the social development approach are “local partnerships” in which government departments are experimenting with new ways of grappling with social problems in collaboration with communities.

The modern social development approach recognizes that helping the individual means addressing problems such as the lack of skills or loss of confidence. Further, it recognizes that this is best done by working in partnership with the communities in which people live. (New Zealand Government, 2001: 2)

This chapter assesses the New Zealand social development approach in general, and the rise of local partnerships in particular, in the context of

debates about neoliberalism, cities, and contestation. How should we understand these new political aspirations and working arrangements? What are the spatialities of local partnerships in New Zealand? What are the implications for those who are involved in partnerships? And what does an analysis of local partnerships in New Zealand contribute to broader discussions of neoliberalism?

Following a brief theoretical discussion in which we situate our approach in relation to broader discussions of neoliberalism, cities, and contestation, we focus on the places, people, and politics of local partnerships in New Zealand. We begin by pointing out that, because of New Zealand's historical positioning as a resource-based economy, cities are not necessarily the places where the effects of neoliberalism have been most pronounced. Indeed, it is well established that it is Maori and Pacific communities—both rural and urban—who have been most disadvantaged by neoliberalism. We then show how, following the election of the fifth Labour government and the rise of the social development approach, these patterns of disadvantage came to be reflected in the geography and sociology of local partnerships.

We then turn our attention to the people and politics of partnership. We are particularly interested in those people we call, after Reich (2001), “strategic brokers”—the new actors being employed by government agencies and charged with the task of building collaborative relationships between government departments, local institutions, and communities. These new brokers are disproportionately women and/or from Maori and Pacific communities. Not only do they contend with the political legacies of neoliberalism, they also work across diverse organizational and cultural contexts, and their efforts are often poorly understood and inadequately resourced. Consequently they are often overcommitted and sometimes stressed. At the same time, however, these strategic brokers are catalysts for political and institutional changes that, in turn, are feeding back into government/community relationships,

We conclude by returning to theoretical discussions of neoliberalism, cities, and contestation. Our analysis of the places, people, and politics of local partnerships in New Zealand underlines the need for situated, process-oriented accounts of neoliberalism. While in our case it would be very easy to argue that the responsibility for addressing the consequences of neoliberalism has been off-loaded (yet again!) onto the backs of overworked and underpaid local bureaucrats and community activists, to make such an argument would be to risk underplaying the specificity and significance of the changes occurring. While there are indeed important questions to be asked about the political and personal costs associated with the rise of a “partnering state,” we argue that the efforts of the strategic brokers are playing a crucial role in contesting the parameters and logics of neoliberalism in New Zealand.

NEOLIBERALISM, CITIES, AND CONTESTATION

Despite recent calls for greater sensitivity to the geographical and cultural variants of neoliberalism (Peck, 2004), too often neoliberalism continues to be seen as a monolithic project that makes manifest the desires of hegemonic actors. In contrast, we are concerned to emphasize the "inventiveness" (Rose, 1999) of neoliberalism—the way it skews contestatory arguments, draws together discrete political projects in contingent ways, and involves post facto rationalizations (Larner, LeHeron, & Lewis, 2007). Understood in these terms, contestation is always and everywhere within neoliberalism, rather than simply being a reaction to hegemonic forces. This does not preclude our exploring the novel aspects of neoliberalism; indeed it encourages us to pay close attention to the emergence of new political forms. But it does mean we should be wary of portraying these political forms as univocal and prejudging their content and consequences.

Local partnerships are a useful lens through which to consider debates about neoliberalism and contestation. It is argued that local partnerships exemplify the ways in which governmental processes have moved away from the singular conceptions of society that dominated during the postwar period, to multiple and heterogeneous conceptions of the social embodied in the term "community" (Rose, 1999; Marinetto, 2003). It is also well understood that this new mobilization of community involves reterritorialization in the form of increasing spatial differentiation and fragmentation (Imrie & Raco, 2003). Indeed, it is in part through these discussions of the new sociologies and geographies of local partnerships that cities have emerged as key sites for understanding the processes associated with the rise of neoliberalism, particularly in the United Kingdom.

The Janus-faced nature of the processes involved in the constitution of local partnerships has been recognized; for example, Gough (2002) argues that communities mobilize themselves in an oppositional mode but also have been mobilized "from above." However, in most analyses the conclusion is that the new subjects and spaces of community are being co-opted into hegemonic projects and that the neoliberal state still controls community processes and outcomes despite the rhetoric of collaboration (cf. Clarke & Glendinning, 2002; Imrie & Raco, 2003; McDonald & Marston, 2002; Schofield, 2002; Mayer, Chapter 5, this volume). Seen in this context, local partnerships exemplify the flanking compensatory civil society mechanisms that are understood to characterize neoliberalism more generally (Castree, 2005).

Both our theoretical orientations and research findings make us wary of generalizing this characterization of local partnerships. In New Zealand there are signs not only of the "governmentalization" of community but also of the "communitization" of government; that is, as the people and

practices of partnership are being brought into government, so too are they giving rise to changes in the nature of the state (see also Jones, Goodwin, Jones, & Simpson, 2004). The rise of a “partnering state” is not wide-scale reform *per se*; it is highly localized and much further developed in some government departments than others, or in some local authorities rather than others. But at the same time, we would argue that it is worthy of our attention. While it does not signal a complete break with neoliberalism—hence the use of scare quotes in our title—and nor does it represent a return to the political understandings that underpinned the postwar welfare state, there is evidence of a more collaborative approach emerging in the New Zealand social sector. This underlines the need to think of neoliberalism as a situated process and to focus carefully on the specific political formations emerging in particular contexts.

In making this argument, we draw on two stages of empirical research conducted as part of a larger project on neoliberalism and local partnerships in New Zealand (www.lpg.org.nz). The first stage of the research involved identifying the new initiatives that were bringing together government agencies, local institutions, and *iwi* (Maori) community organizations across more traditional vertical relationships. To achieve this task we collated relevant background documentation, conducted key informant interviews, and held two workshops to share our interim findings with government officials and community sector representatives. The second stage of the research, conducted a year later, involved semistructured interviews with 22 strategic brokers working in the “headline” local partnership programs. By this time the government’s new social development approach had been in place for 3 years. The aim was to learn more about the strategic brokers themselves and to examine the issues arising in their efforts to build local partnerships.

THE “NEW ZEALAND EXPERIMENT”

The “New Zealand Experiment” of the past two decades is internationally recognized as an exemplary case of neoliberalism and market-oriented restructuring. During the 1980s, economic reforms initiated by a nominally social democratic Labour government saw the removal of tariffs from a highly protected domestic manufacturing sector in order to encourage competition on a “level playing field,” the corporatization and privatization of resource-based industries such as forestry and mining, and government withdrawal from major infrastructural services such as post offices, banks, and telecommunications. These reforms had geographically uneven consequences, including the declining significance of rural industries (such as pulp and paper mills and meat processing plants), the growing concentra-

tion of economic activity in major metropolitan centers at the expense of provincial towns and cities, and within these metropolitan centers a new emphasis on the service sector at the expense of manufacturing (Britton, LeHeron & Pawson, 1992; Le Heron & Pawson, 1996).

One immediate consequence of these economic reforms was a dramatic increase in unemployment. Not surprisingly, given established patterns ethnically based occupational segregation, Maori and Pacific workers were disproportionately represented among the newly unemployed (Ongley, 1996). In the early 1990s, following a change of government, the economic reform program was succeeded by a series of social reforms that involved severe cuts to social spending and a substantial reduction in benefit levels. Again, these experiences were highly racialized, with Maori and Pacific families in rural communities and working-class suburbs disproportionately represented among those struggling to survive on reduced and increasingly targeted benefits, and most likely to find themselves coping with the direct and indirect consequences of poverty.

By the late 1990s both the economic and social foundations of Keynesian welfarism in New Zealand had been fundamentally eroded. Rather than the focus of governmental activity being a relatively closed national economy and the primary policy goal that of promoting full employment, economic policies were designed to integrate domestic activities into global flows and networks. This new economic formulation privileged new industries and occupations, particularly in the service sector, and contributed to the increasing economic dominance of cities such as Auckland and Wellington. Moreover, in contrast to the male breadwinner model that underpinned the welfare state, in this formulation participation in paid work for both men and women was understood to be the primary basis for social inclusion, with a diminished welfare state responsible only for residual support.

During the same period, however, and somewhat paradoxically, there was also greater recognition of the long-standing political claims of Maori, and notions of biculturalism began to have a sustained impact in the state sector (Larner, 2002). While the political claims for neoliberalism and biculturalism emerged from quite different constituencies and were not reducible to each other, as Mason Durie (1998: 11) observes, "Positive Maori development, with its focus on tribal responsibilities for health, education, economic progress and greater autonomy, fitted quite comfortably with the free market philosophy of a minimal state, non-government provision of services, economic self-sufficiency and privatization." These new features of the sociopolitical landscape, in combination with the well documented ethnically linked socioeconomic disparities that had ensued from the restructuring of the previous decades, gave rise to an emphasis on ethnicity, rather than gender or class, as the major axis of difference for government policies and programs. Maori, and by association Pacific communities,

emerged as an explicit focus for targeted economic and social initiatives during the 1990s.

AFTER NEOLIBERALISM?

Today there is a new “New Zealand Experiment.” While the policies of the fifth Labour government continue to emphasize global connectedness and participation in paid employment, there are also sustained efforts to institutionally re-embed economic and social relations. One consequence is the building of new relationships, many of which are with nontraditional economic and social actors. For example, environment and culture have entered into the domain of economic policy, and community and ethnic diversity now feature centrally in social policy. There is also a new approach to policymaking and service provision. Collaboration and partnership are now identified at the highest possible level “as our normal way of doing business” (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, 2003). It is in this context that local partnerships have risen to political prominence, particularly in the area of social policy. Thus, whereas in other contexts local partnerships may have been closely associated with the reconstitution of community organizations as “little fingers of the state” (Nyland, 1993), in New Zealand they are explicitly associated with efforts to move beyond the competitive contractual approaches that characterized earlier “more market” variants of neoliberalism.

Maori—and by extension Pacific—communities are an explicit focus of these ambitions to address economic and social disparities through local partnerships. On one level this emphasis is not surprising in that it is underpinned by demographic trends. Maori now account for 15% of the total population and Pacific people an additional 7%. Both groups are also steadily increasing as a proportion of the overall population, with demographers estimating that by the middle of this century the Maori population will have doubled and Pacific populations tripled. At the same time, Maori and Pacific people continue to underperform on most economic and social indicators. But perhaps even more importantly, the emphasis on Maori and Pacific communities also reflects the commitment of the fifth Labour government to explicitly address the racialization of economic and social disadvantage that ensued from earlier periods of neoliberalism. Consequently, social policy and service delivery arrangements often explicitly target Maori and Pacific communities by including ethnically specific components, and concepts such as self-determination and the desirability of the cultural matching of service providers and clients have become central to understandings of social well-being.

Building on established traditions of community involvement in areas

such as safety and education, and moves toward interagency service provision that date from the 1990s, local partnerships make manifest the new ambition to join up government agencies, local institutions and community organizations—including iwi and urban Maori organizations—in an effort to develop community infrastructure and capacity. They are most often found in sectors such as health, housing, and community development that are understood to involve “cross-cutting” and “intractable” problems that require local infrastructure to develop effective solutions. These new definitions of social problems (i.e., poor housing is not only about inadequate housing but also about issues of health and poverty) have also underlined the need for innovation in the social sector and drawn in a new range of actors. Some of the partnership programs are based on international models, whereas others have involved the scaling-up of local initiatives. Given the emphasis on experimentation and change, it is probably not surprising that many of these new programs are pilots, and they are often characterized by short-term or seed-stage funding.

The programs engage both geographical communities and ethnic communities (Larner, 2005). The first is predominant. Socioeconomic indicators are used to identify “at-risk” communities, for example, low-decile (schooling), overcrowded (housing), and high-offender (safety) communities. Not surprisingly, these are most often those communities that were particularly hard-hit by increased unemployment and are disproportionately concentrated in poorer working-class suburbs on the outskirts of major urban areas and in rural areas such as Northland and the East Cape. These geographical definitions of community sit uneasily beside ethnically based definitions of community in initiatives that explicitly target Maori and Pacific people. Nor are these always clearly distinguished from one another. In part, this is because even local partnerships based on geographical definitions of community tend to be located in areas where Maori and Pacific people are overrepresented. While this emphasis is explained in part by the racialization of poverty, it is notable that few other impoverished ethnic communities are explicitly targeted by local partnerships. For example, poor migrant and refugee communities, together with poor Pakeha communities, are defined as part of broader geographical communities.

These distinctive geographies and sociologies of local partnerships are, of course, in large part the legacy of earlier forms of (contested) neoliberalism. Local partnerships are most likely to be found in those areas of New Zealand where the effects of neoliberalism were most dramatic—in small rural towns, provincial resource towns, and former working-class suburbs. During the 1990s increasing economic hardship, accompanied by social fragmentation, saw many of these communities struggle against increasing odds to retain a sense of economic and social well-being. At the same time, they often retained an established community infrastructure, as opposed to

the more fragmented and demoralizing experiences described elsewhere in this collection. Moreover, throughout this period both community based activists and local bureaucrats continued to struggle against the worst excesses of neoliberalism (Larner & Craig, 2005). When the broader political context changed, so too were these political actors well placed to take advantage of the new political opportunities offered by the social development approach and the associated rise of local partnerships.

THE ROLE OF STRATEGIC BROKERS

The new emphasis on local partnerships as a means of addressing economic and social polarization has had significant implications for the social sector as a whole. Both central and local government agencies are now seeking out those individuals who have the background and experience to build collaborative relationships between government, local institutions, and community organizations. Those who fill these positions are not only required to exercise new forms of leadership and management skills but are also expected to introduce new cultures of working and learning into their institutions. In particular, they are valued for their relational skills, their ability to bring together diverse constituencies in order to develop new ways of dealing with social issues. But what happens when community oriented actors, engaged precisely for their relational skills and grassroots networks, are integrated into the institutional context and organizational culture of government agencies? Are they simply coopted? Or are they able to effect changes in the arenas in which they are working? To examine these issues we draw on our interview findings to focus on the people at the heart of local partnerships and examine their backgrounds and experiences.

Who exactly are these people who work between and across divergent organizations to build local partnership programs? Given the emphasis on innovation, it is not surprising that in New Zealand local partnerships take multiple forms, depending on the government departments, intermediate institutions and community groups involved. Correspondingly, while most of our interviewees occupied newly created positions, they represented a wide spectrum of involvement with local partnership programs. Their job titles were disparate, ranging from those that explicitly included reference to the new emphasis on relationality (e.g., relationships manager, general manager partnerships) to those whose relatively conventional job titles obscured the new content of their responsibilities (e.g., executive director, national operations manager). Their contractual status also varied, with some working directly for government agencies and others as independent consultants. Similarly, relationships with the day-to-day activity of the pro-

grams included some who were office-based, whereas others spent most of their time in the field.

Despite the apparent diversity of their formal involvement in the partnership programs, there were strong commonalities in their personal attributes and background experiences. Most immediately, the overwhelmingly majority were middle-aged, university-educated Pakeha women, confirming our earlier claims that in New Zealand local partnerships are a feminized domain (Larner & Craig, 2005; Roelvink & Craig, 2005). The gendered nature of partnerships was recognized by some of our respondents. For the men, partnership working was understood to be related to more traditional concepts of networking, whereas among the women it was seen as a more "feminine" way of working. As one interviewee said, "I think that the New Zealand economy runs on a heck of a lot of goodwill and the bulk of it is women-driven" (Interview 13, March 11, 2004). Maori and Pacific people were also overrepresented, accounting for one-third of those interviewed, and many of the Pakeha respondents also had commitments to Maori, most notably manifest in their ability to speak *te reo* (the Maori language).²

It was common for respondents to have begun work in the social sector as practitioners—teachers, nurses, social workers, health professionals—and then moved into brokering work. While they understood their professional backgrounds to be relevant to their current work, more important was their experience in the community sector. All of the respondents had long histories of community involvement, either paid or unpaid. This involvement taught them how to negotiate the politics of community organizations, form committees and networks, lobby, fundraise, and write reports and so on. Moreover, while they were not necessarily political activists in a narrow sense, they had a strong sense of social justice that they attributed to their sustained commitment to community-based activities. Consequently in their new positions they understood themselves to be jointly leveraging professional skills gained through formal employment with political and organizational know-how gained from community-based experience.

Their rationales for becoming involved in partnership work were also remarkably similar. They were clear about their role as "change agents" and spoke passionately about their efforts to transform organizational cultures and practices:

I believe that there needs to be a fundamental change if we are actually going to make this goal of ensuring that young people feel that somebody's going look after them or be on their case . . . that they're going to have positive opportunities and options to choose from. If we're going to do that then . . . there's a cultural shift that has to happen that enables that to be. (Interview 9, June 14, 2004)

The ability to work within and across organizations by identifying those people who privileged horizontal relationships and tacit knowledge over hierarchical structures and formal contracts was clearly key to these aspirations. But nor were they unduly romantic about how organizational change could be achieved. These were not the “feel-good” stereotypes that might be expected to inhabit a social policy domain characterized by relationality; rather, they were self-described “no-nonsense” people. Indeed, interviewees spoke explicitly of the need to have this ability in order to reconcile the competing demands that characterize partnerships and to be able to “say no when no is needed.”

They bring to their work a diverse set of skills. Although content-based knowledge is important, when asked about relevant skills they were most likely to stress the personal qualities, values, and philosophical beliefs they saw as crucial to keeping partnerships alive. Honesty, integrity, patience, a sense of humor, and “establishing credibility from the start by calling your own values” (Interview 2, March 10, 2004) were all explicitly discussed. Diplomacy, political sensitivity, and multicultural awareness were also frequently mentioned, as was the ability to think holistically and listen carefully. Of particular importance was the perceived need to be proactive; to be able to think and plan strategically, see gaps, and fix problems. Finally, emotional skills are recruited, quite literally, into partnership roles.

Good process is easy to learn, and you apply the process once you’ve got a good understanding of what you are doing. But if you are process driven but you can’t relate to people you are working with, you will never get any traction—and that’s the emotional side of the performance, that connectivity and it is a rare bird . . . so that’s where we value the emotional rather than intellectual. (Interview 21, February 25, 2004)

At the same time, effective partnership working demands institutional knowledge and technical expertise in order to develop structures, manage organizations, write reports, manage contracts, and establish financial systems. Strategic brokers thus need to be able to “look both ways”; that is, they need to be comfortable in community settings but also familiar with the culture and expectations of government agencies. Indeed, this experience of different sectors and modes of working is an important factor in enabling the work they do. Not surprisingly, given their dual loyalties to community and government, interviewees often explicitly mentioned the fact that despite their institutional location they didn’t feel like public servants. As one person explained, “I could have said, ‘No, it’s 5 o’clock now, I’m sorry, I’m off duty.’ But it doesn’t work like that for me. I’ve still got that social work focus and background and want to be able to help” (Interview 10, June 16, 2004).

PILOTING PARTNERSHIPS: CHANGING PATTERNS OF INVOLVEMENT

By definition, local partnerships involve developing new innovative projects in small, newly opened institutional spaces. Consequently, the forms local partnerships take are strongly influenced by the brokers, and both the "how-to" of the partnership and the success of subsequent projects are often personified. As one broker explained, "You could never have drawn up a contract to do this job. . . . You need to have the person. If I'm going to move on I need to identify a person. . . . There's no way you could put an ad in the paper and get [them]" (Interview 9, June 4, 2004).

Many of those interviewed spoke of long-standing efforts to broker without prior recognition, and regardless of title or job description. Typically they had actively sought out the opportunity to become involved in local partnership programs, seeing this as a means to advance the values they considered essential to the new social development approach. There were also those recruited more directly from community or iwi organizations, who were more likely to be explicit about their political activism. They retained direct contact with grassroots organizations, but their new status meant that they played a different role in the effort to achieve local aspirations. This experience was often but not always associated with Maori brokers.

In many cases the genesis of a local partnership was no more than an expressed desire for diverse organizations to work together. The development of the program is then heavily dependent on the vision and activities of the strategic broker. They use their personal networks to access community organizations, then develop expertise and build further relationships as the partnership grows. Often these roles begin as part-time or seed-funded jobs, but as the programs gather momentum so too do the jobs grow. Indeed, we would argue that as local partnerships have become institutionally embedded in the everyday workings of government, so too have distinctive patterns of involvement emerged.

More specifically, the role of the strategic broker changes as the partnerships themselves become more formally recognized. This is a symbiotic relationship where development of the partnership and the career of the strategic broker evolve together. It takes the form of a movement from ad hoc and operational activities to strategic and policy interventions, reflected in the shift from pilot programs to more enduring institutional initiatives. The story below is not unusual:

It was still [in the] reasonably early days of the initiative. . . . [There were] a lot of teething problems they were still dealing with in terms of implementation. . . . I was in a position to be on the front line, out there with the social

workers and providers, having a look at what was going on, and I provided a bit of an analysis in a report to the national manager at that time. And that led on to me doing a bit of a project plan . . . and I just continued in that part-time capacity starting to work on it. In the meantime he had considered everything and established a full-time role in coordination, because the initiative needed that kind of focus, really. (Interview 5, June 2, 2004)

Clearly, the distinction must be made between a local partnership as an organizational entity and the efforts of particular strategic brokers. Yet, as we have intimated, these are closely connected. While some who have been with the initiatives from the start downplay their individual involvement, the interviews revealed the extent to which their roles were critical to fulfilling broader ambitions for local partnerships. It is the strategic broker who is responsible for the demanding and hands-on work involved in the implementation of what are usually innovative and experimental projects. It is no surprise, therefore, that interviewees spoke of the challenges of their work in a wider sense, amalgamating the daily difficulties of their role with the inevitable tensions and conflict built into projects that by definition involve diverse political agendas, multiple stakeholders, and negotiated outcomes.

THE POLITICS OF PARTNERSHIP

The pronounced shift toward “mandatory partnership working” by government agencies has placed a huge burden on strategic brokers. Not only must they liaise across government departments, they must also bridge the gap between the “top-down” approach of central government agencies and the “bottom-up” ways of working more commonly associated with communities, *iwi*, and (some) local authorities. Moreover, the antagonism between government and community organizations that was one of the legacies of the 1980s and 1990s has not necessarily abated, and there remains considerable skepticism in some communities about the motivation for local partnerships. Finally, many brokers experience considerable conflict as they negotiate official statements of their agencies’ position and their own views. For Maori and Pacific brokers, who are often required to speak both for their own communities and the government agency for which they work, these tensions are particularly acute. In this section we outline in more detail four specific sets of challenges regularly negotiated by the strategic brokers.

First, strategic brokers are working in institutional spaces that are both changed and changing. Partnership work is inevitably conducted on the boundaries of conventional organizations in the especially selected, less in-

stitutionally dense, spaces where innovation may flourish. Indeed, becoming a strategic broker sometimes can mean literally "being" an innovation rather than just acting innovatively within a defined and established role. In this context, it is notable that, of the 22 brokers we interviewed, seven had either written their own job description or didn't have one because they had been employed on the basis of tasks to be completed rather than a formal job. Moreover, many of these positions involved limited-term contracts rather than permanent positions. In this regard, the strategic brokers are positioned in strategic points of "on-the-ground" tension in the context of significant institutional change.

More generally, while usually the broad ambitions for the partnership are identified by stakeholders, the work required to realize these ambitions by developing new solutions to familiar problems is often left to the brokers themselves. On the one hand, this means considerable freedom to determine how the new aspirations for relationality will be made manifest. On the other hand, the onus is on them to decide what and how things will be done differently in a context where there are relatively few guidelines³ and where it is well recognized that the rhetoric and practice of partnership don't always stack up. To further complicate matters, their work is taking place in a highly volatile context. As mentioned earlier, many of the partnership projects are pilots and so can be sacrificed according to the winds of political change and/or the whims of ministers. Partnership programs thus involve constant pressures to innovate in a highly politicized environment.⁴

Second, by definition strategic brokers are constantly negotiating the demands of multiple stakeholders and accountabilities. They embody the need for local partnerships to be flexible, generative, and responsive and must also span divergent organizational cultures in order to build networks and connections. However, this often leaves them in a precarious position in relation to these organizations. As one interviewee explained, "The main challenge is I've got two masters and sometimes they don't necessarily want the same things" (Interview 2, February 17, 2004). Another commented, "One of the key problems for me is that I'm kind of not owned by anybody. I'm owned by a management group" (Interview 10, June 16, 2004). Ironically, given their task of building relationships, many echoed these comments and spoke of a sense of "not belonging" and of being "owned by everyone and no one." They felt that they had limited backup and were sometimes isolated.

These multiple accountabilities are not simply organizational or sectoral. When asked about the issues for strategic brokers, one respondent replied, "Well, one is to do with just the stretch. I mean, there are a hell of a lot of groups out there, and there's only one of me" (Interview 3, March 9, 2004). Not only are they working across government agencies and local in-

stitutions, they are often working with multiple communities. Because of the emphasis on local solutions, each community is seen as different, and the task of the broker is to recognize and respect those differences. Moreover, because of the distinctive geographies and sociologies of local partnership programs in New Zealand, these differences are likely to be both geographical and cultural:

You really do have to have that credibility, you have to have the trust and the experience, particularly for organizations like *Mana Whenua*. With community organizations, they have to trust in you, the person, before they'll actually believe anything you may have to offer. And know how to communicate different things to different communities, so what I say to Howick won't necessarily be the same way I say it to Mangere or Otara. They all have their own different processes, so you've got to know those things. (Interview 20, February 17, 2004).⁵

The third set of issues involves the "cultural clash" between the traditional expectations of government agencies and the new emphasis on relationality. It is clear that, despite a rhetorical commitment to partnership and even the political will to do things differently, many government agencies do not yet provide a supportive organizational framework for local partnerships and their brokers. Despite their efforts, tightly delineated performance agreements, targeted outputs, and contracts for service are still the main way of operating in the social sector and mitigate against effective collaboration (Larner & Butler, 2005). Nor does the need for audit trails and documented proof of transparent processes sit easily with the face-to-face trust-based relationships associated with community activism.

Close political scrutiny of the new programs adds an additional level of complexity to these tensions. With the current emphasis on social development, the shift to partnership working as a mandatory tool, and government claiming that local partnerships are successful ways of achieving social outcomes, joint working with communities has been brought into public view. The ensuing dilemma is discussed below:

For 10 years we were able to work quietly from behind. . . . While we were behind we were also protected from exposure where things didn't work, and a lot of that happens when you're being innovative and testing and experimental just trying things. Now we work in a very high-risk environment. We also have people who were recruited into the role to act in a nonbureaucratic way, so they are not used to documenting due process. And we've been able to be very honest on a verbal level with each other, and with our community organizations. And the result of new expectations about documented process has led to some of the adverse publicity. Because you can make anything look stupid unless somebody who's been trained to

has documented it the way that makes it look OK. The risks associated with freely available audit trails, etc., means that they may severely constrain the way that we are able to (a) be innovative and (b) manage risk effectively. (Interview 7, June 17, 2004)

Fourth, and finally, all of these issues are particularly pronounced for those working with Maori and Pacific communities, particularly if they themselves are from those communities. The political emphasis on improving the well-being of Maori and Pacific people means that strategic brokers committed to these communities are being increasingly integrated into the processes and structures of government. However, these brokers face acute challenges in their efforts to link these little "p" partnerships back to the big "P" Partnership based on the Treaty of Waitangi (McIntosh, 2003).⁶ In addition to all the other issues discussed above, these brokers face a bigger burden of trust in their community engagements as they confront the historical legacies of institutional racism and monoculturalism. The communities they are working with are more likely to be geographically spread, particularly if ethnicity rather than geography is the organizing principle for the partnership. Their difficulties are compounded by the assumption that "any Maori or Pacific person will do," still too common in government departments and local institutions, in a context where local solutions are as likely to be driven by specific tribal agendas as by national politics.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have discussed the places, people and politics of local partnerships in Aotearoa New Zealand. Whereas the literature on neoliberalism and contestation tends to focus on urban politics, in New Zealand the legacies of neoliberalism are as likely to be pronounced in rural areas and small provincial towns and are most likely to involve Maori and Pacific communities. Consequently, efforts to address these legacies "after neoliberalism" through initiatives such as local partnerships have distinctive geographic and ethnic characteristics. Moreover, whereas analysts elsewhere have focused on how local partnerships have resulted in the "governmentalization" of community, the focus herein has been on the "communitization" of government. Our aim has been to make visible the new community-based actors moving into government agencies and local institutions and to examine the issues that have emerged for them as they have engaged in coalition building, program development, and institutional design.

We do not underestimate the challenges and dilemmas these actors face. Partnership working creates a space in which the professional, political, and personal collide. Holding together multiple notions of partnership

(political, institutional, cultural, personal) and leveraging these is the daily business of strategic brokers. To do this effectively, they need to be able to work in a variety of paradigms and negotiate multiple accountabilities to diverse stakeholders. Knowledge of governmental processes, a strong belief in the wisdom and expertise of communities, and cultural sensitivity are all seen as crucial attributes for strategic brokers. They also “translate” between different constituencies: “It’s a lot of translation, you know, we talk about, not ethnic translation—it’s local government speak, community development speak, more translation goes on—you’ve got to have that skill” (Interview 20, February 17, 2004). But our broader point is that, despite all the difficulties, their efforts also involve transformation, most immediately embodied in the strategic broker themselves but increasingly seen among the agencies and groups they work with. As one broker reflected, “Processes change, they get changed. People influence them and eventually they get changed. I’d like to think I’m having that influence here, slowly” (Interview 4, March 8, 2004). Thus, as participatory approaches have become more integral to social policy and service delivery, not only have new political actors moved into government agencies, but so too have new governmental structures and practices emerged. The emphasis on local partnerships and the efforts of these brokers has seen the launch of a wide range of new community-based initiatives, the shape and content of which have been determined in “bottom-up” ways. Moreover, while contractualism remains, it is now associated with the redeployment of techniques such as Memoranda of Understanding and Partnership Agreements to ensure that the demands of collaboration and relationality are met by government agencies and community organizations alike (Larner & Butler, 2005).

As increasing numbers of Maori and Pacific brokers move into government agencies and local institutions, there is also evidence of important cultural change. For many Maori brokers, bringing a treaty-based approach into a local partnership program, thereby promoting changes in governance structures and creating new roles in organizations, is of primary concern. One notable example involved the broadening of a city council committee structure to encompass two chair people, creating a model where executive meetings involved mainstream and autonomous Maori signatories at the same table. Subsequently a *Kaiwhakahaere*⁷ role was created to identify strategic health issues for Maori in the region and to build working relationships with Maori service providers. This development was described by the broker concerned as “a reflection of the treaty, our specific intent around the treaty and response to the treaty at an operational level” (Interview 20, February 17, 2004). Certainly, it demonstrates how a small “p” partnership can embody the big “P” Partnership, and more generally why the discourse and practice of partnership resonates so strongly in contemporary New Zealand.

But have local partnerships really opened new spaces for empowerment, or do such initiatives simply rework the nexus of government at a distance? By championing a new approach to social policy and service delivery, are these strategic brokers successfully contesting neoliberalism, or are they simply pragmatic actors responding to the unexpected outcomes of devolutionary change and the realignment of institutional arenas? Our argument is that, while this is far from being a simple good news story of successful political engagement and strategic brokers remain in tough marginal positions, they are indeed beginning to change the institutions and culture of government. We are very aware that we may be accused of making an overly optimistic conclusion, but so too are we wary of overlooking the ways in which people can and do make a difference to political processes. We wish to underline the point both theoretically and empirically that governance is always and everywhere a political accomplishment—historically produced through place-specific struggles and contestation.

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NOTES

1. The first Labour government was elected in 1935. Since then both Labour and National (conservative) parties have held the roles of government and opposition. In 1993 New Zealand moved to a form of proportional representation; however, the habit of naming the ruling coalition after the majority party remains.
2. Over half of our respondents spoke at least some Maori, in comparison to 15% of the total New Zealand population.
3. The recent publication of *Mosaics* represents an effort to fill this gap (Ministry of Social Development, 2003).
4. The disestablishment of the Community Employment Group, following adverse publicity around one of its grants, underlines this point.
5. *Mana Whenua* is the customary authority held by a Maori tribal group. Howick, Otara, and Mangere are all South Auckland suburbs. Howick is relatively affluent and now has a large Asian population, whereas Otara and Mangere are working-class Pacific suburbs.

6. In recent reworkings of how the Treaty of Waitangi is to be understood, “partnership” has come to be understood as the central tenet of this founding document.
7. A term that is being increasingly used to describe a broker whose job involves pushing Maori issues to the fore.

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Contesting the Neoliberalization of Urban Governance

MARGIT MAYER

This chapter looks at contemporary contestations of urban governance that challenge its participation in the neoliberal project. As neoliberal restructuring strategies have reconfigured individual states across the various Western welfare regimes, a variety of social movements have responded by addressing and challenging neoliberal urban policies and their consequences. However, these policies and their consequences have transformed not only the forms and spaces of urban governance but also social movement terrains, breaking up familiar patterns and creating new frontiers and cleavages of contestation. The urban movement literature has barely begun to take note of these transformations (see Pickvance, 2003).

By placing the analysis of the major fault lines along which these contemporary urban contestations take place within the framework of ongoing neoliberal restructuring, this chapter seeks to identify the novel features—the particular strengths as well as dilemmas—of the new kinds of contestations. It draws on original as well as secondary research on urban movements, especially in the United States and Germany over the past decade. This research reveals that many of the elements from the cycles of urban protest familiar since the 1960s have disappeared with the demise of radical squatting and antigentrification movements; that alternative movement infrastructures appear eroded; and that the “neighborhood rebellions” of blighted areas have been surpassed by revitalization and stabilization

efforts involving former grassroots activists as economic developers or community managers. Neoliberalism has in many ways created a more hostile environment for progressive urban movements, forcing them and their advocates and supporters to regroup and rethink their priorities.

Cities are today confronting a more competitive (global) environment, and local governments have taken to place-marketing, enterprise zones, tax abatements, public-private partnerships, and new forms of local boosterism—but also have reached out for new strategies of social control and workfare policies. Urban forms of governance have become entrepreneurialized, emphasizing economic efficiency, low taxes, individual responsibility, and user fees; the most important goal of urban policy has become to mobilize city space as an arena for market-oriented economic growth. Brenner and Theodore (2002) have differentiated between an initial phase of “protoneoliberalism,” when cities became flashpoints for major economic dislocations and struggles, particularly in the sphere of social reproduction; the era of “roll-back neoliberalism” in the 1980s, when municipalities introduced a variety of cost-cutting measures, cutbacks in public services, and the privatization of infrastructural facilities; and a phase of “roll-out neoliberalism,” which has responded, since the 1990s, to the contradictions of the earlier zero-sum kind of entrepreneurialism. While the basic neoliberal imperative of mobilizing city space as an arena for growth and market discipline remains the dominant municipal project, “roll-out neoliberalism” has established some flanking mechanisms and modes of crisis displacement such as local economic development policies and community-based programs to alleviate “social exclusion,” and it has introduced new forms of coordination and interorganizational networking among previously distinct spheres of local state intervention (pp. 26–27). That is, social, political, and ecological criteria have become included (while also redefined) in the efforts to promote economic competitiveness; social infrastructures, political culture, and ecological foundations of the city are being transformed into economic assets wherever possible.

The argument developed here is that the shape and dynamics of urban contestation have been influenced by these waves of neoliberalization of urban governance. While urban movements of the 1970s and early 1980s had been part of a broader social mobilization in the aftermath of the various 1960s movements, linked to “rising expectations” and political openings, and their resistance to urban renewal and uneven distribution of resources and their demands for improved collective consumption were embedded in a vibrant infrastructure of progressive alternative projects, since then, movement milieus have confronted continuously maturing neoliberal policy regimes with contradictory effects.

While grinding away at the Keynesian-welfarist and social collectivist institutions (roll-back) and while constructing and consolidating neoliberal

modes of governance and regulatory relations (roll-out), neoliberal policies have also had the effect of integrating the movement critique of bureaucratic Keynesianism, of occupying formerly progressive goals and mottos such as “self-reliance” and “autonomy”—and redefining them in a regressive, individualized, and competitive direction. On the one hand, many of the participatory demands of the early urban movements have apparently been fulfilled, and many former social movement organizations now work as service delivery or respected advocacy organizations, but on the other hand their political influence and mobilizing capacity have in many ways eroded, and the local governance structure of which they have become a part is under enormous pressure, as more and more responsibilities and risks have been decentralized or downloaded to local administrations, though municipal budgets are squeezed as never before.

Already, with the deregulation and dismantlement of the 1980s, the conditions of urban conflict began to change dramatically: Distributive policies were increasingly replaced by measures to strengthen urban competitiveness. As a consequence, sociospatial polarization intensified, and wealth and opportunities became more unevenly distributed. During the roll-out phase of neoliberalism of the 1990s, new discourses of reform (such as welfare dependency, the activating state, community regeneration, social capital; see Mayer, 2003) and new institutions and modes of delivery were fashioned (such as integrated area development, civic engagement, public-private partnerships in urban regeneration and social welfare; see Eick, Grell, Mayer, & Sambale, 2004). Both the new discourses and the partnering programs emphasize but also instrumentalize “community” and other social networks and assets toward the goal of a competitive and revitalized urban growth machine.

These developments have meant that the foundations upon which generalized resistance might be constructed have eroded; as a consequence, spaces of contestation have become restricted. But there are at least four frontiers along which mobilization has continued to focus, all of which challenge one or another form of the neoliberalization of urban governance:

1. Challenges have arisen to the growth politics that have come to dominate the municipal repertoire. Movements have emerged that fight the new downtown developments, contest the discriminatory patterns of investment and disinvestment transforming city centers, and resist the entrepreneurial ways in which cities market themselves and compete on regional and global scales. As cities rebuild their downtowns into producer-oriented service centers, seek to attract tourism or convention industries as well as upscale residents, effects have been gentrification, displacement, and con-

gestion, and neighborhoods not fitting into this design have been abandoned. Many of the movements opposing the new competitive urban politics have also fought the negative effects of these politics, the concomitant deterioration of urban services, and the neglect of neighborhoods that have fallen by the wayside.

2. Blighted and poor neighborhoods have long been the turf of community-based or neighborhood-oriented activism, but this responsibility has increasingly been pushed into frameworks of territorially oriented programs such as “neighborhood management” in European Union countries and similar “comprehensive” development programs supported by foundations or empowerment zone programs in North America. Thus grassroots organizations tied into programs combating “social exclusion” now increasingly find themselves managing the new spatial and social polarization on the community level—and their social economy and community empowerment ambitions become instrumentalized for neoliberal activation strategies.

3. Mobilizations against the neoliberalization of social and labor market policies, against the dismantling of the welfare state, and for social and environmental justice have come to the forefront of urban activism over the past decade. Social justice in particular has become the realm of many advocacy nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and workers’ rights organizations, many of which appear to converge, in more and more countries, into a new type of broad coalition politics.

4. While all of these arenas reflect the global context that has led to the redesign of urban governance, this context becomes most manifest in the recent “discovery” by the so-called anti-globalization movements of “the local.” These movements increasingly see localities as the scale where global neoliberalism “touches down” to make itself felt, where global issues become localized. Particularly in Europe, networks that are part of this transnational movement have been importing repertoires and goals from global-scale protest, often in collaboration with the social justice alliances characteristic of the third frontier.

The following sections explore each of these areas where the neoliberalization of cities and their governance is currently contested. Though each one of these areas evidences a broad spectrum of approaches and orientations, the defining characteristics of contemporary urban activism—that is, what distinguishes it from earlier urban contestations—emerge best when we see the movements in relationship to the (local) state and the various neoliberal policies that have triggered them. This context also helps us identify the particular dilemmas that contemporary urban activism confronts, which are summarized in the final section.

CONTESTING CORPORATE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Within the Fordist growth model, municipal policies had focused on expanding the urban infrastructure and managing large-scale urban renewal. In contrast, the growth-first approach to urban development, with which many cities reacted to the decline of inner-city middle-class population and business commitment, put social investment and redistribution second. This public sector austerity went hand in hand with a limited urban policy repertoire, emphasizing place promotion, supply-side intervention, central-city makeovers, that is, the rebuilding and expansion of downtowns into attractive up-scale service centers or “world-class” conference and hospitality destinations (see Hall & Hubbard, 1998). With so-called mega-events, cities began to engage in subsidizing zero-sum competition, not only via large-scale projects (such as waterfront redevelopment schemes, train station makeovers, or efforts to attract expositions, conventions, Olympics, etc.) but also via theme-enhanced urban entertainment centers. Success in this competition depends to a large extent on the packaging and sale of urban place *images*, which have therefore become as important as the measures to keep the downtowns and event spaces clean and free of “undesirables” and “dangerous elements” (such as youths, the homeless, beggars, prostitutes, and other potential “disrupters”). Not only have such “undesirable” groups been relocated to marginal areas, where they could be “fenced off as a wild zone” (Lees, 2003: 630), but also urban renaissance initiatives have been ambivalent about urban diversity: Where cultural diversity can be marketed for cultural consumption, it may well be promoted—at the very same time that social controls limiting diversity are promoted!

The new growth politics make cities compete not only in terms of their place images but also for capital to build new offices and plants and provide jobs—a competition that companies are skillfully exploiting. National and international corporations have increasingly resorted to demands for incentive packages to locate in or retain their operations in particular places, pitting localities against one another. The corporate participants in this “bidding war” have far greater options than the economic developers or mayors they deal with. As national governments have tended to abandon the responsibility for economic development to subnational state scales and are doing little to regulate this competition, the result has been that many cities mortgage their future through tax forgiveness, debt burdens, and have foregone spending on other public needs—except where labor/community coalitions insist upon financial accountability and ensure that the concessions granted to corporations are outweighed by good jobs for local workers and community benefits.

Yet another dimension of the new urban entrepreneurialism has manifested in the policies of privatizing public space and urban infrastructures.

The privatization of public goods has been a central mechanism of neoliberal localization, involving not only the elimination of public monopolies for the provision of standardized municipal services (utilities, sanitation, public safety, mass transit) but, conversely, also the creation of privatized, customized, and networked urban infrastructures through competitive contracting. Thereby, competitive logics and privatized management have been extended into (up to now) comparatively socialized spheres.

Movement groups have responded to all these manifestations of “the entrepreneurial city” and to the privatization and reductions of the public weal. Initiatives have formed against the new generation of large-scale development projects and attack the detrimental side effects of and the lack of democratic participation inherent in these strategies of restructuring the city and of raising funds (Beazley, Loftman, & Nevin, 1997). Protest campaigns against the instruments of city marketing raise questions of democratic planning that urban elites concerned with competitiveness tend to downplay. Sometimes these opposition campaigns bring otherwise scattered local movement groups together in broad coalitions, as happened for example in the NOlympia Campaign in Berlin during the early 1990s and the anti-EXPO movement in Hannover in the late 1990s (see Diemer, 1998). Radical so-called autonomous movements have often taken the lead by seizing on the importance that image politics has gained in the global competition of cities and by devising image-damaging actions to make their cities less attractive to big investors and speculators. “Booming” cities with runaway development and gentrification, low vacancy, and high eviction rates have seen massive resistance by coalitions of housing activists, artists groups and Latino organizations, as documented for example in *Boom—the Sound of Eviction*, about the Mission district in San Francisco.¹

In a deindustrializing “backwater” city characterized by capital flight and an eroding tax base, such as Philadelphia in 2000, local movements may, however, share the urban growth agenda as a way to boost neighborhood revitalization. Activists fighting the blight of immiserated neighborhoods shared with the city elite the hope that hosting the Republican National Convention would bring an economic boost to the city as a whole, and therefore to their neighborhoods as well—and objected to “outside” protesters damaging the city’s fragile reputation as a convention center (Maskovsky, 2003).

While the results of coalition-building attempts in the run-up to the convention were mixed, “with scattered endorsements from labor leadership, little rank-and-file support, and minimal support—and even some opposition—from civil rights leaders” (Maskovsky, 2003: 156), in other cities, less tenuous community-labor coalitions have arisen to challenge large development projects, in particular where they cause displacement of existing residents and reduce the affordable housing stock. This was the

case when the University of Southern California and the L.A. Land Arena Company wanted to develop a new sports and entertainment district in the vicinity of the Staples Center, home to the Lakers basketball team. In 1998, the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice (FCCEJ) emerged in response to the threat of gentrification and displacement, and mobilized to prevent the disruption of a community, which over the years had already suffered a great deal of displacement from the building of the Convention Center and the Staples Center (Padwa, 2001). The coalition included a variety of community organizations, unions, and technical assistance groups. Anticipating the need for community support in future labor struggles and acknowledging the fact that thousands of union members (particularly food and service workers, home care workers, janitors) lived in the neighborhood and shared the broader community concerns for affordable housing and park space, they pushed for a “community benefits agreement” since the public subsidy for the development project was estimated to run as high as \$70 million (Gross, 2002: 6). Their struggle achieved an array of *community benefits* as part of a legally binding agreement reached in 2001, including a goal that 70% of the (approximately 5,000) jobs created in the project would be unionized or pay the city’s living wage.²

Similar local “accountability campaigns” have been undertaken by community–labor coalitions in many U.S. cities³ that intervene in specific subsidy deals to ensure that the whole community—not just corporations and developers—benefit, for example through agreements on first-source hiring, living wages, apprenticeship set-asides, affordable housing, money for community facilities, and other local benefits (see Gross, 2002).

On the other side of the spectrum of action repertoires, rather different mobilizations are also contesting the commercialization of public space and the concomitant emphasis on urban order and surveillance of urban spaces. For example, so-called downtown action weeks took place during the late 1990s across German and Swiss cities, with rallies, demonstrations, and the symbolic reclaiming of parks and plazas that had been turned into private property (see Grell, Sambale, & Veith, 1998). In Britain, “Reclaim the Street,” which had started in 1995 with improvised street parties against the pollution associated with abuse of private transport and the privatization of public transport, organized “global street parties” in 30 cities around the world on the day of a G-8 meeting in Birmingham in May 1998 (see Pohlsch, 2002; Brünzels, 2001). When on June 18, 1999, the world economic summit took place in Cologne, local groups in more than 40 cities around the world organized happenings in their central business districts. The 2001 May Day protests focused on London’s shopping streets “as embodying the processes that constitute the global capitalist system” (Uitermark, 2004: 716).

Although these and similar disruptive actions have been targeted at

specific local places, they are confronting global power relations as symbolized in the downtown buildings of banks, corporations, and international organizations. As the groups “reclaim” streets and spaces dominated by global capital, they challenge the symbols and places that transport the neoliberal messages of corporate power: flexibility, entrepreneurship, self-reliance, security, and cleanness. In an action labeled “Security Now!” activists dressed as members of a private security firm and, equipped with cameras, showed up in the remodeled Hamburg train station distributing flyers demanding a cleaner and more secure central station. They underlined their demands by controlling tickets, filming, and obtrusively accompanying people “for security reasons” (see Häfele & Sobzak, 2002).

This first frontier of antineoliberal urban contestation, while holding enormous mobilizing potential on the basis of the discontents produced by the “entrepreneurial city,” confronts a specific set of dilemmas peculiar to its issues and actors. The radical and imaginative inner-city actions are frequently only short-term types of protest, emphasize creativity more than resistance, and thus often remain ambiguously stuck between protest and carnival. A growing segment of these creative movement groups is becoming incorporated into the cultural diversity and attractiveness of the neoliberal city. And the campaigns against the privatization of public and political space are becoming increasingly a matter for intellectual and cultural activists with limited outreach potential, while the remnants of those broader movements, which had scandalized the negative consequences of turning downtowns into luxury citadels and had fought for urban areas now neglected, have become isolated and increasingly compete with one another for what little is left over in terms of resources and space available for progressive movements.

GRASSROOTS COMBATING “SOCIAL EXCLUSION”

During the course of the roll-out phase of neoliberalism, with the downloading of resources and responsibilities to local administrations and extrastate agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs) and former movement groups have become partners in policy development and program delivery in areas such as urban regeneration and social welfare. During high Fordism, neither labor regulation nor welfare provision were regarded as tasks of the third sector; rather, the sphere of civil society was seen as detached from that of the labor market and the institutions regulating it; it was seen as an unpoliticized sphere of associational activity. During the early phase of neoliberalism, urban zones of concentrated poverty and exclusion were ignored, but with its roll-out phase such areas have become penetrated by a panoply of programs addressing crime, welfare de-

pendency, worklessness, and other manifestations of “social breakdown” (see Demazière & Wilson, 1996). The neoliberal approach to (re)regulating the labor market and the social sphere is through territorializing strategies, which seek to govern in and through “communities.” At the same time, neoliberal urban governance seeks to “economize” formerly neglected social zones, turning them into fields for entrepreneurial calculations. Funds and programs for community development, neighborhood management, and zone empowerment are pushing disadvantaged neighborhoods in a direction where they and their representative and advocacy institutions become busy defending their niches and securing their own reproduction through adaptation to market principles.

In this process, neighborhood movements that had their origins in the 1960s’ and 1970s’ struggles against urban renewal, highway development, and gentrification became, during the course of the 1980s and 1990s, recognized and upgraded for their work serving low-income and disenfranchised communities. With the fading of national entitlement programs and the spread of outcontracting of social services, antipoverty policies were introduced as part of a new set of spatially targeted regulations involving so-called comprehensive approaches for areas of concentrated blight (Mayer, 1993, 1995). While these approaches stress the complex causes of poverty (and redefine it as lack of “social cohesion”), they emphasize that poverty must be addressed at the local level by involving nonstate actors and with the goal of empowering or “activating” spatially defined needy groups. These three criteria—localism, inclusion of civil society stakeholders, and workfare—have become the essential ingredients of the new devolved integration policies. They have not only shifted from a social to a spatial definition of cohesion, but are also, particularly due to the third criterion, connecting social and labor market policies in a new way, as “the excluded” are now to participate in their reintegration and have a reciprocal obligation (to work). Further, these new policies are pushing the local state and the third sector to develop a “cooperative state” through the use of outcontracting. Third-sector groups, in particular, are expected to mobilize local self-help potentials and to develop and consolidate neighborhood networks. Community-based nonprofits appear to be predestined to administer the new activating programs to the urban poor because of their local knowledge and experience, their closeness to clients, and their innovative skills. Not only are they more familiar with the particular local constellation of needs and development potentials, but—as civil society organizations—they are presumed to be based on empowerment and solidarity rather than bureaucratic or market rationality (see Hula & Jackson-Elmoore, 2000; Peterman, 2000).

All of these programs, whether they deliver proximity services, job training, or welfare-to-work support, function on the basis of contracts: All

of them offer contracts to the nonprofit CBOs and social service providers, and these new contract relations have been shaping both the newly emerging sector of a social economy in neighborhood services and the work of the nonprofits, which is oscillating between social, entrepreneurial, and political work. As a consequence, the major dilemma presenting itself within this arena of urban contestation is that the complex work of “empowering” the groups disadvantaged by neoliberalism is embedded in a process of permanent production and reproduction of inequalities through competition. As local administrations resort to competitive contracting in order to meet their economic development and social policy tasks, this tendering along with its criteria gets passed down to the nonprofits they partner with. As a result, the nonprofits find it more and more difficult to use the (state) funding for progressive goals and for political struggles around the design of the programs, or even to build empowerment and solidarity, which originally was the basis for their inclusion and valorization (see Mayer, 2000).

Unsurprisingly, some of these organizations end up training and employing the long-term unemployed benefit recipients in areas such as security and policing, where they go after free riders in public transport or homeless people and drug users in public places. In other words, they end up reinforcing rather than countering the precarious and substandard labor conditions and new marginalization processes at the root of contemporary exclusion and poverty (see Eick et al., 2004).

At the same time, these new integration programs contribute to commodifying civil society sectors that so far had not been subordinated to market rationality. They mobilize excluded groups into (low-wage, micro-enterprise, or social economy) labor along a logic where market and productivity criteria replace social rights and welfare state criteria. This is obviously the case where poor neighborhoods are recast as potentially productive places and investment frontiers (see Porter, 1997) and where nonprofits cooperate with local governments to make such neighborhoods attractive for investment; such collaborations involve ridding the site of whatever threatens the prospect of revitalization, whether abandoned cars and residences or homeless people. As such symptoms of blight appear as impediments to neighborhood stability, neighborhood activists pursue “the sanitization of the landscape of its bad qualities, which just happen to include the poor and homeless” (Maskovsky, 2003: 158).

Commodification and marketization trends are also manifest where nonprofits working with (re)insertion programs for the poor and unemployed do not have jobs in the “regular” labor market to offer, where “client” groups remain excluded from “regular” economic relations. The precarious employment relations in new types of microenterprise and so-called self-employment emerging here exhibit structural similarities with the shadow economy of informal sectors in the global south. The pressures of

these conditions don't allow for the kind of neighborhood-based social economy to emerge that succeeds in providing socially useful services, meeting real needs, or contributing to community empowerment and democratization, as it is usually invoked in glossy American foundation magazines or EU papers (see Borzaga & Defourny, 2001).

These pressures are exacerbated by the fact that cutbacks and privatization of the public sector have destroyed substantial parts of the alternative infrastructure that urban movements of the past decades had built. Not only have public amenities become victims of these curtailments, but also houses for battered women, projects for immigrants' rights, initiatives against right-wing violence and HIV/AIDS work have all been hampered by diminishing subsidies. The "liberated" spaces, which had been conquered in the urban struggles since the 1970s for alternative politics, are vanishing from the urban scene.

While urban societies are becoming more polarized, the grassroots organizations charged with ameliorating poverty and exclusion are constrained by the contractual relations with their funders. Resistance within this sector thus is often limited to skirmishes or to mere efforts to delay the downward spiral. Much of what used to constitute urban activism in this context now has demobilizing effects, where community-based organizations have become too busy training, feeding, and inserting their clients into job programs instead of representing them, lobbying for them, or "joining coalitions against poverty"—which is, of course, how civil society authors such as Schambra (1998: 49) like to have them.

The main dilemma shaping contestations in this field of community participation-based policy to combat exclusion is this pressure to manufacture the grassroots in a way conducive to market efficiency and productivity. Deprived communities and their organizations do benefit from concrete concessions that the new development and integration programs present to them. But they come at the price of new exclusions and divisions: Whatever cannot be turned into a subject of value or a potential for growth and regeneration becomes marginalized or even criminalized.

MOBILIZING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: NEW COALITIONS BETWEEN SOCIAL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS AND UNIONS

As the focus of neoliberal strategies has increasingly moved toward "work"—that is, toward reregulating the labor market and reorganizing social policies toward workfare—it is not surprising that a traditional actor has joined local protest milieus: labor unions. The emergence of new labor-community coalitions occurred earlier in U.S. cities, where it found expression in the struggles for living wage ordinances, but has picked up on the

other side of the Atlantic as well, as European states have accelerated the dismantling of their welfare states, thereby intensifying cutbacks in social benefits and the spread of poverty.

While the faces of protest familiar from the 1990s—the homeless, migrants, and refugees who have been responsible for leading most of the poor people's movements of the past decade—are receding into the background as conditions for them to mobilize resources are becoming increasingly difficult, two types of new urban mobilizations are moving to the fore that are framing the concerns and demands of immigrants, workers, and marginalized groups in new ways. First, a novel type of coalition building has emerged among groups that used to work in fragmented ways next to one another: (local) labor unions, community and welfare rights organizations, self-organized groups of unemployed, as well as church groups and other faith-based organizations are coming together, for example, in “anti-Hartz” coalitions in Germany (protesting the recent reform of the unemployment and welfare system), or in the worker centers that have arisen across the United States to challenge the infringement of workers' rights. Second, antiglobalization activism has differentiated into a multiscalar movement where global issues are strategically framed as local problems and shaped by a new kind of advocacy professionalism that seeks to build organizational continuity in order to move beyond the short-term campaigns of the past (addressed in the following section).

During what was called the 2003 “hot fall” for Germany, regional and national protest against the social cutbacks came to a first climax, surpassed in April 2004 by a Berlin demonstration of half a million people protesting the dismantling of the welfare state⁴ and by the decentralized so-called Monday demonstrations against the Hartz reforms, which brought more than a million demonstrators to the streets of more than 230 cities during the late summer and early fall of 2004.⁵ The convergence within these alliances of work-related organizations, on the one hand, and groups organized around the defense of social and political rights, on the other, presents a novel phenomenon.

While the central demonstration on April 3, 2004, was unsuccessful in many respects, the 3 months of Monday protests were not as easy to squelch. Initiated by often spontaneous and locally based actors without any central coordination or support, invoking the tradition of the Monday demonstrations in East German cities before the fall of the communist regime, these events took place in all kinds of cities simultaneously, with some medium-sized cities such as Magdeburg producing larger turnouts (20,000 during August) than Berlin. The breadth and vehemence of these protests created more significant legitimization problems for the political parties pushing the reforms than any of the preceding protests and led to some concessions in the definition of entitlements and benefits.

These various protest actors first came together in a national coalition against the dismantling of social security, which mobilized 100,000 protesters at a central demonstration on November 1, 2003. Regular partners in these joint actions have included regional union organizations, leftist youth organizations, peace groups, citizens initiatives as well as jobless organizations, the PDS, and Attac—that is to say, most of the groups forming these coalitions have been small and local, with only a few large-membership organizations. While these new coalitions are actively seeking the support and participation of union groups, national union leadership has been hesitant or negative.

These groups' unmet demands—for living wages and a guaranteed minimum income without any compulsion to work at bad jobs—have been carried forward not only by the newly founded German affiliate of the international "Basic Income European Network"⁶ but also by a new round of actions: Implementation of welfare reform in January 2005 was countered by rallies, go-ins, blockades, and other civil disobedience-type actions at unemployment offices in more than 50 German cities.⁷

These media-oriented, frequently high-profile actions have often been complemented by efforts to connect public consciousness raising with local projects that provide concrete support, counsel, and legal aid to those affected by the new Hartz laws. Info cafés, local exchange trading schemes, social centers, and other spaces for jobless and needy people are beginning to be consolidated. Activists "visiting" both job centers and nonprofits that hire and train the jobseekers protest being compelled to work at just any job and the frequent displacement of regular workers by workfare workers, but also try to build solidarity between Labor Office and nonprofit employees and their "clients."

Social and labor market retrenchment policies in the United States, which have exacerbated the downward trends in the low wage sector, have also spawned new forms of activism that bridge the gap between community and labor issues. Poverty, especially among the working poor, has become far more widespread in the United States than in western Europe, and urban movements tackling these trends are bringing worksite and community organizing together in new ways. National unions have provided their locals with resources, encouraging them to develop better ties with local progressive organizations and neighborhood churches (see Zabin, Quan, & Delp, 2001). The AFL-CIO began experimenting with so-called geo projects, geographically based organizing projects that combine features of labor unions, ethnic associations, and community organizations, and engaging in organizing activities at the local level to advance the interests of low-wage workers, moving back and forth between worksite and community organizing. In a multiunion effort launched in 1998, low-wage workers from diverse sectors were organized: for example, nursing home workers,

who are often new immigrants and extremely poor; the janitors, who are low-wage immigrant workers; and low-wage, primarily African American workers, from childcare centers as well as immigrant taxi drivers, as in the Stamford Organizing Project (Fine, 2001).

Municipal living wage campaigns have been another instance where unions have joined hands with community and church groups. The first victory of this movement occurred in Baltimore in 1994, and within the next 3 years living wage ordinances were passed in New York, Los Angeles, Boston, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Portland, and Miami.⁸ In Baltimore, food bank operators at churches participating in Baltimore's United in Leadership Development (BUILD) had noticed that many people they served worked full-time in privatized city jobs that were once decently paid. In Minnesota in 1995, critics of welfare reform linked up with plant-closing opponents to force subsidy recipients to deliver on promises of good jobs. In Los Angeles, a nonprofit group funded by the hotel employees' union defended unionized airport employees who lost their jobs when new minimum-wage firms won the contracts.⁹

An important role in these campaigns has been played by worker centers that have arisen throughout the United States since the 1980s in response to the infringement of workers' rights; they primarily serve immigrants who are low-wage restaurant workers, janitors, day laborers, or garment workers, that is, groups that have rarely been organized by unions. Nationwide there are currently 134 worker centers, some founded by students with a strong ethnic identity wanting to give back to their community, others by union locals to support the unionization of disenfranchised low-wage workers in immigrant communities.¹⁰ The majority of worker centers seek to help workers help themselves by drawing on broader communities of interest such as ethnicity and/or by linking workplace-specific issues with direct services such as legal aid, English-as-a-second-language (ESL) courses, computer training, workers' rights education, or leadership development.¹¹ Most worker centers use their services and problem-solving techniques as a means of recruitment of workers, hoping that these recruits will then take an active role in the organization (see Fine, 2004), but they also win important victories. By combining service delivery, advocacy, organizing, uniting, and empowering workers, the Garment Worker Center in Los Angeles, for example, succeeded in persuading the Los Angeles City Council to adopt a tough ordinance against sweatshops (Leavitt 2005: 10). Though focused on (low-wage) worker issues, the centers share a broader commitment to social justice concerns and engage in combating anti-immigrant policies and attitudes within their surrounding communities.

Another type of worker center focuses on a particularly precarious but growing segment of the workforce: day laborers. Some NGOs have begun

to create niche markets in this low-wage sector, and some of these NGOs have been commissioned by the city to take over the coordination of so-called day laborer centers. The Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) and the Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA) have been codirecting and managing five such centers in the Los Angeles region since 1997. Here the workers can attend English courses, receive further training, borrow tools, and use the toilets. In order to hold out against competition when prices are constantly being undercut, the wage level is above the minimum wage, and the laborers are allocated to employers via a register.

CHIRLA and IDEPSCA see their work as practical support for undocumented immigrants who can now seek work within a legalized context and simultaneously make use of the social services offered. But through their work these organizations also sustain and reinforce a pool of constantly available cheap labor and thus promote the expansion and growing societal acceptance of such markets—with problematic implications for union organizing and struggles against wage dumping (see Theodore, 2003).

Against the background of numerous community groups becoming involved in service provision, a new type of advocacy organizations has emerged in U.S. cities that seeks to engage grassroots leaders in policy development and implementation. These are illustrated well by AGENDA,¹² which was founded in 1993 as a reaction to the Los Angeles riots. AGENDA undertook a long-term research-based process of organizing and education, building its membership and mass base in South Central Los Angeles, but also building bridges between the region's low-income communities, and to the city's research institutions. Sensing the potential of "community-based regionalism" (Pastor, 2001), AGENDA built a coalition with other groups and neighborhoods called Metro Alliance in order to go after DreamWorks SKG, Steven Spielberg's effort to create the first new movie studio to be built in Los Angeles in the past 50 years. Metro Alliance/AGENDA challenged its placement in West Los Angeles, holding "public hearings" through 1998 in City Hall and South Los Angeles charging that the company was rewarded with a \$70-million subsidy from the city of Los Angeles with no hiring or other conditions. AGENDA negotiated with DreamWorks to create training programs to help inner-city youth gain employment in the entertainment industry. This was just the first of several successful projects through which AGENDA and the Metro Alliance developed networks with groups throughout Los Angeles's inner-city neighborhoods as well as working-class suburbs—which became preconditions for the electoral campaigns of progressive city council members and, in 2005, of Villaraigosa's election as mayor by a stunning 17-point margin.

While in the United States the spread of such progressive grassroots coalitions is leading to a leftist trend in urban electoral politics,¹³ municipal

governance in Europe is shaped more by party politics—hence the gap between broad grassroots coalitions for social and civil rights, on the one hand, and parties in city governments, on the other, remains significant. Some of the movements involved in the anti-Hartz coalitions in Germany were behind the East–West “Left Party Coalition” that won 8.7% of the vote in the 2005 national election, sending 54 Leftists into the German parliament. While the outcome of these parliamentary politics is far from clear, earlier experience with delegating movement issues to party politics (as with the Greens) points to the danger of movement demobilization through party incorporation or co-optation.

Even when the demands of these new coalitions for social justice are picked up by supportive local politicians, they still confront the problem of the very real limits of municipal policy in an age of capital mobility and neoliberal hegemony. And invariably there will be some parts of these movements that appear attractive to urban policymakers, whether it is social fora meetings boosting the local tourism industry or social centers figuring as cultural attractions for urban competition strategies (see Mudu, 2004).

MOBILIZING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE: LOCALIZING GLOBAL PROTEST

New energy has been infused into urban movement milieus through a vibrant and growing social movement that initially seemed not to have any relevance or implications for local contestations. Though it was seen and critiqued by many as disconnected from community and urban scales (see DeFilippis, 2001), the so-called antiglobalization movement is no longer solely concerned with the global scale but has turned toward cities as sites not only where the negative effects of the neoliberal project are making themselves felt but also where resistance against global neoliberalism—and against urban governance, through which it is carried out—needs to be organized.

The mobilizations against the global representations of neoliberalism (the WTO in Seattle 1999, the G8 in Genoa 2001, etc.) and the articulation of protest at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre and Mumbai¹⁴ and the following regional social fora all created spaces for reflecting and exchanging local experiences with movements from other parts of the world. These events allowed not only for the globalization of networks of resistance but also for a growing translocal political solidarity and consciousness to unfold. Increasingly, these antiglobalization movements have been taking the message of “global justice” to the local level, allowing organizations such as Attac and the social fora to expose neoliberalism as a multiscale political project.

The movements themselves have evolved multiscalar approaches, as they increasingly see the global institutions such as the G8, WTO, IMF, and EU influence local living conditions in first world metropolises as much as in the global south. Free trade and deregulation of markets are perceived not only as ruining sustainable production opportunities in so-called underdeveloped countries but also as threatening unions and consumers in North America and Europe. For many locally active groups in France, Britain, and Germany, this has entailed that claiming the right to the city now calls for addressing the neoliberal realities on a global *as well as* national and regional/local scale. It implies demanding, simultaneously, the democratization of international institutions *and* the defense of public services and infrastructures in the cities.

Since the violent repression of the anti-G8 protest in Genoa in 2001, local social fora have mushroomed in cities across Europe, serving to network individuals and organizations that are critical of “neoliberal globalization” and that advocate “democratization from below.” These networks have taken to organizing campaigns and demonstrations on such issues as the rights of migrants, protecting labor rights, the privatization of public infrastructure, welfare reform, and, after September 2001, when the term “global” was given new meaning by the “global war on terror,” also regarding the unilateral policies of the United States in pursuing the war. In recognition of the strength of the Italian social fora, the coalition of European associations present at the first World Social Forum (WSF) in Porto Alegre decided to hold the first European Social Forum (ESF) in Italy (della Porta, 2005: 176).

These European social fora, in Florence in 2002,¹⁵ Paris in 2003,¹⁶ and London 2004,¹⁷ were each dominated by local activists, revealing a growing presence of locally rooted networks organized around global issues (see Pianta & Silva, 2003). Unlike the relatively homogeneous new social movements of the 1970s and 1980s, the groups and organizations coming together as critics of neoliberal globalization represent a multitude of interests, from labor unions to environmental associations, from human rights to women’s groups, from grassroots initiatives to established NGOs. These all now become part of translocal networks of communication and action, and tend to participate in transnational events whenever the occasion presents itself, while their activities remain strongly rooted at the local level.

In the United States, several regional social fora have been organized as well, but more as fluid “open spaces,” to exchange and meet—and to cease to exist after the event. The Boston Social Forum held a 3-day meeting prior to the Democratic National Convention in July 2004, with some 600 panels and workshops and about 4,000 participants,¹⁸ and the New York City Social Forum Seed Group held a (less well attended) event in October 2004 under the banner “Another New York City Is Possible!” But

the various local progressive groups that were involved in these events have not congealed into ongoing networks of antineoliberal organizing. The event planned for October 2004 in Seattle by the Northwest Social Forum was cancelled just 2 weeks before it was to happen, as the different visions—a loose open space versus a tighter movement focus—could not be bridged. “The precipitating event was a decision by some organizing committee members to showcase keynote speakers from the World Social Forum coordinating committee as opposed to concentrating on regional community building, a process that caused the regional tribal coalition to withdraw because of perceived cultural difference that proved insurmountable” (Bennett, 2005).¹⁹

The social fora in Europe seek to build more permanent structures. In Germany, by 2005, 28 social fora initiatives have been formed. In each representatives from different organizations get together as part of “the new international movement against the politics of neoliberal capitalism.”²⁰ At its founding in 2003, the Berlin Social Forum (BSF) declared that, at a moment of mounting attacks on social rights, the “splintered protests of childcare workers and students, jobless and handicapped, migrants and welfare recipients needed to be brought together, because their fragmented protest does not find resonance with left parties or other established organizations.” Made up of old and new left groups, jobless initiatives, rank-and-file union groups, church representatives and welfare rights groups, they seek to regroup the Berlin organizations that are “critical of globalization and of capitalism” in order to confront the “crisis of work” and the dismantling of welfare. The Berlin Social Forum adopted the same Charta of Principles (stressing cooperation in nonhierarchical networks) as had been adopted at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre. Conceiving the organization as both a political network and a public and open political space, the BSF founders defined their tasks as “coordinating and supporting the work of different groups, breaking up the climate of resignation, and organizing a public critique of neoliberal social policies.”²¹

Their first big action took place in June 2003 at the SPD Special Party Meeting to decide on the reform package of the red-green government, called Agenda 2010, which implied the heretofore heftiest scaling back of Germany’s purportedly excessively costly welfare state in order to “dynamize” the market.²² Fifteen hundred people rallied outside the meeting, calling the lie of saving jobs by pushing down nonwage labor costs. In further actions, the BSF staged happening-type actions in unemployment offices and against the new profiling of welfare recipients, squatted a vacant building in Kreuzberg in order to establish a social center, developed a pragmatic and professional concept for this center, and tried to negotiate a lease with the district authorities. Together with the social justice organizations described in the previous section, they mobilized for large national demonstrations,

such as on February 15, 2003, against U.S. plans to go to war against Iraq; in November 2003, against the dismantling of the German welfare state; and in March 2004, for the European Action Day against neoliberalism. A first national ESF meeting took place in Erfurt in July 2005,²³ at which special efforts were made for the program to be designed “from below”—that is, without “big players” and with lots of input opportunities for local initiatives, so as to further their coordination and networking. One of the major organizations involved in planning this event was Attac.

Unlike many of the groups and projects that participate in the social fora, Attac is a product of professionalized NGOs with a pragmatic repertoire; it attracts far more media attention than any of the other organizations. Founded in 1998 in France,²⁴ Attac has since evolved into *the* antiglobalization “movement” in several European countries.²⁵ While in each country it functions as a national organization, in each of these (except in France) Attac is made up of regional and local groups, currently 200 in Germany. At its national meeting in Aachen in October 2003, Attac-Germany decided to make the infringement of social rights and privatization the main campaign issues—in other words, it too is now focusing on the impacts of globalization on the everyday local life-world.

Immediately after the meeting Attac kicked off a campaign of regional protests against Agenda 2010, “visiting” SPD headquarters in 30 cities and holding rallies in 20 more to force a public debate about what was still “social” about the *Social* Democratic Party. In continuing its campaign against the General Agreement on Trade in Services, Attac seeks to build “fronts of resistance,” together with the social fora and left unionists, against the privatization of public infrastructure, and especially against the imminent privatization of water provision in various German regions.

In these instances of localizing antiglobalization movements, a new local actor has emerged for whom broad coalition building and a new kind of advocacy professionalization are characteristic. Media-savvy, organizationally conscious activists are connecting the political agendas of citizens initiatives, social service organizations, and a variety of social movements and NGOs, as well as church organizations, in an explicit effort to overcome the segmented local patterns of protest and to build organizational continuity. As with the transnationally active movements before them, they combine traditional repertoires built up during previous cycles of protest with new tactics of civil disobedience and flexible organizational formats, but apply them to local manifestations of the global neoliberal trends.

Like the groups that come together at the (counter)summits of the antiglobalization movement, they seek to frame their differences as enriching and present their diversity as a positive value (see della Porta, 2005: 186). While respecting their differences, the activists are unanimous in their critique of the liberalization of markets. Unlike former generations of leftist

activists, however, they do not envision a revolutionary seizure of power, but present their action as pragmatic, concrete, gradualist. Led by increasingly professional activists and organizers, they translate the impositions of neoliberal globalization to the local and urban context and seek to challenge it, concretely, at every step.

CONCLUSION: DILEMMAS FACED BY MOVEMENTS CONTESTING THE NEOLIBERALIZATION OF URBAN GOVERNANCE

The struggles around each of these frontiers involve a spectrum of orientations, from radical resistance against the implementation of neoliberal policies to efforts at devising more progressive approaches within this policy frame; from local autonomy and neighborhood sustainability to institutionalized forms of community development; from rejecting neoliberalism altogether to building on some of its appealing dimensions. All of these contestations face, to greater or lesser degrees, specific structural dilemmas:

- They are tied into “civic engagement” discourses, where voluntarism and community work are easily mobilized for a neoliberal agenda.
- Participation of social movement organizations can become a mechanism to diffuse or co-opt dissent and political challenges, thus turning the movement organizations into manufacturers of consent.
- The “success” of workers’ rights organizations may end up confirming a work-first focus and even lead to legitimizing substandard employment conditions.
- The victories of housing activists may contribute to saving or improving the quality of a neighborhood for a renewed cycle of investment—and hence the exclusion of current residents.
- The mismatch between scales of life-world experience and scales of political and economic decision making may produce success with implementing participatory planning on the local level, but privatization policies and severe fiscal stress have constrained the capacity of the local level of governance.

In other words, these contestations may constitute an antagonistic challenge in one perspective; yet, at the same time they may act as agents of modernization of local economies and political systems. To make matters worse, today’s urban movements are not only more contradictory and prone to seeing their efforts instrumentalized or producing unintended effects, many of them also seem to have substantially bigger difficulties

mobilizing broad support than movements in earlier phases did. Neoliberalization has encouraged individualization; large parts of the middle classes favor its policies of tax cuts and entrepreneurialism; thus, the prospects for support of and solidarity with the movements from these sectors are not encouraging.

While the politicization of the 1960s and 1970s with its youth, squatting, and other radical movements turned cities into central sites of mobilization, where the struggle for alternative life styles and enhanced participation produced broad support and was in many ways successful, today's contestations over urban policies are much more about resistance to and scandalizing of issues of poverty and exclusion and the concomitant infringements of rights. At the same time, the urban integration machinery has been finetuned for roll-out neoliberalism, making broad resistance more and more difficult. Possibly, the infusion of the connecting energy of the movements against neoliberal globalization—with their material and symbolic successes and the growing translocal solidarity they engender—will serve to strengthen the challenge to neoliberal urban governance. More systematic research along the lines suggested in this brief overview is needed to more fully explore the levers and possibilities for urban contestations in an era in which the global articulation of urban protest has become a reality.

NOTES

1. This documentary video was made by Francine Cavanaugh, A. Mark Liiv, and Adams Wood (a Whispered Media production) in 2002; see www.boomthemovie.org/.
2. The living wage in Los Angeles amounted to \$ 7.27 per hour plus benefits. Further *community benefits* were a first-source hiring program targeting jobs to local low-income people, aiming at 50% of the new jobs to be hired locally; a community-run job and training center with seed money from the developer; a \$650,000 no-interest revolving loan fund provided by the developer for nonprofits to build affordable housing; and a \$1 million commitment from the developer for parks and recreation facilities within a 1-mile radius. See www.laane.org.
3. Coordinated by groups such as the Minnesota Alliance for Progressive Action, Maine Citizens Leadership Fund, Good Jobs First, East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy, and many more.
4. The April Days of Action to protest the neoliberal dismantling of welfare systems were coordinated across Europe by the European Social Fora, Attac, church groups, and the European association of unions. In Germany they were directed against the Agenda 2010 of the red-green coalition government announced by Chancellor Gerhard Schröder in March 2003, which set out to dismantle major elements of the German social security system. It was the first

time in German postwar history that the most important unions (IG Metall, Verdi) and their umbrella organization (DGB) mobilized against the reforms of a social democrat-led government. Also for the first time, independent self-help and unemployed groups as well as the antiglobalization network Attac (see next section) were regarded as “serious” partners by the unions and the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) in protest mobilizations.

5. The reforms are named after the head of the Commission on the Modernization of Labor Market Services, the CEO and personnel manager of Volkswagen, Peter Hartz. This body, commissioned by the federal government in 2002 to develop proposals for modernizing the Federal Employment Agency and for reducing unemployment, made a series of recommendations on which the recent reforms are based. These reforms, implemented during 2003–2005, represent *the* turning point in German active labor market policy (see Eick et al., 2004).
6. Founded in July 2004, the German Basic Income Network is actually a late-comer to the international effort to develop alternatives to hegemonic labor market policies.
7. These well-coordinated direct actions were planned and carried out by coalitions consisting of autonomous groups, organizations of the unemployed, social fora, and student groups as well as Attac, but hardly any unions (see the next section).
8. By now, more than 120 communities nationwide have passed some form of living wage legislation. Although the laws vary greatly, most require at least some taxpayer-subsidized employers to pay substantially more than minimum wages, usually somewhat above \$ 8.20 an hour (but as high as \$12), indexed to keep up with inflation.
9. See ACORN Living Wage Resource Center, which is assisting and tracking living wage campaigns nationally at www.livingwagecampaign.org.
10. For example, the Union of Needletrades, Textiles and Industrial Employees (UNITE!) operates worker centers that organize garment workers in New York, San Francisco, Miami, and Los Angeles. Ethnicity-based worker centers include the Chinese Staff and Workers Association in New York City, Asian Immigrant Women’s advocates in Oakland, and La Mujer Obrera in El Paso, Texas (see Gordon, 2005).
11. See The North American Alliance for Fair Employment (NAAFE) at www.fairjobs.org/docs/wp1.htm.
12. Action for Grassroots Empowerment & Neighborhood Development Alternatives.
13. Organizations such as New Cities, Campaign for America’s Future, and Cities for Progress have formed not only to help the recent progressive mayors (of Madison, Milwaukee, Salt Lake City, Berkeley, Chicago, Irvine, Los Angeles, etc.) implement labor- and environment-friendly policies but also to influence national policy (Nichols, 2005).
14. The World Social Forum (WSF) has met every year since 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, with the exception of 2004, when it met in India. Initially designed as a countersummit to the World Economic Meeting in Davos, it has grown into a gigantic summit of its own, attended by 120,000 people, organized in “11 the-

- matic spaces in which to hold the 2,000 activities proposed by 5,700 organizations from more than 200 countries” (de Queiroz, 2005; see www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/ and www.attac.de/wsf05). The southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre had been chosen as the preferred venue because its participatory budget has made it a model for urban grassroots democracy.
15. Some 60,000 participants—more than three times the expected number—took part in the workshops and the plenary sessions of the Florence ESF, while about one million people took part in the march that closed the forum. More than 20,000 delegates of 426 associations arrived from 105 countries.
 16. While the first European Social Forum in Florence focused on the war, the second one in Paris, where also about 60,000 people from more than 60 countries attended, shifted the focus back to the social implications of neoliberal globalization.
 17. The London gathering included only about 25,000 participants from 65 countries, two-thirds of them from Britain, and the predominant topics discussed related to the war in Iraq, the EU constitution, and ongoing social cutbacks. The Socialist Workers Party and Ken Livingston’s Greater London Authority played large roles in its organization, which made its format more hierarchical and costly than in the past (see Kingsnorth, 2004).
 18. See www.bostonsocialforum.org.
 19. See www.nwsocialforum.org.
 20. Guidelines of cooperation in the Berlin Social Forum, available online at www.wikiservice.at/esf/wiki.cgi?BSF-Leitlinien.
 21. Available online at germany.indymedia.org/2003/03/44293.shtml.
 22. See note 4.
 23. The city’s authorities provided the ESF logistical support, expecting image enhancement and a boost in tourism from the event.
 24. The name, an acronym, stands for *Association pour la Taxation des Transactions pour l’aide aux Citoyens* (Association for the Taxation of Foreign Exchange Dealings for the Support of Citizens), reflecting the idea proposed by Ignacio Ramonet, editor of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, in an article published in 1997 to found a worldwide NGO with that name in order to implement the Tobin tax (see www.attac.org). Meanwhile, four national governments have come out in favor of such a tax, underlining that this instrument, which initially was widely deemed as unrealistic, receives broad attention.
 25. Five years into its existence, Attac-Germany had about 16,000 members, and its budget for 2004 was 1.2 million Euros from donations and membership dues (Lee, 2005: 3).

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Contesting the Neoliberal City?

THEORIES OF NEOLIBERALISM AND URBAN STRATEGIES OF CONTENTION

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Over the past several decades, neoliberal capitalism in the United States has been associated with a significant restructuring of the economic role, political environment, and spatial terrain of the city. Corporate strategies and state policies at multiple scales have reconfigured the labor, land, and consumption markets of central cities, benefiting investors, visitors, and affluent residents. Meanwhile, a rightward-drifting politics and new institutional mechanisms (from flexible public–private partnerships to coercive policing strategies) have also enhanced elite capacities to regulate and expand these increasingly valued urban spaces. Although such realities pose significant challenges for oppositional strategies, U.S. cities continue to be sites of political contention over a variety of issues. Certain conflicts have arisen over labor issues, such as demands for living wages and worker rights; others have emerged from community-based efforts to resist displacement. Yet it is not immediately clear which, if any, of these actions have genuinely *contested* contemporary neoliberalism even though they may have taken place within an urban environment reshaped by it.

What does it mean to contest neoliberalism? In certain kinds of protest action or political conflict, the challenge to dominant principles or practices of contemporary capitalism, such as deregulated markets or privatized services, is made explicit; perhaps neoliberalism itself, as a system or an ideol-

ogy, is named and demystified. Most instances of conflict in U.S. cities, however, are not so clear-cut, partly because of the difficulty of mounting radical or ambitious challenges in the current political environment and partly because of the localized nature of much urban conflict. Community organizations, for example, often fight employment losses, or wage cuts, or the residential turnover that accompanies neighborhood gentrification. Yet many of these groups do not explicitly link the threats they face to the workings of neoliberal capitalism, nor do they necessarily connect their own actions to larger struggles. Furthermore, disconnected efforts to halt plant closings or to stem displacement, even when successful, do not necessarily threaten an established economic regime. Even hard-won local victories often yield only temporary respite from entrenched policies or corporate practices.

Conflicts in U.S. cities, then, while often sparked by intensified neoliberalization, may not have immediately visible impacts on its further advance. Given such an environment, it can be difficult to distinguish urban-based conflicts that offer promise of broader challenge to neoliberal practices or policies from those that do not, and to relate such distinctions to the strategic approaches taken by the groups involved. A common problem is that theories of neoliberalism are not always well suited for examining the strategic possibilities for urban oppositional agency. A further problem is that the ways in which particular instances of localized urban conflict are, and are not, related to more general economic and political tendencies frequently escape careful consideration. Taken together, the two problems weaken the analytical connection between theory and strategic action.

This chapter attempts to strengthen such a connection. It does so first by contrasting two differently articulated conceptions of contemporary neoliberalism—one framed in relatively structural terms, the other foregrounding agency—with respect to their implications for urban political conflict, and second by focusing on two recent examples of contestation in the city of Chicago in order to illustrate, and complicate, those implications. The general point is to highlight the ways in which different theoretical constructions of neoliberal capitalism can lead to divergent readings of the promise of urban-based opposition. One approach reviewed here, articulated by Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell (2002), offers a commanding reconsideration of neoliberal hegemony that points toward the need for broader governance reform, perhaps as a prelude to enhanced urban oppositional capacities. A second approach, advanced by Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward (2000), contends that the major obstacles to effective urban-based opposition are not neoliberal economic structures but political divisions internal to working-class mobilization. Both theories represent suggestive efforts to articulate in broad terms the fundamental dynamics of power within contemporary capitalism. The purpose of this

chapter, however, is not to evaluate the theoretical adequacy of the two conceptions but, rather, to draw out their respective implications for strategic resistance. In pursuit of this task, a consideration of the theories is followed by brief readings of the two case examples in order to anchor and give substance to a number of analytical insights.

NEOLIBERALISM, THEORIZED AND CONTESTED

What might it mean to contest neoliberalism? Urban social or political contestation today can take many forms, of course, from grassroots activism to massed confrontations with global governance institutions (Herod, 2001; Shepard & Hayduk, 2002; Pickvance, 2003; Köhler & Wissen, 2003). As such, varieties of social mobilization or political conflict can be differentiated by social base, strategy, scale, and any number of other criteria. Yet how we understand the nature of contestation, particularly within cities, may also depend on what is meant by contemporary neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism, as an ideology, can be defined as a set of politically inflected claims or discourses that reconfigure liberal conceptions of freedom, markets, and individualism into powerful (mis)representations of contemporary capitalism. This kind of approach continues to be both influential and useful. Yet neoliberalism has also come to designate a set of institutional practices that are supported by, but are distinct from, this ideology. Here, under the rubric of processes of neoliberalization or actually existing neoliberalism, a range of ascendant or dominant political-economic tendencies such as financial deregulation, flexibilized labor and free trade, along with a host of enabling state policies, are seen as constituting a historically specific form of capitalism. Under the former approach, then, the notion of contesting neoliberalism might conceivably include any counterhegemonic activity (intellectual or practical) that challenges the key claims of neoliberal ideology, from scholarly critique to non-market-based experiments in local commodity production. Under the latter rubric, the emphasis with respect to contestation would seem to point more emphatically to insurgent practices, whether they take place in the street or in the corridors of power, that challenge core elements of neoliberal institutional power.

Yet neoliberalism remains a slippery concept. For instance, a problem with any tidy distinction between ideology and institutional practices is that the two have been closely enmeshed. Ideological work by corporately funded think tanks and government officials as well as by intellectuals and community leaders has played an important role in the entrenchment of neoliberal capitalist practices. Conversely, ideologies of neoliberalism are themselves constructed and reconstructed through the various interactions

among corporations, policymakers, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) operating at (and across) various scales. These related processes, then, have not only mobilized power on behalf of supposedly free-market projects but have also routinized and obscured the workings of power in ways that seem to validate neoliberal doctrine itself.

A further problem is that, even assuming one can strip away the mystifications of ideology to reveal a core set of institutional practices, it may not be precisely clear what those practices are. Thus, the term “neoliberalism,” once associated with a revival of Hayekian economics and then with 1980s government strategies that were loosely inspired by such ideas, has more recently become conceptual shorthand for the form of capitalism that now dominates most of the globe. Yet a number of the characteristics conventionally associated with this form, such as free trade or flexible labor or fiscal retrenchment, do not neatly correspond to recent patterns of behavior by corporate and state actors. One could argue, of course, that neoliberalism, like any set of institutional practices, has necessarily evolved, perhaps erecting an elaborate secondary (and mostly state-led) scaffolding upon its (market-based) foundation. Or one could dispense with the term altogether, claiming that such usage imparts an illusory coherence and tends to rule out, in advance, the possibility that contestation itself has shaped the pathways of contemporary economic and political development. In either case, it becomes clear that how one conceptualizes the fundamental operations of early 21st-century capitalism may have important implications for the analytical valence of oppositional challenges. Furthermore, what is the role of the “urban” within different understandings of such operations? Do cities represent crucial sites for the reproduction of a neoliberal order? Or do they constitute merely a terrain on which, and over which, class actors and others struggle for economic and political advantage?

Such questions open up consideration of urban conflicts in an age of neoliberalism to a much broader range of approaches than can be considered here. Yet it may be useful, in light of the ambiguities suggested above, to juxtapose two cogent but quite differently formulated conceptions of post-1970s U.S. capitalism in order to highlight their contrasting implications for the analysis of contemporary urban conflicts. One such conception, drawn from an analysis by Peck and Tickell (2002), sees neoliberalism as a historically unprecedented yet increasingly stable mode of capitalist accumulation and regulation against which urban-based contention, unless preceded by successful macroreform projects, is unlikely to prove effective. A second conception, articulated by Piven and Cloward (2000), defines the central reality of contemporary capitalism as a resurgent, multi-dimensional class offensive by capital, one that, like such assaults in earlier eras, may already be furnishing urban-centered opportunities for effective working-class resistance. The two approaches are not entirely antithetical; indeed,

they share an emphasis on the politico-ideological dimensions of contemporary capitalism as well as the continued importance of state power and national policy, and even certain contrasting elements of their analyses may be seen as complementary rather than competing. Nevertheless, their different formulations, propelled in part by implicitly contrasting structure/agency positionings, entail significantly divergent implications for how we view the city and for how we might understand potential strategies of urban resistance. In order to make full and effective use of this contrast, it is necessary to examine both arguments in some detail.

Peck and Tickell begin by tracing the mutually constitutive relationship between neoliberalism as an ideology and neoliberalization as a historically evolving process. First emerging as a largely U.S.-centered utopian intellectual project, neoliberal ideology has since become a truly globalized hegemonic discourse, a new “planetary vulgate” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1999: 42–43) that proselytizes the virtues of free trade, flexible labor, and economic individualism throughout most of the world.¹ Yet this sweeping ideological triumph has been the product of particular institutional developments, taking place in different parts of the world, that have given shape and resiliency to concrete processes of neoliberalization. In its North Atlantic zones of origin, neoliberalism has evolved not only from insurgent intellectual discourse to dominant political-economic state project but also, as a state project, from a largely destructive assault on inherited Keynesian and social-welfarist institutions to a much more purposeful and fully developed set of regulative institutions. The result is a diffuse, technocratic, and multiscaled rule-regime, one which, while “neither monolithic in form nor universal in effect” (p. 36), offers a historically unprecedented and highly resilient form of capitalist regulation that enforces competitive and privatizing strategies across a variegated global terrain.

This interpretation of neoliberalism by Peck and Tickell represents a partial revision of an earlier analysis (1994) by the same authors, one that characterized neoliberalism as a short-term-oriented and unsustainable global–local disorder. In their more recent contribution, Peck and Tickell come to grips with the metamorphosis of the early neoliberal state projects (epitomized by Reaganism and Thatcherism) into the more stable forms of neoliberal institution building guided by late-1990s Clintonite consensualism. Their analysis here distinguishes between a first-stage roll-back neoliberalism (focused narrowly on market logics to accomplish the destruction of an entrenched welfare-state Keynesian) and a subsequent roll-out stage, in which construction of new policies and institutions (from workfare programs and penal systems to partnership-based modes of urban governance and community regeneration) helped to establish a more stable socio-political infrastructure for neoliberal strategies of accumulation. Thus, the neoliberal ascendancy resulted not simply from an unfettering of economic

competition but from the political construction of markets and an evolving institutionalization—by state as well as corporate actors—of competitive logics and privatized management. Intensified interurban rivalries have played a central role in this process; so have related changes in neoliberalism's scalar constitution, as devolution, localization, and interjurisdictional policy transfer tend to reinforce prevailing logics of urban competition and problem solving. The result has been that multiple neoliberalisms may emerge as disparate local innovations internal to specific institutions and polities, but these solution sets are solidified and reproduced by the structural rule-regimes that govern established modes of interurban competition. In other words, neoliberalization takes the form of a larger systemic process in which cities become accomplices in their own subordination.

In broad terms, such a process has intensified the spatially uneven development that is a central dynamic of capitalist accumulation. Yet Peck and Tickell also acknowledge that this new geography of inequality may also produce new opportunities for challenging the neoliberal project. Partly because neoliberalized urban competition tends to reinforce public sector austerities and relentless growth chasing, and partly because roll-out neoliberalism has increasingly involved the penetration by capital of deeply impacted zones of poverty and social exclusion, the neoliberal landscape is rife with bouts of policy "problems" and "reforms," creating a recurring sense of serial localized instability. Furthermore, the possibility of a system-wide crisis cannot be ruled out, as a tightly linked global order (one that is already straitjacketed by U.S.-inflected models of economic and social development) might rapidly disseminate sudden accumulation irregularities or even foster (as posited by Hardt & Negri, 2000) new global solidarities among the subaltern. Mature neoliberalization, then, for Peck and Tickell (2002), has created new vulnerabilities and strategic targets. Yet their overall emphasis is on the resiliency of the system, and urban-based resistance, in particular, does not offer immediate promise as a springboard for the larger struggle against neoliberal capitalism. Progressive local alternatives remain persistently vulnerable to social undercutting or institutional overloading. The effectiveness of targeted campaigns of disruption or of alternative models of urban development will continue to be muted, absent a "phase-shift" (p. 54) in the broader rules that entrench neoliberal competition. What emerges strategically from this theory, then, is a largely implicit emphasis on governance reform, perhaps as a necessary precondition—a loosening or decoupling of networked circuits of neoliberal enforcement—to effective amplification of urban-based struggles or perhaps as a first step toward more sweeping shifts in macro-regulation. Such reform projects, they acknowledge, lack the radical allure of direct contestation but represent crucial steps toward a political-economic environment in which urban struggles might begin to make progressive gains.

Piven and Cloward (2000) take up a different starting point, seeing the central reality of contemporary capitalism as a multidecade remobilization of corporate power. This class project has been rationalized by notions of globalization rather than being produced by the kinds of economic structural imperatives that are often seen to lie behind such a phenomenon. Thus, for Piven and Cloward (even more emphatically than for Peck and Tickell), neoliberalism represents an ongoing ideological and political offensive by capital, one that has centered on direct assaults against unions but that has also been pursued through business-led political mobilization and supported by an array of state institutions, from legislative and executive initiatives to the rulings of the court system.

The primary concern of Piven and Cloward's analysis, therefore, is not to develop a fully fledged conception of neoliberal capitalism but to combat strong versions of the globalization thesis. This thesis has often rested on the claim that transnational capital mobility has dramatically undermined state sovereignties along with the capacities of first world workers to exert power. Instead, Piven and Cloward contend that globalist accounts typically overdraw the influence wielded by U.S. citizens and workers during a post-World War II "golden age." Basic asymmetries of class power under capitalism, combined with the weak democratic protections afforded by a state that favors employers over laborers, have consistently advantaged corporations throughout the history of modern America. Thus, the power relations of late-20th-century U.S. capitalism—with capital strongly on the march and labor struggling to regain its footing—reflected not a qualitatively new set of structural conditions but merely the latest in a series of such offensives in which elites have initially enjoyed the upper hand. Situating current developments within the broad history of class conflict in the United States, Piven and Cloward suggest that, while employers in every era have been quick to exploit new opportunities to strengthen their control over labor, workers have eventually been able to develop strategic responses of their own. Thus, exploitative labor conditions bred unions and strikes; strikebreaking was met with self-defense and solidarity campaigns; layoffs and lockouts were countered through pooled savings, boycotts, and sit-down strikes. As employers sought to exploit divisions among workers, employees learned to forge common identities across race, craft, and community. Piven and Cloward (2000) do not suggest, of course, that such struggles have ever been even ones; capital has benefited from long-standing economic advantages (such as significant powers of exit) as well as from privileged relations with the state, which has used its monopoly on force and its legitimating power more often to enforce property laws than to protect workers. Nevertheless, they insist that the strategic repertoires of both capital and labor have evolved in a kind of "dialogic" dance (p. 416), as the changing conditions that offered economic and political elites new oppor-

tunities for undermining the hard-won gains of an earlier era also furnished new possibilities for resistance.

Piven and Cloward observe, however, that simply because strategic possibilities emerge has not meant that workers readily embrace them. Habit, entrenched leadership, reluctance to give up once-successful strategies—for a variety of reasons, workers frequently have been slow to adapt to new conditions, and here again state intransigence has played an important role in constraining labor while enabling capital. Furthermore, ideological offensives often retard effective worker responses. Launched through think tanks and policy institutes, a post-1960s doxa on “competitiveness,” for example, asserted that worker pressures or voter demands for services inexorably drive out capital. This propaganda campaign then proceeded to construct a notion of globalization that clothed a full-throttle corporate and state-supported assault on labor in the utopian garb of free-market inevitability. These devastating attacks on labor—the large-scale layoffs, two-tier contracts, endemic speed-up, the spread of part-time and contingent employment—along with the near-evisceration of income-security programs have yet to be effectively countered. Yet Piven and Cloward (2000) suggest that, even after several decades of weakened working-class solidarities and generalized job fear (p. 423), new strategic repertoires for workers are beginning to become visible.

The conditions for the emergence of those repertoires stem, in Piven and Cloward’s analysis, from several underappreciated weaknesses of the 21st-century corporate environment. One such weakness is that the new employer threats of exit that are characteristic of the age of globalization have rested as much upon political power and propaganda as on economic conditions of expanded capital mobility. Another point of vulnerability resides in the fact that global supply networks entail not merely an enhancement of corporate flexibility but the creation of supply-chain choke points that may become open to disruption. Furthermore, multinational corporations continue to rely on the protection and patronage of national states, both for profit-securing activities within their home countries and for forging global frameworks that reduce the risks of international trade. Such realities may furnish the partial conditions for renewed worker and citizen leverage over neoliberalization. Meanwhile, they contend, new signs of resistance are finally beginning to emerge. Beyond recent examples of cross-border strikes and solidarity campaigns, Piven and Cloward point to several more gradual developments within the U.S. labor movement—new leadership, organizational mergers, significant growth in women and immigrant memberships—that may bode well for future strength. Increasing efforts to build worker/community and worker/consumer alliances, in certain cases across racial divides, may also broaden the popular base of support for labor and living wage struggles. Such developments have encouraged labor

organizers to move away from long-established unionization approaches (especially union elections certified by the National Labor Relations Board) to broader campaigns that combine such tactics as civil disobedience, public pressure, card-check recognition, and associate membership.

It is important to recognize, in the Piven and Cloward reading of the contemporary moment, a number of consonances with the analysis offered by Peck and Tickell. Despite differences in conceptualization and terminology, both approaches point up the ideological dimensions of neoliberal ascendancy, a three-decade-long process of intellectual institution building and corporate-led knowledge production that has played a key role in the resulting policy hegemony. More than this, both approaches see a formidable power in the self-validating circularity of neoliberal ideology when it is coupled with state projects that relentlessly favor the powerful market actors who are counted among this ideology's most fervent apologists. In this sense, the two analyses develop effective critiques from a similar focus on the role of politics and the state in sustaining the conditions for market triumphalism.

Yet the two approaches differ in important respects as well. For Peck and Tickell, neoliberalism is seen as a more-or-less coherent political-economic regime, a mode of capitalist accumulation and meta-regulation that, while politically constructed and sustained, enforces its logic of competition upon social actors and places through what are by now highly fluid, globally networked systems of response. Careful not to portray 21st-century international capitalism as a seamless or uniscalar global system, Peck and Tickell acknowledge the nationally and georegionally differentiated varieties of neoliberal political economies, as well as the complex economic and policy-transfer linkages that operate across those spaces and that traverse multiple scales. For the most part, however, their emphasis remains on neoliberalism as a global phenomenon; even if the specific forms delineated most fully are those of Britain and the United States, and such forms are not assumed to provide a prototype for global replication or convergence, Peck and Tickell manage to convey the main features of Atlanticist neoliberalism in ways that suggest its basic affinities with other national or georegional cases. Piven and Cloward, on the other hand, approach U.S. capitalism largely as a historically constituted and nationally specific object of analysis. Although their approach does not assert that recent domestic developments are entirely *sui generis*, nor does it rule out the relevance of global linkages, their effort to understand current asymmetries in relation to a historical ebb and flow of class power reinscribes long-observed features of the American polity—decentralized state institutions, racial and ethnic cleavages, a separation between labor and community—into the political landscape of contemporary neoliberalism. In this sense, their claims about the emerging possibilities for working-class resistance are grounded in (and

presumably are circumscribed by) a nationally specific set of class forces and political institutions.

The two approaches also present contrasting historical frames, a difference that, while subtle, does much to encourage their divergent strategic insights. For Peck and Tickell, Atlantic neoliberalism is defined largely by its post-1960s struggle against Keynesian welfare-statism, a struggle not only to efface structures that impede neoliberal accumulation but also (and more challengingly) to develop its own institutions of economic and political regulation. Through this historical lens, it is not surprising that neoliberalism's points of vulnerability are seen as lying precisely within such macroinstitutions, charged as they are with "stabilizing" a complex inter-local system in which the destabilizing impacts of competition remain a core dynamic. Macroreform projects, then, of the sort that might encourage (neo-Keynesian?) forms of political regulation remain potential elite responses to capitalist crises as well as the kinds of first-step changes in environmental conditions needed to make local alternatives genuinely viable. For Piven and Cloward, on the other hand, the lessons of history lie in recognizing the continuities between our own time and the class structures of a pre-Keynesian America. While this historical frame may seem complementary to that employed by Peck and Tickell, it yields (particularly when linked to an agency-oriented vision of dialogic class power) quite different insights. If the most obvious of these is the possibility for effective working-class resistance to emerge even from recurrently unpropitious circumstances, a more implicit point concerns the necessity for such resistance to arise in order to create conditions for macrostructural reform. Just as working-class and poor people's struggles—Piven and Cloward (1977) have argued elsewhere—made possible the New Deal/Keynesian order, similar conflicts may be necessary today to set in motion the sorts of macro-reform initiatives that Peck and Tickell see as initial steps.

Clearly, then, different geographical and historical lenses help give shape to the two different understandings of contemporary capitalism. What may be less readily apparent are the analytical consequences of their contrasting treatments of the city. For Peck and Tickell, cities play a central role in neoliberal dynamics of growth and regulation. Because a crucial characteristic of neoliberal capitalism involves the institutionalization of competitive logics, the entrenched dynamic of interurban competition makes cities important not only as spaces of economic development but as engines of broader accumulation and networked nodes of systemic regulation. In this sense, cities become sites of serialized crisis as well as social laboratories for the corporate and policy "learning" that enhances neoliberal flexibility and governance. On the face of it, this systemic role for cities might seem to render urban-based contention strategically well positioned. Yet, inasmuch as interurban competition serves to contain local economic

crisis and punish local innovations that depart from neoliberal prescriptions, such failures or alternatives are unlikely to disseminate widely. In effect, the vertically scaled and networked circuits of mature neoliberalism work to selectively filter interurban or upward-directed flows, relaying innovations that stimulate accumulation while isolating and containing those that do not. Local growth is soon tapped for broader neoliberal expansion; emerging crisis or resistance, on the other hand, is swiftly localized. To produce broader systemic change, urban confrontations need to benefit from macrolevel reform efforts that rewire these circuits.

Piven and Cloward's account, by contrast, does not view cities as straitjacketed agents of neoliberal accumulation, nor does it rule out the potential for local resistance to generate larger struggles. Although the struggles they highlight take place, for the most part, in urban locations, the city itself, as space or as scale, is given no distinct theoretical status or analytical valence. Rather, the national polity or "society" (as traditionally understood within American sociology) operates implicitly as both the initial condition and ultimate arena of social conflict; national political change remains the tacit longer-term goal, while cities represent simply the locations where many such struggles begin.² And when such struggles engage larger class actors, then local conflicts may well represent the opening salvos in significant counteroffensives by labor or its allies against neoliberal capital and state policies. If, on the other hand, such conflicts fail to expand in this fashion, then we would do well to direct our attention not to structural obstacles posed by neoliberal capitalism, which they believe to be overstated, but to cleavages (between whites and racial minorities, for example, or unions and community organizations) that have perennially weakened American working-class mobilization.

The implications of these two theoretical approaches may emerge more sharply when we examine particular instances of urban conflict. The following sections present two recent cases of contestation in the city of Chicago. These cases do not represent the full range of such conflicts, nor will the discussions that follow provide highly contextualized accountings of the particular dynamics of each case. By focusing briefly on these conflicts, however, as well as on their linkages to broader political-economic developments, it becomes possible to see how different conceptions of neoliberal capitalism direct our attention to distinct strategic challenges.

CASE 1: THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST PEOPLES ENERGY

The Peoples Energy case concerns a protest campaign launched by lower-income community residents from Chicago's south and west sides to combat utility rate increases. Early actions, initiated in the winter of 2000,

focused on sharply rising gas prices for local consumers. The local utility (a corporation called Peoples Energy) claimed that these increased charges resulted from unfortunate contingencies—what it called a perfect storm of low gas reserves, decreased drilling and unusually cold weather—but activists demanded nevertheless that the company suspend the increases and continue service for residents who were unable to pay their bills. The campaign also put pressure on Chicago's mayor, Richard M. Daley, to intervene. When the mayor responded by calling for Peoples to extend its customer-payment schedules, the company urged the city of Chicago to tap into revenues from its 8% tax on natural gas customers to help people pay their bills. Protesters attempted, meanwhile, to blockade the company's truckyards in order to prevent utility crews from shutting off gas lines in the homes of delinquent customers, and agitated for a new payment system for low-income residents based on ability to pay. In April 2001, the utility granted brief extensions to customers slated to be shut off, but shortly thereafter, in the face of more blockades, recommenced the terminations of service. By late the following year, community activists were picketing Peoples' headquarters building, the Chicago City Council, and the mayor's office, demanding reconnection for more than 14,000 homes now without gas service (*Chicago Tribune*, 2000; Washburn, 2000; Vogell & Isackson, 2000; *Chicago Tribune*, 2001; Long & Washburn, 2001; Ciokajlo, 2001; Lynch, 2001; Abdur, 2002).

In many respects, this case seems to typify a certain kind of local political conflict: The campaign was led by local community organizations; the protests focused on local targets; activists struggled over several years to keep residents engaged and to keep the issue visible in local media coverage. Yet as the campaign continued it also took on extralocal dimensions and, in the process, illuminated broader developments in American neoliberal capitalism with significant implications for other cities.

One such development concerned the effects of deregulation on U.S. energy companies and on urban residents. Early in the 20th century, lucrative franchises for natural gas and electricity transmission, defined as "natural monopolies," had been awarded to private corporations, which then enjoyed guaranteed profits in exchange for rate regulation by state commissioners (Hirsh, 1999). In recent decades, though, as successive waves of post-Fordist deregulation have transformed most areas of the energy sector, states have loosened controls on customer rates, and utilities like Peoples Energy have become more aggressive in exploring new profit-generating opportunities. The protest campaign in Chicago was given additional life, in fact, when a local public interest group, the Citizens Utility Board, discovered in 2003 that Peoples Energy's rate hikes had been intended to cover losses from a secret partnership with Enron, the energy trading firm hailed in the 1990s as a corporate pioneer of the "new economy."³ Under one

such contract with Enron North America (the Houston-based company's natural gas sales and trading arm), Peoples agreed to transfer much of its stored gas to another Enron subsidiary for winter-month sales, when prices were high; Enron then would restock the gas in the spring, when prices were lower, and secretly share the profits with Peoples. Downturns in the larger economy, combined with Enron's own corporate scandals and subsequent bankruptcy, short-circuited the plan. Faced with revelations about these deals, the city of Chicago and the Illinois attorney general filed lawsuits against the utility for hundreds of millions of dollars in customer overcharges while the Illinois Commerce Commission investigated whether further penalties would be appropriate (Garza, 2003, 2004a, 2004b; *Chicago Tribune*, 2004).⁴ In effect, news of the Enron partnership created the potential for recasting the campaign against Peoples as part of a wider struggle against corporate corruption and neoliberal governance.

The involvement of Enron also highlighted important connections between the neoliberal political economy and the restructuring city. A one-time domestic energy firm transformed by deregulation and political influence into a global energy and online commodities trading company, Enron exemplified how the growing interpenetration of corporate and state strategies in the United States not only encouraged speculative and short-term-oriented accumulation but also spurred increasingly predatory strategies toward lower-income urban communities. Just as the fictive profits of Enron were partly made good through squeezing workers and their pension funds, the ability of such firms to dominate their reconstructed markets tended to direct pressure downward onto less mobile urban actors, such as public utility corporations and local governments, to pursue more "entrepreneurial" approaches to extracting profits or revenues from captive consumers. Such approaches dovetailed in Chicago with ongoing efforts to reconstruct new spaces of accumulation, particularly in devalued industrial zones and long-neglected areas of African American and Hispanic settlement on the south and west sides of the city. In this sense, utility-rate gouging operated as a significant residential-displacement mechanism, serving, along with plant closings and public housing demolitions, to hasten the outward expansion of the gentrification frontier.

This connection between neoliberal corporate strategies and a changing urban landscape also helps to situate the context for community resistance in the case of Peoples Energy. From the vantage point of Peck and Tickell, it is not entirely surprising that this campaign first emerged as a grassroots mobilization over specific grievances against local actors, nor that these "localist" qualities continued to contain the scope of the struggle even after the issue's connection to Enron became public knowledge. For one reason, a market arena in which distinct local providers operate as de facto subcontractors within flexible, increasingly deregulated corporate

supply chains tends to disperse and serialize (within this economic sector as in many others) the disruptive impacts of broader systemic operations, inhibiting the elevation of local mobilizations into national urban-based challenges. Recent episodes of welfare state restructuring have resulted in similar consequences; while spearheading a broader austerity, these measures have been successfully presented as exercises in the expansion of local discretion in part because their impacts have been staggered. Meanwhile, political leaders in Chicago, as in most other U.S. cities, have responded to this economic and policy landscape by actively embracing a neoliberal notion of competition, internalizing its logic within their own “local” approaches to economic development, education, welfare, and housing. This kind of policy hegemony, reinforced by the corrosive tendencies of inter-urban rivalry, makes the immediate-term emergence of a coherent local progressivism—one that might represent a nascent alternative to urban neoliberalism—quite unlikely even in the event of sustained community mobilizations.⁵ For all these reasons, then, neither the protests against Peoples Energy nor even the much more visible conflicts over Enron’s role in California’s energy crisis (which did have a brief impact on broader U.S. debates over corporate governance) ushered in major changes in the shape or substance of American neoliberalism.⁶

In this sense, the unfolding of the Peoples Energy case resonates with many of the structural dynamics highlighted by Peck and Tickell. One can find evidence, however, that the oppositional campaign was also hampered by the sorts of intraclass divisions and strategic weaknesses emphasized by Piven and Cloward. Thus, while mobilization of the campaign’s core constituent base (low-income consumers) would be hard to sustain under any circumstances, a lack of connection to workers, whose social-structural position vis-à-vis capital typically gives them greater leverage than community residents or consumers, exacerbated the challenge. As it happened, Peoples Gas staff and clerical workers launched their own strike against the utility during the early months of the protest campaign against shut-offs. But there appears to have been surprisingly little effort by union leaders and community organizers to coordinate their struggles, and the strike was soon settled (Franklin & Kantzavelos, 2001; Hepp & Kantzavelos, 2001). It also seems clear that certain community groups that joined the campaign in midstream (such as those churches and community organizations, led by the Reverend Jesse Jackson, that tried to help residents pay their inflated utility bills) served in key respects to demobilize the protesters and facilitate economic victimization (Ciokajlo, 2001). Given the broader economic and political obstacles to expanding the struggle, greater efforts to address these problems of internal weakness and fragmentation may not have made a significant difference. Nevertheless, these recurring fissures that often plague urban con-

tention in the United States probably further constrained the impacts of the protest campaign against Peoples.

CASE 2: THE FIGHT AGAINST WAL-MART

A second case example involves a higher-profile conflict. In early 2004, Wal-Mart, the mass retail chain, announced a plan to open its first stores in the city of Chicago. When the company sought permission from the local City Council to build two stores, the plan was opposed by a coalition led by national labor organizations that have long fought Wal-Mart's antiunion practices. Both sides launched extensive campaigns, deploying representatives to churches, schools, and community halls in rival efforts to build local coalitions capable of swaying the votes of council members. The initial outcome, following an unusually contentious council session and a very close vote, involved a partial victory for the company, which gained approval to build one of its two stores.

It is not difficult to see this kind of mobilization as offering a potentially direct and transparent challenge to core political-economic tendencies within contemporary neoliberalism. Wal-Mart has become a recognizable target for widespread opposition, and a broad range of local and translocal interests (workers, consumers, immigrants, women, and others) were engaged by the campaign to defeat the company's effort to expand into Chicago. Yet the fact that Wal-Mart emerged with a partial victory in Chicago suggests that it is important to examine not only the shifting structural conditions of neoliberal corporate power and the mobilizational capacities of the two sides but also the tactical maneuvers of the opposing campaigns within a distinctive local context.

Wal-Mart's entry into Chicago was not only a symptom of the corporation's relentless expansion but also an outgrowth of recent vulnerabilities. The biggest private employer in the United States, Wal-Mart has long pursued a profit strategy centered on the low wages and poor benefits offered to its workers. Because of its size and phenomenal success, Wal-Mart has come to be seen (like General Motors in an earlier era) as a corporate paradigm, emblematic not merely of the retail sector but of the neoliberal capitalist economy as a whole. Yet a range of new pressures—from weak profits overseas to charges of pervasive gender discrimination and exploitation of illegal immigrants—have led to damaging publicity and perceptions of weakness. Perhaps most importantly, Wal-Mart has saturated rural and suburban locations in the United States, so that future domestic growth will depend on urban markets, like Chicago, where the company has been slow to build a retail base. One indication of the company's strong interest in such markets is that its first bid to build in Chicago, announced in 2002,

had asked for an \$18 million public subsidy, but subsequent proposals dropped any such demand (Arndorfer, 2003; Jones, 2004).

Labor leaders have come to believe that organizing against this virulently antiunionist company is an urgent priority. The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the nation's largest private sector union, is especially concerned because Wal-Mart's influence and example have spurred unionized grocery chains to demand lower wages and weaker benefits from their workers. Yet the company's aggressive antiunionism and its willingness to incur civil penalties for violating labor laws have discouraged unions from mounting a traditional National Labor Relations Board-oriented campaign. Furthermore, no single union has the resources to confront Wal-Mart; even a strong commitment by four or five unions might also require the adoption of a new organizing model, perhaps one similar to the worker/community associations (open to both employees and non-employees) pioneered in the garment industry.⁷ Given this kind of challenge, labor organizations did not necessarily expect to defeat the company in Chicago, but they did seek to lay the groundwork for a longer-term campaign.

This latest stage in the penetration of U.S. cities by mass retailers has also been accompanied by new community-level public relations campaigns that target the urban spatial frontier. Wal-Mart's initial bid in Chicago had focused on the South Loop area, near the central business district, but by 2004 the company was proposing two locations farther out on the south and west sides of the city. Redevelopment of these sites, occupied at the time by abandoned factories, required zoning changes by the Chicago City Council, and opponents sought to make this decision a referendum on Wal-Mart's employment practices as well as on the stores' likely impacts on existing jobs and small businesses.⁸ Taking the offensive, however, the company waged a populist campaign intended to burnish its image, to create public support for the stores among nearby working-class and lower-middle-class consumers, and to generate political pressure on council members (who in Chicago are called aldermen) from the south- and westside wards.

The company sent representatives into African American churches, schools and community halls, offering to provide assistance to ongoing struggles against bank redlining, declining schools, and the lack of affordable housing. Promising a range of concessions, from the hiring of minority contractors to helping organizations that worked with unemployed ex-convicts, Wal-Mart built a network of black ministers to speak in support of its development projects. In response, Chicago Jobs with Justice, along with UFCW and a number of local community organizations, demanded that Wal-Mart sign a Community Benefits Agreement that would permit unionization and other steps, but the company refused. On May 27, 2004, the council voted to permit Wal-Mart to open its first outlet in Chicago at the

proposed westside location (Olivo, 2004; Franklin, 2004; Sluis, 2004). Over the following months, union leaders lobbied the City Council to pass a local ordinance mandating that big-box retailers offer workers “living wages” and enhanced benefit packages. Following a contentious exchange, a number of African American alderman refused to back the bill, insisting that union leaders would have to open up more jobs to minorities in the construction trades in order to gain their support, and this ordinance was defeated (Washburn & Meyer, 2004; Mihalopoulos, 2004).

The intensity of political conflict over Wal-Mart’s entry into Chicago suggests that both sides saw the mobilization of local community support as an important part of the process. Much of this local activity was directly propelled, however, by larger actors. During the days prior to the City Council vote, in fact, the AFL-CIO sent its national organizing director to Chicago to lead the anti-Wal-Mart coalition and to lobby aldermen, a step that did not entirely please local activists. Wal-Mart also stepped up its efforts; a telemarketing team hired by the company went so far as to electronically patch the phone calls of hundreds of enlisted supporters directly to council members’ offices (Mihalopoulos & Rucker, 2004). Of course, even these extralocal actors were forced to compete within a distinctive urban political arena, one in which local officials tend to play key roles. Yet Chicago’s Mayor Daley refused to take a public position on the Wal-Mart vote, presumably because he feared alienating his union supporters (Washburn, 2004). The result was that the City Council, which often serves as a rubber stamp for probusiness development policies, was freed up to engage in a fluid and contentious debate. The positive lesson here for oppositional strategists may be that even neoliberal local officials can be reluctant to embrace Wal-Mart. By the same token, however, the local issues that emerged in the course of this unusually open-ended debate, such as conflicts within the black community as well as those between white union leaders and black aldermen, can be seen as emerging very clearly from the historically recurring features of the urban landscape emphasized by Piven and Cloward. The city “trenches” that divide labor from community; the efforts to construct coalitions across those trenches; the actions by employers that play off workers against consumers; the cooptation of community groups into projects of corporate expansion and welfare-state retrenchment—all these dynamics are deeply familiar to historical observers of class conflict as played out upon the terrain of U.S. cities (Katznelson, 1981; Mayer, 1994, 1999).

These divisions point to strategic obstacles that will no doubt confront subsequent efforts against corporations like Wal-Mart. Thus, while Wal-Mart’s city-centered economic strategy takes it into what are relative union strongholds, labor organizations long ago ceded local working-class politics in U.S. cities to community groups with different social bases and agendas. Given the fact that divisions between labor and community also map onto ra-

cial differences (and that many unions do have histories of racial discrimination), it is not surprising that national union officials are sometimes addressed as adversaries by black urban politicians, even when demands for racial justice are (as they were in Chicago) somewhat disingenuous. Of course, such intraclass divisions may be overcome. A signal advantage of urban-based mobilizations against Wal-Mart (one that was visibly lacking in the conflict with Peoples Energy) lies precisely in their inclusion within a translocally coordinated and supported campaign.⁹ Within such a context, the key challenge is not how can community-based protest transcend the debilitating dynamics of localization but, rather, how might national working-class organizations become more attentive to the complex urban cleavages that hamper effective mobilization on the ground. Viewing the problem in this way may also suggest that effective coalition building across the city's trenches is sometimes entwined with constructing stronger organizational linkages between local and translocal scales of political action.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored how differently formulated conceptions of post-1960s capitalism can entail divergent readings of the potential effectiveness of urban-based resistance. The discussion began by exploring certain problems involved in defining contemporary neoliberalism, and proceeded to compare two powerfully articulated theories—in certain respects overlapping or complementary but ultimately disjunctive—of early 21st-century capitalist hegemony. To draw out the implications of these approaches, and especially to highlight the different kinds of strategic challenges they envision, two case examples were briefly examined.

One conceptual approach, drawn from the work of Peck and Tickell, was seen to offer a rather structuralized interpretation of the evolution and operations of neoliberal hegemony. In this account, Peck and Tickell envision neoliberalism as a globally varied yet relatively coherent political-economic regime in which competitive logics are now enforced upon disparate actors and places through interlocal multiscaled networks of response. Defined initially by its long struggle to roll back and then replace the once-pervasive institutions of Keynesian welfare-statism, neoliberalization in the United States has elaborated a broad range of mechanisms (corporate strategies, state policies, interurban rivalries, problem-solving knowledges) that position cities as increasingly valued spaces of accumulation, important sites of economic experimentation and self-defeating accomplices in the intensification of working-class and public sector austerities. Within such an environment, cities are bound to experience relatively frequent crises or disruptions, yet these same mechanisms also tend to reinforce precisely the sorts of dynamics—corporate flexibility, policy decentralization, interlocal

competition—that localize crisis, isolate opposition, and punish would-be progressive innovations. For this reason, Peck and Tickell seem to envision little immediate promise in urban-based mobilization, or in any form of contentious opposition that fails to engage directly with the extralocal rule systems that mandate neoliberal economic development “solutions” to socioeconomic problems at every scale.

The case example involving Peoples Energy in Chicago served to illustrate a number of these theoretical claims. Indeed, the transformation of the energy sector itself seemed to encompass in microcosm much of Peck and Tickell’s reconstruction of neoliberal ascendancy: the crucial rollback functions provided by early post-Fordist deregulation measures; the dynamic ability of firms such as Enron to restructure, dominate, and even invent new energy markets; the wholesale internalization of privatizing logics of competition and problem solving within state as well as corporate institutions; the predatory consequences for urban working-class residents as such logics coalesce with local redevelopment ambitions and experiment with remaking the inner city. Furthermore, the theory’s emphasis on certain mutually reinforcing tendencies toward localization—from decentralized state functions and flexible corporate supply chains to the channeling of system-wide contradictions into punctuated local crises—may also help to explain the inability of struggles like the one against Peoples Energy to gain broader traction, even at a moment when U.S. national energy policy was clearly in political disarray. Considered in the light of such a case, then, it is small wonder that Peck and Tickell’s strategic implications emphasize the relative futility of urban mobilization absent some broader shift in neoliberal circuits of policy response and governance.

A second theoretical approach, drawn from the work of Piven and Cloward, contends that contemporary capitalist hegemony rests not so much on unprecedented global structures of economic power as on a capitalist class offensive supported by relentless ideological campaigns and the still considerable capacities of national state institutions. Resituating the question of opposition within a long history of American class conflict, Piven and Cloward argue that the most significant barriers to effective challenges to corporate hegemony today may be the social cleavages and outmoded strategies associated with working-class mobilization itself. Even here, they argue, there is growing evidence that labor unions in particular are at least beginning to forge expanded repertoires of resistance, attempting to bring together workers, consumers, community groups, and others, often across debilitating racial divides. While Piven and Cloward seem to recognize that such divisions are often the deeply entrenched legacy of past conflicts as well as ongoing inequalities, recent efforts to overcome these intraclass animosities through mobilization represent, in their view, not simply hopeful signs but possible seeds of broader challenge to capital’s latest offensive. If Peck and Tickell imply that only reform from above is likely

to enable resistance from below, Piven and Cloward's lessons of history suggest that the road to the former leads through the latter.

The Chicago campaign against Wal-Mart dramatized many strategic issues foregrounded by such a reading. Beginning with the recognition that even powerful neoliberal corporations may have weaknesses, this campaign points to broader possibilities for urban-based mobilizations, particularly those that draw together a wide range of oppositional allies. Clearly, the case of Wal-Mart's expansion into inner-city areas involves more than simply the structural evolution of a neoliberal hegemon; it highlights a number of issues—the importance of corporate ideological and political offensives, the emergence of new strategic repertoires for labor, the potential viability of the inner city as a terrain of broader struggle—that yield a more open and encouragingly conflictual vision of the 21st-century political landscape. In particular, the effort to combine the resources, coordination, and visibility of a national campaign with the grassroots engagement and favorable arena offered by an urban-centered strategy may point to one promising model for confronting neoliberalism in the city. Even if it does, however, the divisions that emerged within the anti-Wal-Mart coalition in Chicago tend to dramatize oppositional weaknesses also underlined by Piven and Cloward—such as deep-seated racial and community/labor cleavages—that are easily exploited by corporate and state cooptation.¹⁰ Such fractures are likely to confront other efforts to construct broad-based challenges to corporate and state-led class offensives within the city.

Each of the two conceptual approaches presented in this chapter, then, can be seen to offer certain insights into the strategic field faced by urban-based mobilizations. It is important to emphasize, of course, that these insights are merely suggestive. The primary purpose of the chapter has been to illuminate points of analytical connection between broader theories of neoliberalism and certain challenges faced by urban mobilizations, not to argue for a specific theory or political strategy. The extended focus on two relatively contrasting conceptions was intended to enlarge the sphere of analytical possibility surrounding how neoliberalism might be defined while also permitting sufficient consideration of particular theories (supplemented through the examination of case examples) to draw out the kinds of strategic implications that ensue. This sort of framework, which is more illustrative than assertive, tends to preclude strong theoretical or strategic conclusions. Its advantages may be useful for preliminary investigation, however, especially at a moment when the issue of cities and social movements is being interrogated anew (see, e.g., Nicholls & Beaumont, 2004). Theoretical elucidations of neoliberal capitalism and on-the-ground efforts to change it do not always reveal their mutual relation. The foregoing discussion, by extending analytical linkages between contrasting theories and particular cases, aims to contribute to further reflection, and connection, across the two realms.

NOTES

1. In a more recent article, Peck (2004) traces a second intellectual tradition emerging from German social market theory that also contributes to the development of neoliberal ideology.
2. Piven and Cloward (2000) briefly offer an implicitly spatialized argument when they contend that opportunities for disruption spring from the local dependencies entailed by globalized production chains. For the most part, however, issues of space and scale are not directly addressed, even in theoretical contributions (see, e.g., Piven & Cloward, 2005) that reflect in interesting ways on the fundamental social conditions of oppositional agency.
3. For an overview of the rise of Enron, which filed for bankruptcy in 2001, see Stiglitz (2003: 241–268). While Enron's most notorious energy dealings would be its manipulation of electricity supplies in California, Stiglitz notes that the corporation's early money was made from the deregulated natural gas market.
4. Peoples eventually agreed to a \$196 million settlement, about half of which was designated for low-income consumers and shut-off victims (Manor, 2006).
5. This claim is developed more fully in Sites (2003: 142–151).
6. For examples of the typically modest proposals for corporate governance reform that emerged, see Holmstrom and Kaplan (2003) as well as Healy and Palepu (2003); for a broader critique, see Brennan (2003).
7. Discussion of such models can be found in Featherstone (2004) and Fine (2005).
8. For one effort to forecast those economic impacts, see Mehta, Baiman, and Persky (2004).
9. Following the Chicago conflict, the AFL-CIO launched a national pressure campaign against Wal-Mart involving half a dozen unions; soon thereafter, confronted by a coalition of labor, community, small business, and environmental groups, the company suspended its first serious effort to build a store in New York City (Greenhouse, 2004, 2005).
10. For further discussion of these weaknesses within the context of the anti-Wal-Mart campaign, see Sites (in press).

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Political Polemics and Local Practices of Community Organizing and Neoliberal Politics in South Africa

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Urban activism was instrumental in bringing about South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy and continues to play an important role in postapartheid social and political transformation (Habib, Valodia, & Ballard, 2006). Yet, different visions of the role for activism and civil society and the direction of urban politics and governance divide theorists and practitioners across the South African political spectrum. All conceptualize civil society as necessary and good, as an instrumental element of postapartheid development and democratization (Johnson, 2002), but quite contradictory assumptions are built into this promotion of civil society. Radical "anti-neoliberal" critics, on the one hand, frame South African urban politics in a discourse against neoliberalism, particularly as an oppositional polarization between the neoliberal state and popular interests and movements in civil society (Bond, 2000a, 2004; McDonald, 2002). "Liberal" thinkers from a range of political perspectives, on the other hand, emphasize governance and participatory models through which civil society must work with the state (Parnell, Pieterse, Swilling, & Wooldridge, 2002). This has yielded polarized political polemics regarding the role and dynamic of postapartheid civil society (Habib & Kotzé, 2003),¹ with Presi-

dent Thabo Mbeki joining the fray in his castigation of radical critics as an “ultra-left” force pursuing a political project of “disunity.”²

Framed by a global discourse about neoliberalism, South African debates on “progressive,” “adversarial,” and “emancipative” urban social movements within the radical camp and on “voluntary,” “constructive” and “capable” civic associations and community representatives among liberals speak at cross-purposes, especially in relation to analyzing local political practice.³ Both readings of urban politics frame community organizing in South African cities in monolithic, simplified hues. In this chapter, we contrast this polemic with the practices of community-based organizations that make up the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign. We argue that these binaries do not do justice to the realities of community organizing: In other words, polemical political discourse does not reflect the complexities of political practice. In everyday initiatives to get access to public services, or to protect those that already exist, community organizing crosses the boundary between engagement with the state and opposition to state programs and policies.

Analyzing urban political practices at the community scale highlights the presence of a diversity of political issues, strategies, and arenas, rooted in historical and geographical differentiation within and across cities. In the discussion of the Campaign (and the diverse political practices of community organizations operating within it) that we draw on in this chapter,⁴ political action and community organizing are grounded in local everyday life and local political spaces, yet they are also framed by and partake in the contestation of political decision making and discourses operating at city and national scales. The multiple positions and strategic engagements adopted by urban community-based movements, combined with the complex character of neoliberal policies, produce often contradictory and always uneven politics that at times resonate with critiques of neoliberalism, but also articulate as locally specific issues. These politics and their complex articulations remain undertheorized in academic and policy debates on local civil society in the context of neoliberalism.

CIVIL SOCIETY, THE STATE, AND DEVELOPMENT

The promotion of civil society and the centrality of images of opposition and engagement in reading civil society–state relationships are not particular to South Africa, but mirror international neoliberal and post-Marxist discourses on civil society and the state. There is now a striking convergence in development theory and strategy between “new-right” and “new-left” positions, where both tend to prioritize local civil society over a caricatured image of inefficient and centralized states (Mohan & Stokke, 2000). While

the neoliberal position suggests a top-down process of local participatory development, the post-Marxist discourse centers on bottom-up struggles for social transformation:

Civil society can, according to neoliberals, exert organized pressure on autocratic and unresponsive states and thereby support democratic stability and good governance. It can also facilitate participation in development and thereby empower target groups of poor people. Civil society is, according to post-marxists, the expression of diverse forms of identity politics challenging the hegemony of global economic liberalism and its associated political institutions. Social movements hold the potential for bringing about autocentric and socially relevant development in opposition to the disempowering activities of both the state and the market. (Mohan & Stokke, in press: 2)

In agreement with the neoliberal development discourse, donor agencies and international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have promoted governance reforms that decentralize planning and service delivery and civil society participation and partnerships across the developing world. These institutional changes have the effect of “rolling back” the state by rearranging state–market and state–society relations, placing increased emphasis on the market and civil society as the critical sites and agents for economic and social development. In this context, social capital has emerged as the conceptual tool linking reformed states and citizens. Putnam (1993) has famously argued that “social capital”—the relationships, associations, and networks that tie individuals to one another—is the crucial component to successful local governance and development. While Putnam portrays social capital as inimitable—either there or not—other theorists have identified the ways in which social capital may be created through particular types of intervention (Evans, 1996; Harrison, 2002).

In some instances, development work has focused therefore on ways to build and improve social capital by engaging and funding civil society organizations. These conceptualizations of social capital fall hand in hand with programs and practices of decentralized governance and participatory development, particularly prevalent in the discourse of Western donors (Mohan & Stokke, 2000). Critical analysts, however, observe that social capital mystifies rather than clarifies local civil society, because it evades questions of class, power, and politics. Indeed Harriss (2002: 12) argues that social capital, as conceptualized by Putnam and utilized by the World Bank, has the effect of depoliticizing neoliberal development: “This mystification serves the political purposes of depoliticizing the problems of poverty and social justice and, in elevating the importance of ‘voluntary associa-

tion' in civic engagement, of pointing out the need for political action. 'Social capital' is thus a weapon in the armoury of the 'anti-politics machine' " (p. 12). In more general terms it can be argued that, although neoliberal reforms and discourses promoting good governance, administrative decentralization, and social capital may create certain discursive and institutional spaces for popular participation, they also render development as a technocratic and depoliticized process (Corbridge, Williams, & Srivastava, 2005; Ferguson, 1994; Harriss, Stokke, & Törnquist, 2004; Mohan & Stokke, in press).

The nodal points of "civil society," "participation," and "empowerment" in the neoliberal discourse are shared by the post-Marxist left, but the technocratic conception of development and governance is not. On the contrary, post-Marxists emphasize polycentric adversarial struggles as forms of resistance that are said to operate outside major political alignments and the formal political sphere. Escobar (1995), for instance, advocates social movements in the third world as a potential way beyond the disciplining confines of western Eurocentric development discourses and programs (Crush, 1995).

Although emphasizing the diversity of identities and the polycentric nature of resistance, post-Marxist discourse also situates these struggles in a structural context that overdetermines civil society activism. Chin and Mittelman (2000) illustrate this conception of resistance by referring to Polyani's (1944) analysis of state-supported implementation of self-regulating markets in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with subsequent collective struggles to protect workers and reexert social control over the market. This movement-counter movement dialectic has, some argue, a contemporary expression in the drive toward economic globalization and neoliberalism with resultant multifaceted antiglobalization and anti-neoliberalism struggles. Castells (1997: 69), for instance, emphasizes expressions of collective identity that challenge globalization on behalf of people's control over their lives and environment:

People all over the world resent loss of control over their lives, over their environment, over their jobs, and, ultimately, over the fate of the Earth. Thus, following an old law of social evolution, resistance confronts domination, empowerment reacts against powerlessness, and alternative projects challenge the logic embedded in the new global order, increasingly sensed as disorder by people around the planet.

Harvey (2003) operates within the same overall movement-counter movement framework but provides a more explicit Marxist analysis of the links between global capitalism and local resistance. For him, contemporary capitalism is marked by the importance of "accumulation by dispossession" as

a strategy to overcome crises by releasing assets (including labor power) at very low cost. Following the general overaccumulation crisis of the 1970s, he argues, privatization has become the cutting edge of this strategy, displaying the same patterns of asset redistribution almost anywhere that it is being implemented. In the case of South Africa, he draws on McDonald and Pape (2002) to argue that

The World Bank treated postapartheid South Africa as a showcase for the greater efficiencies that could be achieved through privatization and liberalization of the market. It promoted, for example, either the privatization of water or “total cost recovery” by municipally owned utilities. Consumers paid for the water they used rather than receiving it as a free good. With higher revenues the utilities would, the theory went, earn profits and extend services. But, unable to afford the charges, more and more people were cut out of the service, and with less revenue the companies raised rates, making water even less affordable to low-income populations. (Harvey, 2003: 159)

Contemporary processes of accumulation by dispossession, like historical rounds of primitive accumulation, provoke diverse political and social struggles. Whereas analysts like Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004) see these as a “multitude”—a resistance network that mirrors the network-like character of empire—Harvey sees them as diverse and inchoate struggles that reflect the fragmentary and contingent forms of accumulation by dispossession. For him, the theoretical and political challenge is to work from these particularistic struggles toward a generalized political goal while acknowledging the significance of multiple identifications.

As political as such structure-oriented studies of domination and resistance are, they nonetheless display a certain “political deficit” in the sense that little attention is paid to the contextualized politics of both neoliberal reforms and counterhegemonic struggles. There is an unfortunate tendency to refrain from addressing questions of political agency, interests, and strategies in civil society and how these relate to the state. This renders invisible the complexity and diversity of cultural and political contestation in civil and political society, as well as in the state.

This brief discussion yields some important analytical lessons. Whereas local civil society is important, it is not exclusively so or critical in a normative, idealized sense. In fact, there is a problematic tendency to romanticize civil society and to view it as a separate and alternative sphere outside the economy and polity (Mohan & Stokke, 2000). But local social movements and associations—organs of civil society—do not operate in vacuums or in contexts and with power of their own choosing. Nor is “civil society” by definition “civil,” or “virtuous” (Bayat, 1997; Kasfir, 1998; Hearn, 2001;

Markovitz, 1998). Civil society, therefore, cannot be assumed as “*locus sine qua non* for progressive politics, the place where people organize to make their lives better, even a site of resistance” (Hearn, 2001: 43). Moreover, “the current focus on the notion of “civil society” tends to belittle or totally ignore the vast arrays of often uninstitutionalized and hybrid social activities which have dominated urban politics in many developing countries” (Bayat, 1997: 55). Focusing on the range of activities that poor citizens in developing contexts practice to secure tenure, housing, services, and livelihoods, Bayat argues that these processes occur despite state programs and act autonomously from the development agenda.

The observed political deficit in both neoliberal and post-Marxist development discourses points to the need to critically unpack the complexity of civil society and its relations with the state (Chandhoke, 1995). At first, it should be observed that neoliberalism and neoliberal institutional reforms are not monolithic phenomena or processes. While certain ideological and political commonalities can be identified, these are mediated by specific political contexts with divergent constellations of political institutions, discourses, and forces. Furthermore, studies of neoliberalism in developing countries have often been confined to political reforms and discourses promoting the deregulation of trade and production. But these tendencies are also prominent within the public sector itself. As governments are encouraged by capital interests and international financial institutions to reduce their social expenditures, corporatization and privatization of public assets allow market forces to make inroads into the public sector. Often public services are put out to tender, new public–private partnerships are introduced, and service delivery units are made subject to market processes. Resultantly, the affordability and access to these services are put at risk, as well as the job security and working conditions of public sector workers. Finally, the contestation of such initiatives by trade unions and social movements contains a plethora of issues and strategies, with diverse and reflexive combinations of engagement and disengagement with economic and political actors in different localities and at different scales. This geographic and political complexity calls for contextualized studies of both the changing conditions and strategies of community activism. These analytical points help frame a critical analysis of South African civil society and development politics in the contemporary period.

DEBATING THE NATURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY–STATE RELATIONSHIPS

Habib and Kotzé review academic and political debates on civil society and argue that there is a critical “need to transcend the false divide that has

emerged between opposition and engagement in South Africa” (2003: 28). In postapartheid South Africa, proponents of political engagement frame their arguments around the prioritization of governance, while their opponents highlight adversarial struggles for social justice.

Reconstructing Governance versus Achieving Socioeconomic Justice

At all tiers, the postapartheid state has prioritized re-creating governance patterns and broadly reconfiguring state–society relationships, outlined in both the 1996 Republic of South Africa Constitution and state policy and legislation (such as the White Paper for Local Government 1998 and the 1998 Municipal Structures Act and 1999 Municipal Systems Act). Democratic elections at the national, provincial, and municipal levels changed the political and institutional environment in which organs of civil society engage with the state. For instance, statutorily mandated community development forums were instituted to structure community–state engagement (for example, Reconstruction Development Forums and other sector-specific structures such as Community Policing Forums). These structures were designed to facilitate communication between local government and civil society and to provide a platform through which civil society could participate in area-based decision making (Chipkin, 2003). In turn, civil society was assumed to be an arena for progressive debate on development, symbolic of the democratic era.

At the same time that the South African state has grappled with means to institutionalize and deliver on its development imperatives locally, it has made particular choices at the macroeconomic scale. Emblematic in the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution framework (GEAR), macroeconomic policy has embraced neoliberal ideologies that prioritize a restructuring and downscaling of state activity and a promotion of private sector actors and logics. These policies emerge at the urban scale as tensions between the commitment to development and poverty eradication and a market-driven promotion of “efficient” cities, and as competitiveness through “global city” status and the development of “world-class” infrastructure to attract foreign investment (Robinson, 2003). In the local government context, the recent implementation of policies of cost recovery for basic services such as water and electricity illustrate the ways in which market-driven mechanisms dominate developmental agendas for addressing inequality. The degree to which these trends can be understood as outright privatization is contested, but the postapartheid government has certainly moved from statist service delivery to neoliberal partnerships with private sector actors. “In the latter model, the state acts as a service ‘ensurer’ rather than a service ‘provider’ . . . and municipal services are ‘run more like a

business,' with financial cost recovery becoming the most important measure of performance" (McDonald & Smith, 2002: 1). Populist anti-neoliberal critics argue that these choices not only demonstrate the neoliberal turn to the right in South African governance but also have come at the cost of socioeconomic justice and redress (Bond, 2000b, 2004).

The collection of papers in the volume edited by McDonald and Pape (2002) on cost recovery and service delivery, among others such as Ruiters and Stein (2002) and Peters and Oldfield (2005), argue that policies of cost recovery in service delivery jeopardize the postapartheid project by disenfranchising and further alienating black communities and citizens already disadvantaged by the ravages of the apartheid system. These actions, they argue, negate the government's extension of services in the democratic era. Poor households and communities face an affordability crisis due to high unemployment levels and the real difficulties in eking out livelihoods under the current neoliberal macroeconomic regime. Although their arguments and figures have been challenged,⁵ this type of conceptual and empirical work provides an ideological and research platform on which the Anti-Eviction Campaign and other social movements often articulate the service delivery crisis.

In the Cape Town context, confrontation over payment for services has characterized the relationship between local government and residents in poorer areas of the city in the postapartheid period. The city has instituted cost recovery policies to attempt to recover arrears on rates and service bills, with city policies stating, for instance, that

Action will be taken against those who do not pay—the Council will not hesitate to cut off services and take legal action where necessary. Residents who do not pay will be without electricity or water and will have to pay the additional costs of reconnection fees, lawyers' fees and legal costs. They could ultimately have their houses sold (if they are ratepayers) or be evicted (if they are tenants in a Council house). (City of Cape Town, quoted in Xali, 2002: 110)

The implementation of this policy has been piecemeal, however, and has fluctuated with changing political party control of the municipality. In coalition with the (now-defunct) New National Party, the African National Congress (ANC) presently has control over municipal government and has recently made some concessions for renters in state housing and for households in arrears. For instance, since April 1, 2004, rental arrears accumulated before July 1997 have been written off, and the city will match 1 rand for every 1-rand repayment on arrears accrued between July 1997 and June 2002 (Dreyer, April 2, 2004). Nonetheless, these policies only address debts accumulated between 1997 and 2002 if residents

can make payments, and they exclude debts accumulated after 2002. Families unable to meet agreements on arrears payments still face disconnection of water and electricity and repossession of furniture in lieu of rental payment. Evictions and arrests for protesting such actions have become commonplace again. In response, some residents live without water and electricity, even without homes; many illegally reconnect themselves to services, and organize in their neighborhoods and across the city (Smith & Hanson, 2003).

Arguments for socioeconomic justice or reconstructing governance are not incorrect or falsely constructed, but reflect the postapartheid politics of engagement and opposition. Policymakers, activists, and researchers working toward better forms of governance articulate their concerns around a language of engagement. In contrast, those raising questions of socioeconomic justice and redistribution express their arguments and strategies within oppositional discourses. Through our case study on community-based political practice in the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign elaborated on in the next section, we suggest that the complexities of political practice challenge the engagement–opposition dualism, demonstrating the ways in which local politics at times mirrors, but more often crosses and reworks, engagement and opposition in practice.

THE WESTERN CAPE ANTI-EVICTION CAMPAIGN

The Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign (henceforth the Campaign) was launched in February 2001 to fight against evictions, water cutoffs, and poor health services. The Campaign is an umbrella body now representing approximately 25 communities in Cape Town. It encompasses a wide range of activists, issues, immediate material needs, histories of struggle, and political perspectives, and is an important oppositional voice in local politics. The Campaign offers a useful case study as it is both community-driven and positioned in city political discourse as adversarial and in opposition to the state, notwithstanding the range of strategies and activities constituting the Campaign. There are many interesting and relevant issues (Oldfield & Stokke, 2006), but we focus here on the ways in which community-based politics diverge from the political polemics on state–civil society engagement in the postapartheid context. Our analysis builds on three interrelated points: First, community organizing in the Campaign is highly differentiated; second, community-based organizations in the Campaign present a range of demands to the Cape Town Council and other state and parastatal institutions; and, third, in combination, different material organizing conditions and the consequent range of demands on the state produce a wide range of political practices.

Despite shared poverty, material issues underlying the present mobilization vary across different neighborhoods.⁶ There are four general environments in which the Campaign operates: apartheid-era state-built rental housing; different forms of apartheid-period “hire–purchase” homeowner-ship schemes built in the 1980s and 1990s, where residents are both tenants of the Council and homeowners; apartheid-era mortgaged housing for middle- to low-income families; and informal settlements and new neighborhoods where the postapartheid state has built low-income housing.

The Practices of Community Organizing

Analysis of community groups participating in the Campaign and what they do—the demands made, the institutions and individuals engaged with, and the type of tactics drawn on—show that “civil society” and its engagement with the state are configured in a broad rather than binary manner. Organizations in the Campaign undertake a wide range of activities, from legal battles to mass “informal” reconnections of services and territorial control over neighborhoods. Strategies grow from the local context, reflecting neighborhood logics, albeit articulated and mediated by citywide, regional, and national processes and debates. The local is heterogeneous, however, shaping the nature of organizations and the political, social, and material contexts in which groups strategize and struggle, and defining multiple positions along a continuum that spans engagement and opposition.

Most groups seek to engage city government and other relevant stakeholders to some degree, but the experiences of accessibility are diverse. The modes of protest and traditions of organizing also vary considerably across neighborhoods classified racially as former colored and African group areas as well as among organizations within neighborhoods in different sections of the city. In consequence, the present repertoire of protest ranges from strategies that are compatible with the rules and procedures of the formal political system (e.g., community meetings, petitions, negotiations, and legal demonstrations) to practices that are more confrontational and unlawful (e.g., illegal reconnections, occupations of houses, forceful blocking of evictions, and sit-ins). Many of the organizations combine diverse kinds of protests, employing the more radical tactics to solve problems and resist only when negotiations and legal demonstrations fail to yield acceptable outcomes. Clearly, different political contexts also frame mobilization issues in neighborhoods. The diverse practices that fall under the umbrella of the Campaign coalesce and are acted on primarily within neighborhood-level organizations; thus, it is important to shift the scale downward to show how complex political practice operates at a more local scale within

the Campaign itself. These patterns are illustrated in the case of the Valhalla Park United Front Civic in the following section.

The Valhalla Park United Front Civic: Strategic Engagement and Opposition

The United Front Civic⁷ of Valhalla Park illustrates the ways in which many community activists and organizations simultaneously engage with state officials and institutions and oppose them through overt and covert protest actions. This mixture of engagement and opposition reflects the organization's strategic choices and hard-won experiences in organizing in Valhalla Park over the past two decades.

The organization's successes come in part from persistent engagement with officials in the police and the health and housing departments who work directly in Valhalla Park. By building up long-term relationships with local officials, Civic leaders have found ways in which to make them more responsive. In the case of the police, for instance, leaders' personal connections and direct contact tend to improve servicing of the area. An activist comments on her role as intermediary between residents and the local police station:

People come here—even before they go to the police station, they come to the civic. . . . I gotta pick the phone up, then I gotta dial them and say I'm Mrs S. from the Street Committee, I'm from the United Front Civic and the people phoned two hours ago, three hours ago, and you never came. I want you to come out right now. . . . When I raise my voice and I make my voice loud, only then they come. (G.S., Valhalla Park, August 14, 2003)

Relationships with the police are nurtured through participation in the larger area's Community Policing Forum. A similar personal relationship has developed with the local Head of the Housing Office who, unlike officials in many poor parts of Cape Town, has allowed unemployed residents unable to pay rentals to apply for indigent status to relieve them of some of the burden of their bills (G.A., personal communication, May 2002).

Although civic leaders engage with officials, they do not depend on these types of relationships to resist evictions or to improve conditions in the neighborhood. The first community-wide success occurred in response to the cutoff of the entire neighborhood's electricity in the mid-1990s, despite many households paying their bills regularly. After a series of persistent protests and negotiations, the Council agreed to reconnect the electricity. Two activists remember the event:

People protested and we demanded, we actually demanded that they come reconnect the electricity. . . . After a lot of ups and downs, they decided to

come in, to put the people's electricity back on. We got onto that yellow van that rides from house to house to put the electricity on. We Civic members, we got onto the van, and we rode with them till past midnight from street to street. We didn't let them go until everybody's light had been turned on. (G.R. and G.S., August 14, 2003)

Since this period, residents and civic activists have been vigilant about Council activities in the area. Residents alert the civic leaders whenever they see a Council vehicle enter the neighborhood. Residents and activists then respond immediately to ensure that the Council does not cut off water or electricity without negotiating with the civic. Their persistence, and insistence that Council must consult the civic, has paid off from their perspective: The Council rarely enters the area without consultation.

When negotiations with the Council fail, the civic finds radical action entirely appropriate. After a number of children were hit by cars on the main road through the neighborhood, the civic spent 2 years requesting that the Council build speed bumps. After their request was turned down consistently, Civic activists dug a 4-meter-wide and approximately 1-meter-deep hole across the main road in the middle of the night. The following morning, cars rushing to work slammed into the hole. An activist recalls the official response:

When I came outside, the law enforcement was outside. . . . The Bishop Lavis Police Station was in the road to come and see the cars that got damaged in that hole, the traffic cops, a whole fleet of cops on bikes and in cars, the street was dark with all the law enforcements, with everybody standing outside. The hole was fixed and speed bumps were built that day. (G.S., August 14, 2003)

She cynically assesses that there was no money for speed bumps when children got hurt, but the same day that cars got "hurt," the money was found and the bumps built.

The United Front Civic's recent victory is the most significant, as it may impact the city's legal obligations in providing for informal settlement services not only in Cape Town but also regionally. "Homeless" Valhalla Park residents—those families on the housing waiting list living in backyard shacks or as subtenants in overcrowded flats—occupied state-owned land in the neighborhood, explicitly to attempt to move the City Council toward providing more housing in the area. When the Council failed to respond, or provide sanitation and water services, the United Front Civic took the Cape Town City Council to the High Court to demand their constitutional right to services. In July 2003, the United Civic Front won this landmark case (Case 8970/01, July 7, 2003, *Neville Rudolph and 49 others*

v. the City of Cape Town), in which the High Court held the city responsible to provide services to the informal area (called 7 de Laan), granting it 4 months to do so. The city appealed the ruling but lost.

Personal experience of evictions drives many leaders to continue to work hard to protect and support neighbors and the community. As one activist reflects:

Many times the two of us [spokesperson and chairman] had to walk half-way to the places we had to go, then come home on our feet, hungry, we had nothing to eat for the whole day. . . . But personally, I feel that is my calling since I moved to Valhalla Park. Up till today, there is a lot of people that hasn't got a house, that's been evicted with me. But, every time I fought back with the Council and I think that is why this is my calling. I know what it is to be evicted. . . . I overcame it [evictions] seven times. . . . I will fight the Council to the bitter end. I won't see anybody being evicted or anybody's water being cut. I am totally against this. This is why we as an organization felt we should join the Anti-Eviction Campaign because we stand for the same thing; we fight the same thing. We say no to evictions, no to water cuts, and all that. (G.S., August 14, 2003)

Leaders play multiple roles, but they are also supported by a structure of other community leaders operating at the street level. A weekly meeting is held every Thursday night where street leaders and the executive committee report back to residents on progress on issues, engaging with residents not only to keep them informed but also to build support and consensus within the neighborhood. It is in these forums where decisions are taken on appropriate responses and strategies—in particular when to work within the system and when to disrupt and challenge it.

In general, although leaders of the civic continue to work with Council officials and politicians, they have little faith in the system. From experience, they have found that the Council responds only if they present a direct challenge to governance and Council operations in the area. The Chairperson comments:

Council don't listen to us if we go through the right channels. They don't listen. They make as if they listen if you go through the right channels. They don't take notice of us. But, if we do what we do, then immediately they respond. . . . If they make too long, then we do our own thing. (G.S. and G.R., August 14, 2003)

Local experiences of and mixes of engagement and opposition challenge the political polemics of state–society relations in South Africa. Postapartheid movements like the Campaign and its local community organizations are actually characterized by creative combinations of strategies

of engagement and opposition and resistance to the state, responding to neoliberal policies of cost recovery but also to a broader and more complex neighborhood- and city-level politics.

THEORIZING COMMUNITY ORGANIZING AND EVERYDAY POLITICS

Practices of community-based activism embodied in local politics are more complex than a dualism between engagement and opposition. A reading of local political practice demonstrates the need for more complex and grounded understandings of urban civil society and less polemical constructions of state–society relationships as products of neoliberalism. The clash between policies for economic liberalization and struggles for socioeconomic justice generate local and national politics that cloak everyday civil society activism as either engaging with the South African transition or in opposition to it. This polemic frames the consequences of different types of activism: While political engagement may grant access to material resources for community development, it may also undermine the legitimacy of the movement as an independent representative of struggling people. On the other hand, community mobilization may empower the movement in dealing with state institutions, but may also lead to branding as disruptive forces are made into a target for state repression. African National Congress representatives increasingly distinguish between positive (collaborating) social forces and disruptive (adversarial) “ultra-revolutionaries.” The Campaign is increasingly placed in the latter category in this debate (Makinana, 2003; Ntabazalila, 2002).

Polemical readings of urban politics, supported by binary conceptualizations of neoliberalism and anti-neoliberalism struggles, reinforce the polarization of civil society organizations and actors from the state. This polarization and polemical rhetoric increase antagonism between liberal promoters of governance and engagement and anti-neoliberal activists prioritizing issues of justice. This type of polemic often prevents discussions that might help solve very real urban problems such as universal access to services. On the one hand, state officials and politicians (and other commentators) interpret activities by organizations like the Campaign as by definition adversarial. At the same time, activists and organizations (and other commentators) interpret state actions as, by definition, neoliberal and therefore counter to the interests of the poor and progressive politics. Grounded analysis of community organizing demonstrates, instead, that community politics include strategic and relational collaboration with and opposition to the state. Theorizations of civil society and of state–society relationships need to reflect this complexity and the plurality of urban poli-

tics in practice, building from a mediation of the empirical with the conceptual.

NOTES

1. Similar issues are articulated by Johnson (2002) as a question about reconciliation of popular mass movements with liberal democracy and Mangcu as a shift “from the lifeworld of social movements to the systems world of bureaucrats and technical experts, all in the name of empowerment and reconstruction” (Mangcu, 2003: 288).
2. African National Congress (ANC) rhetoric increasingly distinguishes between constructive and disruptive forces in civil society, as seen in ANC deputy secretary general Mthembu-Mahanyele’s contrast between “positive social formations” that have responded sympathetically to the government and those (i.e., Mbeki’s “ultra-left”) with which “we have a bit of a problem” (*Mail and Guardian*, August 5, 2003).
3. In contrasting these groups, we are not suggesting that the South African political context represents a “level playing field.” These two opposing political forces have differential access to power. Actors and institutions that promote engagement often have access to state resources and administrative channels. In comparison, “anti-neoliberal” activists face a dire shortage of financial and organizational resources.
4. The research that informs this case was completed with the Anti-Eviction Campaign’s Community Research Group in 2003 and 2004. The research methodology was designed to explore the history of the various organizations and areas that are part of the Campaign, focusing on the dynamics of each, the issues that they face and organize around, and the individuals that make up the organizations and that shape the campaign. In-depth interviews and focus groups with activists involved in the Campaign were conducted to discuss histories and dynamics of community organizing in the area and Campaign. These conversations helped unpack connections between individual activists, organizations, and the Campaign. Two case studies were conducted to focus on Campaign legal strategies and research capacity building, through the development of the Legal Coordinating Committee and the Community Research Group, respectively. These case studies complemented the more general and systematic analysis of Campaign diversity.
5. See the series of articles in the *Sunday Independent* in June and July 2003 by Ronnie Kasrils, Patrick Bond, and David McDonald debating not only the survey statistics but also their interpretation.
6. Many of the community organizations analyzed in the research operate at a neighborhood scale. Neighborhoods, sometimes referred to as areas, reflect histories of urban segregation and thus are also referred to as “colored,” “African,” or “white,” for instance, “areas.” This does not imply, however, that all colored neighborhoods somehow work together at an “area” level.
7. Historically developing as a form of antiapartheid resistance and as a response

to a lack of political representation and service delivery at the local level in formerly racially segregated African and colored neighborhoods, “civics” are community structures that help to advance development and issues linked to everyday living. Many have developed since the transition to democracy and continue operating during the present period.

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Decommodifying Electricity in Postapartheid Johannesburg

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POSTAPARTHEID NEOLIBERALISM

Apartheid's formal urban system was meant to have been dissolved by April 1994, when Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress won South Africa's first democratic elections. But residential segregation and the gender-discriminatory migrant labor system have persisted. Economic inequality has widened, with attendant spatial implications. National elites and urban managers attempted to tame social unrest and lubricate the transition from racial apartheid to class apartheid. Yet, at the lower rungs of the society, the early and mid-2000s witnessed hundreds of intense contestations of power, including electric power.

This chapter reviews South African neoliberalism in part by focusing on the electricity sector and possibly the most famous case of an urban anticapitalist protest group in contemporary Africa: the Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC). The Sowetans campaigned for access to basic services beginning in 2000, illegally reconnecting electricity to thousands of households disconnected due to poverty. As we write, in mid-2005, the SECC is mired in ideological strife and interorganizational competition with another socialist community movement in Soweto, and may suffer the classic problem of a downturn in social movement activity after some notable victories. Nevertheless, the SECC's militancy, analytical vision, and suc-

cessful reconnection tactics catalyzed similar activism across South Africa as well as brought substantial international admiration, and its socialist manifesto captured the imagination of anticapitalists of all stripes. No matter the SECC's fate, the label "ultraleft" given to it by President Thabo Mbeki and his Moscow-trained colleagues in 2002 indicates an enduring record of struggle.

Before considering the rise of the SECC in the context of urban neoliberal public policy, we ask a broader question about the new ruling elite: Were they pushed or did they jump? The ANC adopted free-market macroeconomic and microdevelopment policies even before 1994. The South African case is not so unusual, as there were many democratic transitions from the 1970s to the 1990s that allowed popular oppositional movements access to power, but only under restricted conditions known as "low-intensity democracy," with the new regimes constrained by debt repayment and neoliberal policy implementation. These ranged across southern Europe, the cone of South America, eastern Europe, east Asia, and parts of Africa.

In South Africa's case, because of a broader structural crisis in capitalism dating to the 1970s, white elites finally agreed to share power during the late 1980s. This arrangement facilitated a new round of capital accumulation and dampened the class and community struggles that were making life unprofitable and uncomfortable. By 1994, a small group of leaders dominated strategic discussions in the country's mass popular movements—the Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu), many of the NGOs, civic associations, women's and student/youth groups, and even church-based liberation organizations. While preventing pressure from below emerging into a full-fledged challenge to the ANC government, the leaders promoted a "corporatist" (i.e., elite-pacting) political style that further demobilized, disoriented, and disillusioned the base. The results included both decreasing electoral turnouts and the decay of the mass organizations' branch structures at the same time that the objective socioeconomic conditions of the majority worsened considerably.

Soaring unemployment was the government's biggest single failure, by all accounts. Falling tariffs on imported industrial machinery allowed automation to kill hundreds of thousands of jobs, while many more tens of thousands in vulnerable industries were eliminated thanks to imported consumer goods from East Asia (Altman, 2003). Setting aside agriculture, the number of formal sector jobs in South Africa in 2004 was less than it was two decades earlier. During the 1990s, large employment declines occurred in mining (47%), manufacturing (20%), and even the public sector (10%) (Nattrass, 2003: 142). Officially, the country's unemployment rate rose from 16% in 1995 to 31.2% in 2003 (Statistics South Africa, 2001a, 2003: iii). Adding to that figure the category of "frustrated job-seekers" (i.e.,

those who have given up looking for employment) raises the percentage unemployed to 42%. The rate for African unemployment by this measure exceeded 50% in 2002, compared to 6.3% for whites (United Nations Development Programme, 2004).

In rural South Africa, the African women's unemployment rate (including those who have given up looking) rose to 54%, compared to 42% for rural men (Gelb, 2003: 9). Substantive income-generation possibilities for a huge share of the population—especially the women who traditionally subsidized the migrant labor system—are nearly nonexistent, just as during apartheid. Indeed, the system of racial oppression perfected in the middle of the 20th century was also, primarily, a system of *gender*-based superexploitation that made possible migrant labor throughout southern Africa. South Africa's urban capitalist managers designed a subsidy from the rural areas so as to lower the cost of workers in the mines and factories. Economic development was, according to the Chamber of Mines, dependent upon this system. As a leading mine official testified to a government commission in 1944. "The ability of the mines to maintain their native labor force by means of tribal natives from the reserves at rates of pay which are adequate for this migratory class of native, but inadequate in practice for the detribalized urban native, is a fundamental factor of the economy of the gold mining industry" (cited in Wolpe, 1972; see also Legassick, 1974; O'Meara, 1996). The migrant "tribal natives" did not, when they were young, require companies to pay their parents enough to cover school fees or to pay taxes for government schools to teach workers' children. When sick or disabled, those workers were often shipped back to their rural homes until ready to work again. When the worker was ready to retire, the employer typically left him or her a pittance, such as a cheap watch, not a pension that allowed the elderly to survive in dignity. From youth through mid-life to illness and old age, capitalists were let off the hook. The subsidy covering child rearing, recuperation, and old age was provided by rural African women. The central lesson from this crucial aspect of apartheid was that capitalism systematically looted the "bantustan" areas, especially women, which supplied such a large proportion of workers. The post-apartheid period is characterized by insignificant structural changes in the migrant labor system and in these power relations, and indeed some reversion to older tribalist systems of patriarchy as a function of restored powers for traditional leaders.

As even Statistics South Africa concludes, what was among the world's worst income inequality rankings actually worsened after 1994. According to an October 2002 report, in real terms, average black "African" household income fell 19% from 1995 to 2000 (to the purchasing-power parity level of \$3,714/year) while white household income was up 15% (to \$22,600/year) (Statistics South Africa, 2002). The ruling party's rebuttal is

that major asset transfers mitigated the damage of worsening income inequality, for example in household electricity: "There have been around 3.8 million new electricity grid connections since 1994. This means that the number of households with electricity had increased from 32% to 70% by 2001" (Republic of South Africa, 2003a). Yet, disconnections of electricity (and water) were extreme problems for poor people, and these connection statistics simply ignored the fact that millions of people were cut off for more than 45 days.

The reason for the disconnection epidemic was obvious. Notwithstanding deeper poverty, the South African government raised household electricity and water prices dramatically from the mid-1990s onward. By 2002, they accounted for 30% of the income of those households earning less than \$60 per month. One cause of higher municipal utility prices was dramatic declines in central-local state subsidies designed to cover operating/maintenance expenses during the 1990s (85% in real terms, according to the Finance and Fiscal Commission). As a result, a conservatively estimated 10 million people were victims of electricity disconnections. Pretoria's national record of municipal "credit control" statistics showed that 60% of the disconnections were not resolved within 6 weeks (Bond, 2000, 2002). That, in turn, confirmed that the blame lay with genuine poverty, not the often alleged "culture of nonpayment" as a hangover of antiapartheid activism. Likewise, of 13 million given access to a fixed telephone line for the first time, 10 million were disconnected due to unaffordability. Naturally, the bulk of suffering caused by the rescinding of vital state services was felt most by women, the elderly, and children.

Ultimately, these problems are the outcome of neoliberal capitalism, but by and large the state's postapartheid urban policies amplified rather than counteracted the underlying dynamics of accumulation and class division. These included the *Housing White Paper* (1994), the *Water and Sanitation White Paper* (1994), the *Urban Development Strategy* (1995), the *Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework* (1997, 2001), the *Local Government White Paper* (1998), and the *Energy White Paper* (Republic of South Africa Department of Minerals and Energy, 1998). The *Urban Development Strategy* articulated the familiar mainstream relationship between globalization and cities: "Seen through the prism of the global economy, our urban areas are single economic units that either rise, or stagnate and fall together. . . . South Africa's cities are more than ever strategic sites in a transnationalized production system" (Republic of South Africa Ministry of Reconstruction and Development, 1995: 17, 41). An "Urban Regeneration Strategy" was proposed by President Thabo Mbeki's office in 2000–2001, but in spite of initial hype it took the form only of a description of discrete investment projects in several underdeveloped nodes. A "Free Basic Services" monthly package of 6,000 liters of water and 50 kwh

of electricity per household was offered to many households beginning in 2001, but it proved far too little, and, if anything, disconnections actually increased. Changes to the housing policy were made in 2001 and 2004, providing a higher grant to subsidy recipients with proven savings or sweat equity, to invest in higher-quality structures. Rental policies also changed slightly. Overall, though, the neoliberal orientation changed only marginally.

South African state policymakers thus accepted the premise that cities must be competitive units in the world economy first and foremost, and that everything from design of the urban form to pricing of municipal services must be based upon market principles. Subsidies should be minimized so as not to distort market relationships. The neoliberal philosophy of decentralization—namely, allowing “subsidiarity” of service delivery so that more state activities could be transferred to lower tiers—was reduced in practice to “unfunded mandates”: more responsibilities with fewer resources. Electricity, so long denied to the masses of black South Africans, explicitly reflects the trends to inequality associated with urban neoliberalism.

“COST-REFLECTIVE” ELECTRICITY AND SOWETO DISCONNECTIONS

South Africa’s largest parastatal firm is the Electricity Supply Commission, still known by its Afrikaans acronym, Eskom. Ben Fine and Zav Rustomjee fix Eskom at the heart of the economy’s minerals–energy complex, a “system of accumulation” encompassing mining, petrochemicals, metals, and related activities that historically accounted for around a quarter of GDP and typically consumed 40% of all electricity (Fine & Rustomjee, 1996). By the mid-1980s, even the isolated apartheid regime was not immune from international neoliberal trends in the electricity sector. The 1986 *White Paper on Energy Policy* called for the “highest measure of freedom for the operation of market forces,” the involvement of the private sector, a shift to a market-oriented system with a minimum of state control and involvement, and deregulation of pricing, marketing, and production (Charles Anderson Associates, 1994: 12–13). In 1987 the government released a *White Paper on Privatization and Deregulation*, declaring the objective of “a systematic transfer of appropriate functions, activities or property from the public sector where services, production and consumption can be regulated more efficiently by the market” (Republic of South Africa, 1987: 8–9).

At the same time, however, electricity provision became increasingly politicized, in part because of township payment boycotts. The sorts of sur-real energy problems South Africa faces in the 21st century reflect the kinds

of predictable contradictions accompanying a transition from apartheid economic history to a contemporary electricity pricing system all too often based on neoliberal market policy for households, but massive subsidies for big corporations, in one of the world's most unequal societies. Asked why cross-subsidization of electricity prices to benefit the poor was not being seriously considered, the leading infrastructure-services official in the then-Department of Constitutional Development explained in 1996, "If we increase the price of electricity to users like Alusaf [a major aluminum exporter], their products will become uncompetitive and that will affect our balance of payments" (*Mail and Guardian*, 1996). (Alusaf pays approximately one-tenth the price that retail consumers do, and the ecological price of cheap power—both at the site of production and in the coal-gathering and burning process—is not factored in, which in turn contributes to South Africa's extreme culpability for global warming and damage done to the citizenry and economy through local pollution.)

Rising electricity prices across South African townships had a negative impact during the late 1990s, evident in declining use of electricity despite an increase in the number of connections. According to Statistics South Africa (2001b: 78–90), households using electricity for lighting increased from 63.5% in 1995 to 69.8% in 1999. However, households using electricity for cooking declined from 55.4% to 53.0%, and households using electricity for heating dropped from 53.8% in 1995 to just 48.0% in 1999. The state agency conceded a significant link between decreasing usage and the increasing price of electricity. Most poor South Africans still rely for a large part of their lighting, cooking, and heating energy needs upon paraffin (with its burn-related health risks), coal (with high levels of domestic household and township-wide air pollution), and wood (with dire consequences for deforestation). Women, traditionally responsible for managing the home, are more affected by the high cost of electricity, and spend greater time and resources searching for alternative energy. Ecologically sensitive energy sources, such as solar, wind, and tidal, have barely begun to be explored, notwithstanding the enormous damage done by South Africa's world-leading addiction to fossil fuel consumption (Bond & Dada, 2005).

Meanwhile, corporate South Africa suffered the opposite problem—an embarrassment of energy riches—especially when poor planning at Eskom during the 1980s resulted in massive overcapacity. Defenders of the big corporations argued, correctly, that they helped mop up the excess capacity and could do so at off-peak hours, and also that low-volume consumers, especially in townships, generate much larger administrative costs per unit. As a result, Eskom and municipalities minimized cross-subsidies that would charge big users more per unit (generating a surplus) than those consuming a bare minimum (who are supplied at a loss). The 1994 Reconstruction and

Development Programme (RDP) mandated higher subsidies, but far stronger continuities from apartheid to postapartheid emerged owing to neoliberal pricing principles and the consequent policy of mass disconnections, preventing the widespread redistribution required to make Eskom's mass electrification feasible.

Of course, it was the very lack of electrified households during the early 1990s that accounted for Eskom's success in providing new connections. By the end of 2001, Eskom and the municipalities together had made nearly 4 million household connections, including farmworkers, at a cost to Eskom of \$1.2 billion. The percentage of households with access to electricity infrastructure increased to 70% at the end of 2000. In urban areas, the percentage of households with electricity infrastructure was 84%, with rural areas lagging behind at 50% (National Electricity Regulator, 2001: 14).

To be sure, Eskom continued to be a target of criticism, especially from environmentalists who complain that coal-burning plants lack sufficient sulphur scrubbing equipment and that alternative renewable energy investments, especially in solar and wind power, have been negligible. Moreover, labor opposition mounted. Having fired more than 40,000 of its 85,000 employees during the early 1990s, thanks to mechanization and overcapacity, the utility tried to outsource and corporatize several key operations, resulting in periodic national antiprivatization strikes by the trade union federation.

Regulation of Eskom and the municipal distributors was not successful from the standpoint of mass electricity needs. This is partly because government policy has increasingly imposed "cost-reflective tariffs," as a 1995 document insisted. In yet another indication of neoliberalism trumping environmental sustainability, the 1995 energy policy argued that "Fuelwood is likely to remain the primary source of energy in the rural areas." As if on cue, Eskom began to wind down its rural electrification program and announced it did not even anticipate electrifying the nation's far-flung schools, because "It is not clear that having electricity in all schools is a first priority" (Republic of South Africa Department of Minerals and Energy, 1995: 95, 66). Notwithstanding Eskom's commercialization fetish, its economists had badly miscalculated rural affordability during the late 1990s, so revenues were far lower than were considered financially sustainable. By estimating that customers would use 300 kwh per month, Eskom believed it could turn a profit. Yet high prices drove down consumption, even by those with 5 years of access, to less than 10 kwh per month, resulting in enormous losses for Eskom. Paying as much as \$0.06 per hour (compared to a corporate average of \$0.01 and bigger discounts for Alusaf), rural women use up their prepaid meter cards within a week and cannot afford to buy another until the next pension payout. Without a viable market, Eskom slowed new rural electrification connections to a standstill.

The 1998 *White Paper* was an improvement on previous versions, allowing for “moderately subsidized tariffs” for poor domestic consumers. But it too made the counterproductive argument that “Cross-subsidies should have minimal impact on the price of electricity to consumers in the productive sectors of the economy” (Republic of South Africa Department of Minerals and Energy, 1998). Worse, the Department of Provincial and Local Government’s *Municipal Infrastructure Investment Framework* supported only the installation of 5–8 amp connections for households with less than \$120 per month income, which does not offer enough power to turn on a hotplate or a single-element heater. As a result, health and environmental benefits that would otherwise flow from clean electricity go up in smoke. Thanks to social movement advocacy, this level was at least better than the old Independent Development Trust site-and-service subsidies from 1991–1994 and the original infrastructure investment policy, drafted largely by the World Bank in 1994–1995, both of which offered low-income households *no* electricity hookup.

In 2001 domestic consumers paid an average price to Eskom of 24.59 cents per kwh (Sowetans paid much higher average prices), while the manufacturing sector paid 12.83 cents per kwh and the mining sector paid 12.32 cents per kwh. Two years earlier, in 1999, Soweto residents had experienced three increases in a short period as Eskom brought tariffs in line with other areas. From 18.77 cents per kwh, the price of electricity rose by 47% to 27.6 cents per unit in less than 12 months (*Star*, 1999). Such changes in tariffs reflected the move toward “cost reflectivity” and away from regulated price increases, in order to reduce and eventually eliminate subsidies, so as to achieve “market-related returns sufficient to attract new investors into the industry” (Eskom, 2001a: 56). Eskom acknowledged that “individual customers could experience significant changes in their price of electricity.” In particular, those who previously had subsidized tariffs suffered increases “well above the average” (Eskom, 2001b: 4, 7). The result of the shift to cost-reflective pricing will be “significant price increases (around 50%) for domestic (conventional credit) customers,” according to a confidential PriceWaterhouseCoopers report, “Tariffs, Levies and Financial Transition Strategies.” In some areas, prices for domestic users are expected to rise by over 100% by 2010, before inflation. Prices for most of the Eastern Cape and the Free State, and parts of the Northern Cape—South Africa’s poorest areas—are expected to rise higher than anywhere else due to their distance from electricity generation plants. The National Electricity Regulator gave explicit support to above-inflation tariff increases in order to fund investment in new capacity, much of which is anticipated to be privately supplied, with a standard 20–30% profit premium added (Eskom, 2001a: 36).

Because of the residual bias toward supplying large consumers, the

postapartheid government and Eskom simply neglected the implications of an eco-social benefit analysis for low-income people, focusing instead on holding down costs. In contrast, providing cheaper supplies in the form of a free lifeline subsidy, as mandated in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, was not on the politicians' agenda, even when protests broke out in townships from Cape Town to Durban to Johannesburg. The main reason was that such subsidies disincentivize the drive to corporatize and privatize electricity. The most important deterrent to Eskom's privatization was, by all accounts, the large (\$320 million) and growing debt owed by township residents. The most durable problem for any privatizer—whether generator, transmitter, or distributor—is pressure to redistribute cheap national-scale supplies of power to municipalities, or eventually regional distributors, so as to provide a free lifeline supply to ordinary South Africans. Even in low-income communities with access to electricity, the cost of power for cooking is so high that, for example, only a small proportion of Sowetans with electric power use it, favoring cheaper fuels (Beall, Crankshaw, & Parnell, 2002: ch. 9; White, Crankshaw, Mafokoane, & Meintjes, 1998). The gender, health, and environmental implications are obvious.

When arrears began to mount, Eskom's first strategy was disconnection and repression. Eskom decided in early 2001 to disconnect those households whose arrears were in excess of \$800 with payment more than 120 days overdue. An anticipated 131,000 households in Soweto were to be cut off due to nonpayment, according to Eskom (2001c)—even though the company had only 126,000 recorded consumers in the township. In addition, Johannesburg metro authorities decided, in an act of solidarity, to cut off water and then begin eviction proceedings through sheriff sales in an attempt to pressure people to pay Eskom arrears (*Saturday Star*, 2001; *Star*, 2002). All types of gimmicks were attempted to encourage higher payment levels, including lottery tickets as rewards for bill payments, but Sowetans' arrears still rose to an estimated \$120 million by 2001.

At stake was not merely Eskom's attempt to collect the arrears across South Africa, with Soweto representing the major challenge. Even more important was the general principle of municipal credit control, by which disconnecting electricity consumers made it easier to collect arrears on rates, water services, and other charges. The "Project Viability" monitoring system of the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) reported that a total of approximately \$2 billion was owed to municipalities—not including arrears on Eskom's retail bills—at the end of 2001. Electricity debts accounted for 15% of this total, after rates (32%) and water (19%). Total arrears owing to municipalities therefore stood at more than a quarter of yearly expenditure, with electricity arrears equal to 4% of total municipal spending.

By 2001 disconnections were widespread, with Project Viability re-

ports and Eskom press statements together indicating a rate of around 120,000 households per month. The rate was probably far higher since not all municipalities responded to the DPLG survey, and the Eskom statements focused on Soweto, where resistance was toughest. But even using this base, and making a conservative estimate of six people affected by every disconnection (since connections are made to households, sometimes with a backyard dwelling), more than 720,000 people each month were denied access to electricity because of nonpayment in 2001. The overall connection target set by government of 350,000 connections a year translates to an average rate of 29,167 new connections a month. Even if we only recognize the number of disconnections after the number of reconnections are subtracted, it still means that in 2001 *there were several times as many households losing access to electricity every month as were gaining access*. A survey of Soweto residents found that 61% of households had experienced electricity disconnections, of which 45% had been cut off for more than 1 month (Fiil-Flynn, 2001). A random stratified national survey conducted by the Municipal Services Project (MSP) and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found that 10 million people across South Africa had experienced electricity cutoffs (McDonald, 2002).

More detail on retail electricity finance was provided in two of the SECC's core communities, Orlando East and Pimville, during a 2001 survey (Fiil-Flynn, 2001):

- Sowetans made regular payments on their electricity accounts, with two-thirds paying \$30 or less per month and one-quarter paying less than \$15 (the average bill was \$25, equal to electricity consumption of approximately 500 kwh/month).¹
- Households provided evidence of inconsistent billing often due to nonreading of meters. Nearly one in 10 reported that bills always come to the same amount, while two in five recorded that meters were only read occasionally. A further quarter of respondents said that Eskom never read their meters.
- Aside from disputed accounts, the main problems paying bills were long queues on pay-day, the lack of assistance in explaining bills, cutoffs, and poor service from Eskom staff.
- It was often reported that Eskom staff have a negative attitude toward consumer problems. Consumers know that they must take their complaints to Eskom, but feel intimidated and therefore have many unresolved problems.
- Half of the households keep their electricity bills for more than 4 years, confirming that the rising prices, huge arrears, and erratic billing were the source of long-standing grievances.

Because bills were higher than were affordable, arrears inexorably built up on the Soweto accounts:

- In winter, households that pay up to \$30 per month are actually paying just half of what was billed.
- Due to heating needs, arrears naturally increased in winter, when households are more vulnerable to electricity cutoffs.
- Many people explained that, although they could not afford to pay their entire bills, they would pay part of them as an assurance to Eskom that they wished to avert a cutoff of their electricity.
- Nearly a fifth of the respondents had arrears that dated back more than 4 years, and for 14% the arrears were in excess of \$2,500.²

Finally, arrears led to disconnections:

- Three of every five households experienced cutoffs over the course of the preceding year, of which 86% were due to nonpayment. Only 14% of the cutoffs were disputed, despite the widespread complaints of inconsistent billing.
- Of households experiencing cutoffs, 10% had their cables removed permanently. This is a response usually taken by Eskom when the consumer has reconnected illegally, and the price of reconnection is usually prohibitive.

Disconnections, in turn, lead to all manner of health, environmental, social, and economic problems:

- When electricity is cut off, consumers record numerous difficulties: The food gets spoiled (98%); they cannot cook the food properly (90%); their personal hygiene is negatively affected (88%); they spend more money on alternative fuels (84%); their children cannot study properly (81%); crime increases in the area (73%); they consider it degrading for their family to live without electricity (70%); the women must do more work (65%); it is detrimental to their working life (62%); it disrupts home business (41%); it increases domestic violence in the neighborhood (36%). All of these interlocking problems are felt more severely by women.
- For those disconnected, the length of time that the household was without electricity—that is, until either a payment was made or supply was illegally reconnected—varied: up to 1 day, 9%; a couple of days, 12%; 1 week (14%); 1–2 weeks (10%); 3–4 weeks (11%); and more than a month (45%).

The impact of disconnections can be fatal. One indication of the health implications of electricity denial and of supply cuts is the recent upsurge in tuberculosis (TB) rates, as respiratory illnesses are carried by particulates associated with smoke from wood, coal, and paraffin). Because of the climate and congestion, respiratory diseases are particularly common in Soweto. In a 1998 survey, two of every five Sowetans reportedly suffered from respiratory problems, 2% from TB, 4% from allergies, 0.5% from cancer, and 10% from other infections. More than a fifth of Council house dwellers described their health as bad. Lost working days resulted: 5% took 1–2 days off each year to recover; 9% took 3–5 days; 6% took 6–7 days; and 15% needed more than 8 days (Morris et al., 1999: 34–35, 41).

Survey respondents reported many fires in the neighborhood, often caused by paraffin stoves, many resulting in harm to children. Eskom's disconnection procedures often resulted in electricity cables lying loose in the streets.³ Residents were unhappy not only about the high reconnection fees charged but also with the fact that Eskom outsources the work to companies that earn \$10 per household disconnection. No notification was given that the electrical supply would be cut off, and residents were not given time to rectify payments problems. Eskom can disconnect entire blocks at a time by removing circuit breakers, penalizing those who do pay their bills along with those who don't. All these grievances proved the raw material from which the SECC and its Operation Khanyisa emerged.

SOWETO'S OPERATION KHANYISA

The SECC is a community group, or "civic," founded in May 2000 to represent community interests with respect to electricity cutoffs, rising prices of electricity, billing accuracy, and other electricity supply-related issues (Dixon, 2001; Haffajee, 2001; Nelsen, 2002; Ngwane, 2003; Kingsnorth, 2003; Forrest, 2003; Ngwane & Turner, 2004; Egan & Wafer, 2004). It stands opposed to neoliberal policies and maintains a strong socialist ideological perspective (Alexander, 2003). SECC grew rapidly with considerable local and some international press focus on the organization and its best-known leader, Trevor Ngwane, who was formerly a Johannesburg ANC councilor representing Soweto until the ruling party expelled him in 1999 for opposing the city's privatization strategy (Kgosana, 2002). Although Soweto marches and rallies generally attract less than 1,000 people, the group's local, national, and global popularity is impressive (Ceruti, 2002; Democratic Socialist Movement, 2002). Internal support has tended to wax and wane, often in response to government concessions to the SECC's core constituency (Molebeledi, 2002). A 2005 split in the SECC

constituency emerged over political analysis, strategies, and tactics (leading to the formation of a rival leftist group), and a key SECC organizer (Bongani Lubisi) passed away in late 2005.

The SECC's prototypical member is an older unemployed woman.⁴ Geographically, members are most likely to come from a range of established areas in Soweto including Meadowlands, Diepkloof, Pimville, Naledi, Dube, and Orlando East. At the SECC's annual general meeting in early March 2003, 77 of 110 participants responded to a questionnaire distributed by Peter Alexander of the University of Johannesburg that was designed to probe members' background and motivations. One in every four respondents was over the age of 60, more than two-thirds were over 40, and just over 50% were women. Significantly, some 88% were unemployed. Alexander found that no respondents were members of the ANC or SA Communist Party, and there were only a few members of other political parties. SECC members were hostile to the South African National Civics Organization, an ANC ally. While membership in political parties was low, 70% of respondents declared that they belonged to a church.

A full understanding of the SECC would not be possible without a brief discussion of three other organizations: the Anti-Privatization Forum (APF), the Alternative Information Development Center (AIDC), and the Municipal Services Project. The APF is an umbrella network drawing together Johannesburg-area civics and political groups.⁵ It was formed by a combination of social forces opposed to "Igoli 2002," a municipal plan introduced in 1999 to corporatize and privatize municipal assets. Initially the APF included unions, such as the South African Municipal Workers Union and the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union, the SA Communist Party's inner-city branch, and students from the University of Witwatersrand protesting fee increases and campus restructuring. After the initial failure of two overlapping campaigns—against Johannesburg Igoli 2002 and the University of the Witwatersrand's simultaneous neoliberal restructuring—and the formal withdrawal of the unions and communists from participation as antigovernment rhetoric intensified, the APF turned its attention to the issue of basic services provision in the townships, ranging from electricity to water to education to food. By 2005, the APF claimed as members 21 community-based affiliates and four political organizations.

The Alternative Information Development Center (AIDC) provided technical assistance with the APF's foundation, and support from 2000 to 2002. The AIDC is a "political" NGO, which, through an "integrated strategy of research . . . popular education, campaigning and coalition building," offers "challenges to the currently dominant global economic system." It is committed to the "empowerment and mobilization of pro-

gressive and popular organizations and social movements to contribute to the development of alternatives that ensure fundamental socioeconomic transformation” (AIDC website www.aidc.org.za). Although the Johannesburg office of AIDC was closed in mid-2002 in the wake of pressure against its key personnel by churches and unions, the AIDC had facilitated the emergence of the SECC and similar groups in Johannesburg and Limpopo Province through technical and financial support. In addition, the Municipal Services Project, based at the University of the Witwatersrand and Queens University (Canada), served the SECC as a research, policy, and educational initiative (www.queensu.ca/msp). The MSP assisted the SECC in designing and analyzing a seminal survey of Soweto electricity use, conducted by Danish researcher Maj Fiil-Flynn and several dozen SECC members in 2001 (Fiil-Flynn et al., 2001). With NGO facilitation and academic legitimation, the media became interested, leading to extensive reports by SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) Special Assignment, CNN news, *The Washington Post*, *Newsday*, *New Internationalist*, *Red Pepper*, *Fifth Estate*, and many other print and broadcast media.

The SECC was sufficiently strong that, when the disconnections by Eskom increased to 20,000 monthly in 2001, more than 3,000 Soweto households quickly had their electricity supplies illegally restored through “Operation Khanyisa” (“Reconnect the Power!”). SECC volunteers risked electrocution to do the work and charged their neighbors nothing for the service. They occasionally had run-ins with Eskom officials and the police, and in 2001 two Vaal township residents were shot dead attempting to prevent disconnections (Ngwane, 2001). In spite of demonization by the state, Operation Khanyisa was considered an overwhelming popular success. By October 2001, Eskom became sufficiently intimidated that it gave in, announcing it would no longer disconnect those Sowetans who couldn’t pay. The SECC announced “a temporary victory over Eskom, but our other demands remain outstanding”:

- Commitment to halting and reversing privatization and commercialization.
- The scrapping of arrears.
- The implementation of free electricity promised to us in municipal elections a year ago.
- Ending the skewed rates which do not sufficiently subsidize low-income black people.
- Additional special provisions for vulnerable groups—disabled people, pensioners, people who are HIV-positive.
- Expansion of electrification to all, especially impoverished people in urban slums and rural villages, the vast majority of whom do not

have the power that we in Soweto celebrate. (Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee, 2001)

By late 2001, public enterprises minister Jeff Radebe offered a deal to the Soweto residents, requesting that they end their Eskom payment boycott, repay half their arrears, and start making regular full payments (Republic of South Africa Department of Public Enterprises, 2001). Despite his own recognition that accounts were inaccurate and that corrupt contractors were cutting electricity off and forcing people to pay high reconnection fees, Radebe offered residents only a 1-month “amnesty” to apply for reconnection to Eskom, threatening that any resident who had not done so after 1 month would be prosecuted. He also announced that 100% of pensioners’ arrears and 50% of arrears of other residents would be set aside in a trust account, which amounts would be canceled if payment rates improved. Regardless of the accuracy of the arrears, residents would have to repay 50% of the arrears assigned to their names.⁶ In early 2001 Radebe, along with Sanco, the Human Rights Commission, Eskom, the Johannesburg Metro, and Johannesburg’s corporatized City Power, launched “Operation Lungise” (Light Up) to persuade Sowetans that, as full-page advertisements put it, “All you need to do is pay your current account. Every month. On time. And with those payments, we’re able to keep improving service delivery.” Although quite a few Sowetans signed up for Radebe’s deal, within a few months payment levels were back down to predeal levels (*Business Day*, 2002).

The SECC intensified its struggles, culminating in the arrest of 87 SECC and APF activists on charges of public violence and malicious damage to property at a protest outside Johannesburg Mayor Amos Masondo’s house on April 6, 2002 (*Sunday Times*, 2002). The plight of the Kensington 87 (named for the suburb where they were arrested) became a focal point of activism for the SECC and the APF. Marches and protests were held outside the Johannesburg’s Jeppe Magistrate’s Court, leading up to their release, and during the following 12 months at the various court hearings. The activists had aimed to present the mayor—who was in Hawaii at the time—with a memorandum of grievances at his home, but in the course of a vigorous “toyi-toyi” (political dance) and an attempt to disconnect the mayor’s water supply, a bodyguard fired eight shots into the crowd, injuring two. The bodyguard was arrested and charged with attempted murder and released on bail on April 8. More than three dozen of the protesters where either pensioners or children, and were also released on April 8. The agonizingly slow bail application left 50 of the protestors in jail for 11 days, however, contrasting with the lenient treatment and bail given to the bodyguard. The SECC and APF argued that the Kensington 87’s treatment was evidence that the ANC was tightening controls on civil and political

rights as a way of stifling dissent against the government's neoliberal municipal services policies (Harvey, 2002). After a number of delays, and almost a year after the event, the case against the 87 was dismissed by the magistrate due to a lack of reliable evidence (Anti-Privatisation Forum, 2003).

The events surrounding the mass imprisonment did raise important and difficult tactical questions for the SECC. While the SECC's profile was significantly raised, the mainstream print and broadcast media generally characterized the events outside Masondo's home negatively, despite a few factual reports (Cox, 2002; Pokwana, 2002). This negative spin potentially undermined broader community support for the SECC. The imprisonment and the associated legal costs caused much hardship to the protesters and their families. A vigorous solidarity campaign provided both material and emotional assistance to those in jail, but the strain, both personal and organizational, was high.

Nonetheless, the SECC's activism on other stages continued unabated. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in August 2002 also helped raise the SECC's profile. A memorable *Mail and Guardian* front page (2002) framed elderly SECC stalwart Florence Nkwashu in front of riot police with the headline "We'll take Sandton!" The SECC was central to the memorable 25,000-strong march from Alexandra to Sandton, the largest post-1994 mobilization in South Africa, aside from trade union mobilizations. The "Big March" was roughly 10 times larger than one held supporting the WSSD by the ANC, trade unions, and churches, held along the same route later that day. The SECC's involvement even merited a disparaging mention in the *Economist* (2002: 59).

In early 2003, the SECC gained grants from international agencies such as War on Want, and employed an administrator and an organizer with an annual budget of \$50,000. The SECC subsequently broadened its campaigning focus from electricity to also resisting the installation of prepaid water meters (Harvey, 2005). Disconnections, combined with the imposition of prepaid electricity and water meters, made nonsensical the ANC's 2000 municipal election promise that the "ANC-led local government will provide all residents with a free basic amount of water, electricity and other municipal services, so as to help the poor. Those who use more than the basic amounts will pay for the extra they use" (African National Congress, 2000). Until 2005, Eskom bureaucrats ignored the promise, and finally—along with most municipalities—decided that a lifeline of just 50 kwh (or less) per household per month would suffice. Such a meager amount merely supplied light and perhaps radio/TV power to a typical household but did not provide enough electricity to meet the basic needs of heating, cooking, and a hot-water heater. Ngwane is also critical of the ANC's choice of the household as a unit of measurement, arguing that free

lifeline supplies of electricity should be allocated on a “per-person” basis so as to avoid bias against large families. The main SECC proposal, according to Ngwane (interview, August 19, 2001), was for “at least one kilowatt hour per person per day [of free electricity]. For a family of 10 that would translate to 300 kwh per month, or \$15 at the current high price of \$0.04 per kwh. That is a fair subsidy—less than \$1.50 per person per month—and we think a rich company like Eskom has the means to pay it.”

The SECC’s 2005 organizational crisis stemmed from disputes over Ngwane’s leadership style and the way socialist ideology emerged, ultimately becoming the official constitutional objective of the SECC. Another dispute within and around the SECC and APF was whether and how to contest the March 1, 2006, municipal election. Across Gauteng, an “Operation Khanyisa” political party emerged from those APF affiliates that saw, in the conversion of civil society to electoral politics, the opportunity to advance and test a socialist program with a mass constituency. The hope was not to defeat the still mighty ANC in any particular ward (Ngwane won only 30% in his Pimville, Soweto, constituency in 2000) but at least to win ward-based proportional representation seats in the Johannesburg City Council, from which to launch and sustain yet more intense struggles against the city’s neoliberal rulers.

CONCLUSION

The debate over the commodification of electricity appeared set to continue and even intensify during the last half of the 2000s, as Eskom’s restructuring plan continued to fail its low-income customers and the society and environment more generally. What we learn from the Soweto case confirms the “double movement” of Karl Polanyi (1944: 76), in which “the extension of the market organisation in respect to genuine commodities was accompanied by its restriction,” as society resisted excessive commodification.

While the SECC was one of the most advanced movements along these lines, it was not the only one. Other South Africans fighting for “decommodification” in recent years established interlocking, overlapping campaigns to turn basic needs into genuine human rights, including demands—sometimes partially met—for free anti-retroviral medicines to fight AIDS; at least 50 liters of free water for each individual every day; extensive land reform; prohibitions on service disconnections and evictions; free education; nationalized and free basic telephone service; and even a monthly “Basic Income Grant.” Social movements, women’s groups, churches, NGOs, and trade unions are all basically committed to this agenda, even if there are temporary divisions over political party alignments that prevent,

in the foreseeable future, a South African Social Forum from arising with all the necessary forces. The main trade union movement, the Treatment Action Campaign, and most church activists have strong loyalties to the ruling party. In contrast, the urban and rural social movements, Jubilee South Africa, solidarity groups working on Palestine and Burma, and the Environmental Justice Networking Forum are all vigorous critics of the South African government. They formed a national alliance known as the “Social Movements Indaba”—whose first action was the anti-WSSD protest in 2002—as a prototype for a national Social Forum, but of a more explicitly left style than the standard World Social Forum affiliate.

These campaigns seem to throw up the possibility of “universal” programmatic work, perhaps via a national World Social Forum process at some stage, or via a human rights agenda being extended to socioeconomic rights (as in South Africa’s 1996 Constitution, still largely unimplemented). The APF is taking the water minister to the courts for alleged violation of rights to water, concerning the use of prepaid water meters. While there are all sorts of problems with “rights discourses” they do parallel the kinds of reactions to rampant market penetration now under way across the world, since civil society organizations are expected to stand in when neoliberal policies shrink the state. But here arises another dilemma for the Social Forum strategists: under conditions of never-ending structural adjustment, most Africans who lobby for democracy and basic socioeconomic services from their state regimes are and will continue to be frustrated. Even South Africans have had regular problems with maintaining their first-generation civil and political rights, much less second-generation socioeconomic rights. In such an environment, progress will be forged not from good ideas and polite advocacy, technicist interventions, and insider persuasion tactics, but in mass-movement campaigns emanating from well-organized, democratic communities and shop floors able to withstand repression by the nationalist ruling party. Here, irrespective of its subsequent problems, the experience of the SECC during the early 2000s was exemplary in the broader battle to roll back neoliberalism and ultimately win the hearts and minds of society to socialism.

NOTES

1. According to Eskom, the average domestic customer (excluding Soweto) consumes 700 kwh/month, while the average in Soweto is slightly lower at 600 kwh/month. In richer areas such as Sandton the average consumption is approximately 1,000 kwh/month.
2. Boycotting of service payments was an anti-apartheid tactic until 1994. Eskom negotiations with civics led to an agreement in 1995 that half of all debt accu-

mulated up to June 30 of that year (and interest) would be written off consumer bills. As many as 60,000 customers signed the agreement, and their bills were adjusted accordingly. As part of the agreement, these customers agreed to pay the remaining arrears. In total, R237 million was written off consumer bills in Soweto. However, consumers who signed these agreements claim that Eskom did not honor the agreements, while Eskom claims that consumers have not honored the repayment scheduling. According to consumers, the arrears were not written off or reapplied if they got behind on payments. The whole process has been questioned, as consumers did not understand what they were signing in the first place.

3. In a settlement of shacks outside Cato Manor in Durban, this problem caused the deaths of 11 children in 2001 (ka-Manzi, 2001).
4. The following information is from a survey conducted by Peter Alexander of the University of Johannesburg in 2003 at the SECC's annual general meeting.
5. They include the SECC, Vaal Working Class Community Coordinating Committee, Orange Farm Water Crisis Committee, and small leftist parties such as Keep Left and the Socialist Group.
6. Placement of the unpaid arrears into the city council's "suspense account," suggested that the full arrears might reemerge at a later stage. Activists argued that Radebe would criminalize opposition to cutoffs, and when the opposition was destroyed he would reconstitute the arrears.

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Spaces of Resistance in Seattle and Cancún

JOEL WAINWRIGHT

*F*ew institutions are as globe-girdling as the World Trade Organization (WTO), which regulates the trade policies among its 148 member states. WTO norms and rules form a core part of the ensemble of regulations that shape global capitalism. These are not uncontroversial rules, and the WTO is not a neutral arbiter. The organization operates with explicit biases and a concrete agenda: It aims to liberalize trade among its members. These neoliberal policies are shaped primarily by the WTO's largest and most powerful members, the United States and Europe. Together with Japan and Canada, this group—called the “Quad”—has framed all of the major decisions in the WTO's history. Under its sway, the WTO has become a powerful mechanism for reducing the capacities of member states to regulate their trade and capital flows. Thus, the WTO has become a key mechanism in the proliferation of neoliberal policies, and arguably one of the primary “vehicles for accumulation by dispossession” (Harvey, 2003: 181) in the world today.¹ The WTO facilitates such accumulation by enforcing rules that compel third world (or “developing”) states to open their markets while maintaining key protections for core economies, particularly the Quad.

The WTO's highest decision-making body is the biannual ministerial, where delegates from member states debate neoliberal policies and set the course for subsequent WTO negotiations. The WTO is often said to be more

democratic than other institutions that regulate global political-economic processes, such as the IMF and World Bank, since all WTO member states are invited to the ministerials—where decisions are made by consensus, no less. But there is a strong sense in which these ministerials are no more democratic than the annual meetings of the IMF or World Bank. Developing countries have long argued that the ministerials are more closed than they may appear (see Das, 2003b: 13–16). A careful study of their inner workings (Jawara & Kwa, 2004) shows how the ministerial process is marred by secrecy, arm-twisting of small economies, uneven access to information and negotiating spaces, and other problems. Such inequalities matter because they produce economic policies with unequal effects.

These inequalities are reflected in the geographies of access and power at the ministerials. There is a strict spatial hierarchy of inclusion in discussions and debates; delegates from the Quad can move anywhere and always have access to negotiations, whereas delegates from poorer countries are often left to roam the corridors. The locations of the ministerials and other meetings are not equally distributed globally, and not all member states are invited to all the meetings. Moreover, since the regular business of the WTO is carried out in Geneva, the European Community has another built-in advantage over other members: As a consequence of the WTO's location and language requirements, most of the WTO Secretariat's employees are Europeans. They literally regulate global trade policy from a European perspective.

Although its trade rules are enforced globally, the WTO's rules are produced through face-to-face negotiations, and the local geographies of these events have global outcomes for the regulation of capitalism. Two recent WTO ministerials—the third, in Seattle (1999), and the fifth, in Cancún (2003)—bear this out.² Both Seattle and Cancún were intense battle zones where large groups of demonstrators faced police forces in the streets while delegations fought over potential agreements inside heavily guarded conference centers. Both ministerials unfolded through contradictory spaces, simultaneously local and global, crucibles of both neoliberalism *and* its discontents. Both ended in unexpected and near-total collapse. And yet the geographies of resistance in Seattle and Cancún were different—in ways that reflect changes in the resistance to the WTO.

This chapter is not intended to present a case against the WTO, which has been cogently argued elsewhere (Bello, 2000a; Das, 2003b; Jawara & Kwa, 2004; Wallach & Woodall, 2004). Rather, it examines the relationship between neoliberalism and urban protest by considering the contested spaces in and around these ministerials. More narrowly, I focus on the relationship between (1) the forms and spaces of anti-neoliberal resistance in Seattle and Cancún, and (2) the internal dynamics and outcomes of these two ministerials. I evaluate the collapse of these ministerials alongside a

reading of the geographies of resistance to the trade liberalization policies promoted by the WTO.³

THE BATTLES IN SEATTLE

Few recent political events have been so readily enshrined in the annals of the U.S. left as the “Battle of Seattle” of 1999. Within hours of the cancellation of the first day of meetings at the Seattle Ministerial, announcements spread through Internet networks that something akin to the Zapatista uprising had occurred on the West Coast. Scores of film and book projects were launched to explain and celebrate the events. In this process, the events of Seattle were pilloried with hyperbole, capitalized, and reduced to singularity, as “*The Battle in Seattle*.” Consider Flusty’s interpretation:

The Battle in Seattle announced the emergence of a new alternative globality that ridiculed the institutional contradictions, vulnerabilities and absurdities of its hegemonic other. It signified the coalescence of the . . . “teamsters and turtles” coalition . . . [,] demonstrated new practices of resistance centered upon the highly creative and generally playful intrusion of the body into commonplace spatial infrastructure . . . [and] it accomplished all this through the popular production of an environment most closely resembling a gigantic circus. . . . The Battle . . . brought plutocratic globality down from on high, humiliated its authority and subordinated it to the body. (Flusty, 2004: p. 190)

There are three problems with this narrative, often repeated in the literature on Seattle. The first is that it collapses the events in the *streets* of downtown Seattle and in the Capitol Hill neighborhood on November 30, 1999, with the events that followed over the subsequent three days *inside* the conference center. The former may have looked like a “gigantic circus” (though I would argue that many of the street demonstrations were also highly disciplined and regulated), but the latter consisted of the sort of rarified high-stakes legal negotiations that characterize multilateral conferences—more banal than carnivalesque. Second, this narrative exaggerates the importance of street protests to the collapse of the ministerial (to say nothing of the WTO or neoliberalism more broadly). If indeed “plutocratic globality” was temporarily “subordinated to the body,” as Flusty suggests, this condition lasted for but a few hours. Finally, it conflates the spatial and political positions of distinct and competing social and political groups. The anti-WTO groups may have “ridiculed the institutional contradictions” of the WTO, but they shared their own differences, such as the

much-debated question of whether the WTO should be reformed or eliminated.⁴

The key to avoiding these problems of interpretation lies in recognizing the heterogeneity of social groups and political practices manifest in Seattle. Different social groups protested in different spaces in Seattle and for distinct reasons. Let us briefly consider three of them.

Teamsters and Turtles: The “Official” Opposition

The first group—a diverse constellation of people and organizations—was structured and led by legally recognized institutions, notably AFL-CIO-affiliated labor unions and NGOs (especially Public Citizen). This group was composed of networks of civil organizations with staffs, concrete goals, and members—the latter mainly white working-class U.S. citizens. Having failed to prevent the passage of NAFTA in November 1993 and the formation of the WTO at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round in 1994, unions, environmental groups, and NGOs targeted the WTO Ministerial as an opportunity to pressure the U.S. government—particularly the recently elected President Bill Clinton and his trade representative (or “USTR”), Charlene Barshefsky—to protect U.S. labor laws in the WTO.

Roughly 30,000 members and supporters of these groups came to Seattle on November 30, 1999 (a day that earned its own sign: “N30”). Their actions focused on a “People’s Rally” organized by the AFL-CIO and Public Citizen, followed by a march. They met at Memorial Stadium, one mile northwest of the convention center, and listened to dozens of speakers from different AFL-CIO-affiliated unions. After about 3 hours of speeches, the group walked into downtown Seattle along Fourth Avenue along a route that had been prepared through negotiations with the Seattle police. Upon reaching the corner of Pine and Fourth—a few blocks away from the convention center, at the margins of the unfolding police–protester confrontations—the march took a left turn, and then another, thereby departing from the CBD. In an attempt to ensure that everyone marched *en route*, union members linked arms to form a human chain at corners to direct the flow of bodies.⁵

The rally and march were noteworthy in several respects. They were large operations for the contemporary U.S. labor movement, and the assertive transnational tone of the speeches was remarkable. The fact that environmental and consumer groups shared a labor platform was novel. But this is not to say that the “Teamsters and Turtles” articulated a radical position: As suggested by the chief slogan of the signs carried on the march—“WTO: Fix it or nix it”—the formal aim of this group was to *reform* the WTO. Few speakers at the People’s Rally suggested that the WTO should be eliminated; many more appealed to the U.S. government to protect and enforce

U.S.-style labor and environmental laws within the WTO. There was great emphasis on keeping China out of the WTO but little mention of pressuring the U.S. government to leave it as well.⁶

This group did not shut down the WTO on November 30. Even before the People's Rally had left Memorial Stadium, the WTO Secretariat was debating whether to cancel the first day's activities because so few delegates had been able to reach the Washington Convention Center. The People's March had not yet entered downtown when the first day of the ministerial was cancelled.⁷ When Seattle's riot police used tear gas and batons to clear Pine Street, members of the labor and environmental groups comprised only a minority of the retreating multitude. The march took place, existentially, in a different space than the protests unfolding downtown that morning.⁸

The Direct Action Network

If the People's March didn't force the closing of the ministerial, then who or what did? Credit for this achievement goes to the ephemeral collection of small groups that formed the Direct Action Network (DAN). The DAN was born a few months before the Seattle Ministerial, when members of the Rukus Society formed a camp in rural Washington to train activists in urban activist tactics (Sellers, 2004: 183). Using the Internet to put out a call for activists, form affinity groups, and coordinate logistics, the DAN organized a radically democratic, nonhierarchical network of disciplined activist groups. This structure attracted protesters (mainly white students from the Pacific Northwest) inspired to shut down the WTO through direct action.

In the days before the ministerial, hundreds of these affinity groups assigned themselves to different areas around the Washington Convention Center. A map of downtown Seattle posted in the organizing center was divided into portions, like a pie cut into slices with the convention center at the middle; each affinity group assigned themselves to one "slice" of urban space. Early on the morning of November 30, two streams of people emerged from Steinbreck Park and Seattle Central Community College and met at the Paramount Theater, across from the convention center. Demonstrating impressive discipline and adept use of cellular communications, the DAN swiftly closed off roughly 20 blocks of traffic, thus preventing delegates from accessing the building. Although they had been warned of the DAN's plans, the Seattle police could not open a path to the center because of the number of disciplined activists.⁹ (Ironically, the DAN was inadvertently aided by the Seattle police, who had parked buses bumper-to-bumper along the north side of the center, thus reducing the number of entrances open to delegates.) The police could not clear the streets around the con-

vention center until around six o'clock that evening, and then only by using pepper spray, batons, horses, concussion grenades, and sundry weapons to drive the activists into the Capitol Hill neighborhood, where the *mêlée* continued through the evening.¹⁰

In the literature that emerged in the wake of Seattle, the crucial question about these events is left largely unexamined: What was the relationship between the protester-police clashes in the streets and subsequent conflicts between delegations at the ministerial?¹¹ Most U.S.-based commentators on Seattle ignore the subsequent ministerial and therefore exaggerate the accomplishments of November 30 vis-à-vis the WTO (see Starhawk, 1999, 2000).¹² The effect is to suggest that the predominantly white American activists who gathered in Seattle—the first two groups discussed here, taken together—defeated the WTO on behalf of “the people,” that is, subaltern classes everywhere. For instance, in his widely reproduced essay on Seattle, Paul Hawken correctly notes that “it was not on the streets that the WTO broke down” (2000: 27–28); yet, he claims that “the mandate for the WTO had vanished” by the time that President Clinton arrived in Seattle on December 1 (p. 26).¹³ This is not the case. The DAN was unable to close the conference center beyond November 30; the WTO’s mandate, though checked, had not disappeared.

Three Days in December: Resistance within the Ministerial

“Seattle” had entered the annals of history before the tear gas faded from the skies over Capitol Hill. Yet, on the morning of December 1, as the national news programs were showing scenes of mayhem from the previous night, delegates arrived for the ministerial ensconced within a city effectively under martial law. Curfew had been imposed, the main streets were patrolled by phalanxes of National Guardsmen, and activists that marched toward the central business district (CBD) in an attempt to repeat the successes of the previous day were arrested *en masse*. U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky opened the ministerial by “expressing her regrets to Ministers . . . who were harassed during the demonstration” the day before, declaring that the U.S. government deplored the “irresponsible actions of a tiny minority” (Barshefsky, 1999). As talks began, there was no reason to expect that the ministerial would end in utter collapse. Many delegates were irritated by the preceding day’s events, and the arrival of Clinton did little to soothe the disquiet, but the hegemony of the Quad and the multilateral WTO system appeared to hold sway.

Over the course of the 3 days after N30, the Quad’s command of the WTO agenda was shattered by a concatenation of substantive policy disagreements, overzealous bullying by the USTR, and principled leadership by African delegates. The policy differences centered on two sets of issues.

Agriculture, long a major point of contention in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and WTO, was especially problematic. The United States and Europe have long subsidized their agricultural sectors to the detriment of developing economies (IATP, 2003). Their subsidies and below-cost agricultural exports ("dumping") reduce the potential for agricultural exports from developing countries. Moreover, they deflate prices in developing economies, thereby undermining rural livelihoods. As Bhagirath Lal Das, the former Indian ambassador to the GATT, explains:

[A] fraud has been perpetrated on developing countries in terms of liberalization of trade [in agriculture] and improving market access to their exports. . . . [T]he major developed countries have technically fulfilled their obligation of reducing domestic subsidies when in reality, by a very clever use of the provisions of the Agreement on Agriculture, which thus shows up the faults in the drafting of the rules, they in fact have increased the quantum of subsidy. (Das, 2000)¹⁴

The second set of issues concerned intellectual property rights and natural resources. In Seattle, the United States pushed for firm commitments in the negotiations on Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) at a time when anger at the consequences and repercussions of that agreement (introduced in the Uruguay Round as an accord to suppress "trade in stolen goods") reverberated through the developing world. TRIPS strictly limits the means by which states can legally protect their genetic resources (cf. Khor, 2000: 35–37; Das, 2003b: 56–60). Relatively rich in biodiversity but poor in the high-tech means to transform genetic materials and patent new species, many third world states had seen the WTO's purview expand into an area in which they were at a distinct disadvantage.

Behind these two issues lay fundamental questions about power and process in the WTO system. Delegates from developing countries found the assurances of expanded market access and increased economic growth made before the creation of the WTO unfulfilled. Attempts to correct the course of WTO negotiations revealed underlying inequalities in the WTO system. Thus, in Seattle, developing countries demanded changes in the WTO decision-making processes: more open access to meetings, access to all draft texts, greater involvement in negotiations, and an end to the infamous "green room."¹⁵ Not only were these demands ignored, but the subsequent Doha Ministerial (the fourth one in the series) manifested all of the worst abuses of power within the WTO system: a draft agreement produced shortly before the close of the ministerial that papered over fundamental differences; intense bilateral threats; and a final "consensus" derived through an exclusionary green room meeting. While the United States aggressively used its position as ministerial host to drive its agenda, devel-

oping country delegates found themselves shut out of key meetings. A crucial meeting on the TRIPs agreement excluded ministers from African countries that had called for an end to the patenting of life forms.¹⁶ Immediately after the ministerial, economist Martin Khor argued that the fundamental causes of the collapse of the Seattle Ministerial lie in “the nontransparent and undemocratic nature of the WTO system, the blatant manipulation of that system by the major powers, and the refusal of many developing countries to continue to be on the receiving end” (Khor, 1999). Based on interviews with delegates from many developing countries, he offers this firsthand account of the collapse: USTR Barshefsky “announced on the second day her “right” as [ministerial chairperson] to use procedures of her own choosing to get a Declaration out of the meeting.” She and the WTO Director General then initiated “green room” meetings to which only between 10 and 20 countries—“the major powers plus a few selected developing countries”—were invited to participate. Thus,

The vast majority of developing countries were shut out of the whole Green Room process. They were not even informed which meetings were going on or what was being discussed. Ministers and senior officials of most developing countries were left hanging around in the corridors or the canteen, trying to catch snippets of news or negotiating texts. Their anger at the insult of being at the receiving end of such shabby treatment boiled over on the third day of the Conference [December 3]. The African Ministers issued a strong statement that there was “no transparency” in the meeting [and] that African countries were generally excluded on issues vital to their future. . . . (Khor, 1999; cf. Bello, 2000b: 49)

The confrontation of the delegates by the People’s March and the DAN undoubtedly emboldened resistance to the U.S. agenda in Seattle. But what caused the Seattle Ministerial to implode was the publication of a declaration written by a group of ministers from Africa. They announced: “Under the present circumstances, we will not be able to join the consensus required to meet the objectives of this Ministerial Conference.” This stand was the *coup de grace* of the battles in Seattle. USTR Barshefsky, unprepared for such pugnacious resistance, could form no conciliatory reply. The collapse of the ministerial was so swift and complete that the closing ceremonies were undiplomatically abandoned. Delegates left without a sense of where the WTO would begin in Geneva.

In a talk given in 2001, Naomi Klein (2001/2004: 219) reflected back on the heady days of 1999, asking: “Seattle—was that a movement or a collective hallucination?” Judging by the literature written since the ministerial, the answer seems to be both. Clearly there were important elements of a novel mass movement, and yet this was accompanied by the collective hallucination that the united work of diverse activists on N30 delivered a

fatal blow to the WTO. Instead, it is fairer to say that distinct and heterogeneous actors came to Seattle with different agendas. This is not to deny the overlap among these groups and their struggles, but rather to recognize meaningful political differences between and within these groups and to acknowledge the challenges of building lasting coalitions (Wainwright et al., 2000: 10–13; Glassman, 2002). What is at stake in the way we interpret “Seattle” is the question of articulation: Different views place different amounts of stress on the relative importance of third world states, first world NGOs, and transnational social movements in challenging the WTO. I will return to this in the conclusion.

From Seattle to Cancún: Disaster at Doha

Any hope that Seattle had delivered a knockout blow to the WTO was premature. Two years later the WTO held its fourth ministerial, in Doha, Qatar. It was no less contentious than the third, with conflicts centered on similar issues: the WTO decision-making process, agriculture, and the new “Singapore” issues. Yet, unlike Seattle, the Doha Ministerial concluded with an ambitious new agreement, the Doha Work Programme. This agreement was produced through the trusted techniques that only narrowly failed in Seattle: producing “draft text” that excluded most views and concluding the ministerial with an all-night green room meeting (for details on these tactics, see Jawara & Kwa, 2003). The Doha Ministerial was arbitrarily extended for an extra day by the WTO Secretariat after many delegates from developing countries had already prepared to leave, because the Quad had not yet succeeded in forcing an agreement. The resulting agreement was framed by the WTO Secretariat as a “Development Round”; the brief text of the agreement uses “development” and “developing” no fewer than 63 times (*Economist*, 2003: 59). Yet, in substance these terms proved meaningless. The most glaring contradiction concerned agricultural subsidies. Developed countries promised “substantial improvements in market access; reductions of . . . all forms of export subsidies; and substantial reduction in trade-distorting domestic support” for agriculture (World Trade Organization, 2001: ¶13), but after Doha they simply shifted the *form* of their agricultural subsidies so that they were exempt from WTO rules. Overall support for agriculture only increased:

The agreement obliged developed countries to reduce the Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS), which is a measure of domestic support, by 20 per cent during 1995–2000 from the average annual level of the base period of 1986–1988. However, two categories of subsidies are exempted, and while the major developed countries did reduce their AMS, they also increased their exempted subsidies significantly, thereby offsetting the AMS reduction, which resulted in an increase in total domestic support. According to

OECD data, the Producer Subsidy Equivalent for all developed countries rose from US\$247 billion in the base period (1986–1988) to US\$274 billion in 1998. . . . (Khor, 2002)

Thus, the newfound emphasis on “development” failed to change Quad agricultural subsidies. The same is true of below-cost exports, which also increased. The 1996 deregulation of U.S. agricultural policy allowed prices for agricultural commodities to fall, forcing rural livelihoods in the third world to compete with multinationals dumping goods at 40–70% below their actual costs of production.¹⁷ Although developed countries essentially ignored their promises from Doha, developing countries were pressured to commit to opening their markets further and to begin negotiations on four new issues. These issues, called “the Singapore issues” because they were proposed at the first WTO Ministerial in Singapore, would bring four nontrade fields of economic policy into the purview of the WTO: investment, competition, government procurement, and trade facilitation. The purpose of including these four new areas was to compel developing countries to open trade in services and to weaken nations’ mechanisms for regulating and disciplining capital. If all four were to come into place, the WTO would be empowered to regulate state practices for disciplining foreign investment, to judge whether government spending was “transparent” and did not favor domestic firms, and to ensure that states would provide contracts only to globally competitive firms.

Recognizing that these policies were not in their interest, developing countries fought the inclusion of the Singapore issues. The Quad insisted. The resulting compromise that facilitated the Doha agreement came as developing countries inserted language specifying that the new issues would not be added to the WTO in Cancún unless there was an “explicit consensus” among members that they should go forward. As Das explained after Doha, the Doha Work Programme only increased “the imbalance in the WTO system . . . by giving special treatment to the areas of interest to the major developed countries [e.g., liberalization of services] and ignoring the areas of interest to the developing countries” (Das, 2003a: 3–4), such as agriculture and market access. “As the developed countries are the beneficiaries of this exercise in the WTO, the least that is expected is that they offer something in return to the developing countries. They have not done so” (Das, 2003b: 141). This failure set the stage for Cancún.

THE BATTLES IN CANCÚN

With the lofty promises made by the United States and Europe in Doha unfulfilled, the WTO gathered in Cancún for its fifth ministerial in September

2003 amid considerable tension. In the months leading up to the Cancún Ministerial, all of the deadlines set in Doha for negotiations and “deliverables” were missed. The unpopular U.S. invasion of Iraq only reduced the U.S. government’s room for maneuver. Many WTO analysts sensed the prospects of another ministerial collapse.

Two familiar issues threatened an impasse: agriculture and the new (or “Singapore”) issues. The draft text that was brought to Cancún offered no relief from the ongoing growth of U.S. and European Community agricultural subsidies. The disagreements over agriculture were symbolized by cotton. Between 1995 and 2001 the export price of U.S. cotton fell from 93 cents to 40 cents per bushel. The percentage of export dumping during the same period climbed from 9% to an astounding 57% (Richie et al., 2003: 21). Ironically, as the deleterious effects of U.S. cotton dumping worsened, subsidies for U.S. cotton producers increased substantially.¹⁸ This issue was forced to the table in Cancún by Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali, which demanded an end to cotton subsidies and a \$300 million payment for the damages caused to their economies by cotton dumping (Anonymous, 2003; Becker, 2003). Their proposal was not seriously considered by the USTR, who engineered the incorporation of the cotton issue into the draft text in such a way that turned the issue to U.S. advantage: Progress on a cotton agreement was made contingent upon the members’ accepting the broader U.S. position on agriculture.¹⁹

The second major source of tension was the inclusion of the Singapore issues. In the run-up to the Cancún Ministerial, most developing countries indicated that they did not want to negotiate on the new issues. Yet, the Draft Cancun Ministerial Text, released by the WTO on August 24, included all four new issues (World Trade Organization, 2003).²⁰ The text thus betrayed “the clearly stated views of Ministers of a large number of developing countries, and violates the Doha principle that negotiations [on the new issues] can begin only if there is an explicit consensus” (Third World Network, 2003: 1).

Resistance to the Quad agenda was led by a new coalition of developing economies that successfully resisted pressures from the United States and EC to advance the new issues. The Cancún Ministerial was distinguished from the previous four ministerials by the creation of a formal bloc of developing countries that successfully resisted pressure from the rich countries to take on these issues. This bloc—called the “Group of Twenty” or “G20+”—comprised 20 developing countries that pressed for increased market access for developing economy exports, the elimination of Quad agricultural dumping, and saying “no” to the new issues.²¹ Led by Brazil, India, China, and South Africa, the G20+ joined in a broader coalition with the African Group, the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries, and the Least Developing Countries (LDCs). Together they insisted that de-

veloped countries first make good on the promises they made during previous rounds. The insistence by the Quad that developing countries accept the Singapore issues emboldened the G20+ and their allies to forcefully reject the draft ministerial text. On the evening of the third day of the ministerial the WTO Secretariat called a green room meeting with delegates of a dozen countries. In that meeting, the Quad insisted that negotiations could not move on to other issues until the G20+ had accepted at least two of the new issues. Talks collapsed the following afternoon when it became clear that neither side would capitulate.²²

I have focused on the major areas of disagreement within the ministerial. However, as in Seattle, opposition to the Quad's policies went beyond the walls of the conference center. In certain respects the geographies of resistance in Cancún paralleled those of Seattle: Although the fundamental cause of the ministerial's collapse was the refusal of developing countries to yield to the Quad, there were three distinct areas of conflict and forms of resistance occurring throughout Cancún.

Inside the Conference Center

Leading up to Cancún, the WTO adopted an approach that provided access for certain NGOs to the proceedings, yet formally excluded them from the most important spaces and discussions. NGOs were invited to apply for access months before the ministerial, and 1,578 registered members of 785 different NGOs were granted limited access to the conference center. While this reflected an unprecedented level of involvement, there were numerous restrictions: Only one person from each NGO could enter the conference center at a time; NGO representatives were restricted to one section of the conference center's first floor; and they could not access the rooms where delegates actually met. NGOs were further denied access to many press briefings and the closing ceremonies.

Though hemmed in and outnumbered by trade lawyers, activists used NGO access to perform numerous acts of resistance within the convention center. A contingent of NGO representatives stood up during the opening ceremony and hoisted signs that called attention to undemocratic WTO practices. In a press conference by the U.S. undersecretary for agriculture, activists from Greenpeace-Mexico dumped maize on the table in front of the speakers to protest U.S. dumping of transgenic corn in Mexican markets.²³ Others donned turtle outfits, placards, and lanyards²⁴ to draw attention to the injustices and the effects of WTO policies. When talks broke down, activists danced and cheered inside the center. These acts bridged the spaces of resistance across the security barriers that separated the demonstrators inside the center from those outside, and in a limited way shaped the discussions within the ministerial.

Outside the Center: A Parallel Summit

The second concentration of anti-neoliberal activists was divided into two areas within an ambivalent space wedged between the large protests and the conference center. This group was distributed around two conference hotels where hundreds of NGOs held a kind of parallel global summit. At one hotel a few kilometers west of the convention center, a 3-day “Fair Trade Fair and Sustainable Trade Symposium” was organized by a group of civil society and fair trade producer groups to promote their commerce.²⁵ Meanwhile, two kilometers south of the conference center (still within Cancún’s hotel zone), a conference hotel designated as the “official” NGO center hosted hundreds of credentialed NGO representatives for a parallel conference on trade policy. Hundreds of panel discussions and press conferences were held over the course of 5 days.

The tenor of the actions carried out in this middle zone were relatively relaxed and professional, more in the spirit of an academic conference and business meeting than a mass protest. This space was thus ambivalent in that it was pulled in two directions: within this space, NGO representatives could not speak to most activists or participate in the mass protests. Yet, they remained nonetheless outside the conference center and were in effect no closer to the trade delegates than any uncredentialed activists. The NGO representatives in this middle zone therefore confronted neither the police nor the WTO delegates. Ensconced in hotels on the privileged side of an unjust wall, they were separated from their allies by a police line and from the convention center for lack of credentials.

The Multitude at Kilometer Zero

The largest group of protesters in Seattle were members of those unions and NGOs that staged the People’s Rally. In Cancún, by contrast, the largest group was made up mainly of Mexican university students and *campesinos*, coupled with perhaps a thousand activists from other countries, particularly the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, and Korea.²⁶ What unified this group in Cancún was not a common agenda so much as their sociospatial *position*: These were activists who were formally excluded from the Cancún peninsula, the high-security site of the ministerial. This group lived in and transformed downtown Cancún, moving freely up to a precise point—known as “*kilometro cero*” in Cancún’s tourist geography—9 kilometers west of the conference center. They were kept off the peninsula by a massive system of barricades, steel fences, and thousands of federal police.

This group—“*los globofóbicos*”—was ridiculed in the local press. Photos of the face-offs between activists and police contrasted the orderli-

ness of police lines with the activists' graffiti, colorful hair, black bandanas, and nudity. Notwithstanding the spatial restrictions and unfavorable representations, this group carried out a wide array of activist practices over the week. They occupied parks and plazas, staged two conferences, organized dance and theater events, closed streets, paraded banners, gave dozens of speeches, amassed for three major demonstrations, and more.²⁷ Unlike with the situation with the Direct Action Network in Seattle, they were never able to get close enough to the conference center to interrupt the WTO's business or even to be seen by delegates. This was less an effect of different activist tactics than a change in the policing of space. The Mexican government arranged for an overwhelming security force and closed off the entire Cancún peninsula to activists without credentials and ordered the police not to use violent measures to break up demonstrations. Thus, the large group of protestors was able to carry out sizable daily demonstrations without facing brutal police attacks.

Occasionally the activists were able to transcend the spatial barriers and communicate directly to the delegates inside the conference center. On the morning of Friday, September 12, activists scaled a construction crane adjacent to the conference center and hoisted a large banner with the message "*Que se vayan todos*."²⁸ For 2 days, the banner invited the delegates across the street in the conference center to pack up and go home. On the evening of the same day, another group of activists blocked traffic on the main road circling the conference center. About six people sat down in the road, and before police could force them out a score of comrades had fallen in behind them. A small banner was hoisted behind the line of sitting activists; corn and beans were spread on the road. A dance party erupted behind this line and the road was closed for about an hour.

Undoubtedly the most powerful moment that reached the convention center occurred on September 10. That afternoon, the multitude staged the second major demonstration of the week with some 7,000 activists marching from downtown Cancún toward the conference center. As throughout the week, this march was met at "kilometer zero" by steel walls and police lines. Denied further passage and unable to reach the ministerial, a Korean farmer at the head of the assemblage named Lee Kyung Hae climbed the steel fence in their path. From the top of the fence, Lee led chants as he sat poised between the two massed forces. Then he took his life, plunging a knife into his heart.

The response to Lee's death was immediate and visceral. The crowd tried to destroy the wall upon which Lee died. It was a task that was left incomplete until Saturday, 2 days after his death, when they marched back to the place where he died. They dismantled the fence that had kept Lee from advancing toward the WTO:

With the black blocks providing security from the provocateurs, and cordoning off the first 10 meters in front of the wire walls, more than a hundred women went forward with bolt cutters and began dismantling the walls. . . . Once the wall was weakened, the Koreans supervised the attachment of . . . ropes to the top of the walls. Then thousands of people . . . pulled the walls down. (Rosset, 2003)

Facing thousands of riot police, the group entered the space where the wall had stood, sat down on the road, and gathered in silence. A ceremony honored Lee Kyung Hae. The crowd chanted “*Todos somos Lee!*” (“We are all Lee!”). An effigy representing the WTO was burned. Then the group marched away in silence. The police, moved by the grace and discipline of the demonstration, honored the protestors departure with gestures of respect: waves, nods, and tears.²⁹

The July 2004 Agreement

The unity of the G20+ after Cancún proved to be short-lived. On July 31, 2004, the WTO announced that the impasse created at Cancún had been broken in Geneva with the achievement of a new agreement.³⁰ The agreement was hailed as a triumph of genuine multilateralism and a success for developing countries. The *New York Times* reported that the WTO “began to make good on its insistence that wealthy nations end the dumping of subsidized food on the global market. The framework agreement they reached . . . also served as a reminder that multinational organizations can at times be effective” (Becker, 2004: E1). Yet, the July agreement portends badly for developing economies. Negotiations on agriculture were advanced in terms that will allow Quad farm export subsidies to continue apace without comparable increases in market access for developing economies. Negotiations advanced in trade facilitation (one of the four Singapore issues). While it is too soon to know what effects these new rules will have, they are certain to increase the WTO’s power in an area in which developing nations are at a distinct disadvantage. Moreover, developing countries accepted a preliminary deadline by which they must submit details of plans to liberalize services; member states must explain their plans “to achieve progressively higher levels of liberalization with no *a priori* exclusions of any service sector or mode of supply” (WTO, 2004a, cited in IFG, 2004; see also WTO, 2004b).

To achieve this end the United States and EC adopted a two-part strategy to reduce the strength of the G20+. First, the USTR went after the smaller states in the group, using the carrot of potential bilateral free trade agreements and various sticks (reduced aid or access to U.S. markets) to win countries over. Within weeks of Cancún, several smaller countries such

as Colombia and Costa Rica were dislodged from the G20+. The IMF made support for the Doha round a *de facto* condition for its assistance. As a result of such pressure, states that might have joined with the G20+ elected not to do so (Jawara & Kwa, 2003). Second, the United States and EC isolated India and Brazil, suggesting that they form a new negotiating group within the WTO, the Five Interested Parties (or FIPS),³¹ and began courting the Indian and Brazilian governments to resolve their particular concerns. This strategy changed the dynamic of the post-Doha negotiations.

The shift from a confrontational strategy to one of cooptation and subtle divide-and-rule was able to rip apart the superficial "Third World unity" that came out of Cancún. The centerpiece of the strategy was to bring [India and Brazil] into the center of the negotiations and play to their specific interests. . . . [H]aving become central players as members of the exclusive Five Interested Parties, their ability to repudiate large parts of a text that they had been consulted on prior to its release to the General Council was limited. . . . During and after Cancún, the G20 was seen in some circles as representing a major power shift in the global trading order. . . . The reality is that . . . [Brazil and India] have been accommodated into the ranks of the key global trading powers . . . [and] the price for this has been their diluting the strength of the negotiating position of the South. (Bello & Kwa, 2004)

The July agreement may have broader implications for the geographies and process of the WTO. Only 40 trade ministers were present in Geneva at the time the agreement was negotiated. By building the agreement in Geneva without the involvement of most member delegations, the international media, or civil society, the FIPS and the WTO Secretariat effectively produced "a ministerial declaration without a ministerial" (Bello & Kwa, 2004). If this agreement were to become a precedent, it could signal the end of the era of substantive ministerials such as Seattle and Cancún. It is no accident that this dramatic shift occurred so soon after Cancún. After the collapse of the Seattle and Cancún ministerials, it was clear that the ministerial was a problematic tool for advancing neoliberal trade policy. Even with only a modicum of openness and transparency, ministerials attracted "NGOs, . . . popular protests[, and] political people determined to stand up for their country's interests. It brought the press in large numbers, thus making decision-making more transparent despite the wishes of negotiators accustomed to exclusive 'Green Rooms' " (Bello & Kwa, 2004).

CONCLUSION: ON THE NGO-IZATION OF THE WTO

NGOs form a sort of buffer between the [state and the] public. . . . They have become the arbitrators, the interpreters, the facilitators. . . . [T]he

capital available to NGOs plays the same role in alternative politics as the speculative capital that flows in and out of the economies of poor countries. It begins to dictate the agenda. It turns confrontation into negotiation. It depoliticizes resistance. (Roy, 2004)

Global affairs always reflect something of the local conditions in which they unfold. The formation of global trade rules through the WTO may stand as a metaphor for “globalization,” but even here the “global” is locally made. The local geographies of such moments—the spatial relations that make room for and frame the negotiations—are ultimately ramified globally through the production of trade rules. We can see this by comparing Seattle and Cancún. Both ministerials unfolded in conference hotels in urban settings and collapsed over disagreements among member states around three issues: agriculture, the Singapore issues, and process. Yet, there were clear geographic differences between the phenomena surrounding resistance at the Seattle and Cancún ministerials. The most important of these, I would argue, concerns a shift in the positions and tactics of different social groups that resisted the Quad agenda.

At each ministerial, the largest group of protesters gathered over a mile away from the conference center. What changed was the composition of this group. In Seattle, the largest group of protesters was led by organizations (mainly unions and NGOs) that chose to keep their distance from the conference center in order to stage a rally and march. Meanwhile, an unrecognized group of relatively modest numbers—the Direct Action Network—closed off the entrances to the conference center and prevented the ministerial from officially convening on time. In Cancún, by contrast, the largest body of protesters—a heterogeneous assortment of peasant, student, and anarchist groups—attempted to get close enough to the conference center to close the ministerial through direct action but were kept at a distance by the police. In other words, there was a shift of priorities among the largest mass of participants, in favor of direct action. But as we have seen, the multitude was unable to get near the Cancún Conference Center.

Yet there was a second important shift: In Cancún, registered NGOs received unprecedented access to the area immediately adjacent to the conference center, and even the ministerial itself (see Figure 9.1). The defining feature of this change is the rising importance of officially-recognized NGOs that have limited access to WTO meetings. While there was a comparable *number* of NGOs given access by the WTO at the Seattle and Cancún ministerials, their spatial access and qualitative importance, relative to the uncredentialed multitude, was much greater in Cancún.³² This came about mainly as a result of a shift in the WTO’s policies toward NGOs. This shift raises many questions. If closing down the ministerial is effectively foreclosed as a result of exclusionary police tactics, as in Doha



FIGURE 9.1. Geography of groups of resistance at the Seattle and Cancún ministerials. Data from field notes.

and Cancún, should this goal be abandoned? And has resistance to the WTO become the exclusive purview of third world states and officially recognized NGOs? If so, what spaces and paths of resistance offer the greatest leverage?

The exclusion of activists lacking the proper NGO credentials from the spaces immediately adjacent to the Doha and Cancún ministerials, coupled with the opening of space for greater NGO access in Cancún, suggests that the WTO has decided to face the “representatives” of anti-neoliberalism—albeit on its own terms and within thoroughly patrolled spaces. The quotation marks surrounding “representatives” reflect one of the risks of this trend for a vibrant and effective anti-neoliberal movement. To the extent that the WTO decides which NGOs have access, it alone determines which NGOs supposedly represent the interests of the people most affected by the WTO. Consequently, NGOs may increasingly represent themselves in such a way that allows them closer access to the WTO. This approach may serve separate NGO leaders from the large groups of protesters not granted access at future ministerials.

Following Roy’s line of argument (see quote on pp. 194–195), it seems plausible to suggest that the rise of NGOs could change the politics of resistance to the WTO. Since most NGOs receive their funding (directly or indirectly) from individuals or foundations in the Quad, there is a risk that these groups will blunt their criticism of the economies on which they are

financially dependent. Ironically, the rise of NGO influence may therefore contribute to the broad hierarchy of space and power within the WTO.

It is too soon to know what effects these changes may have. The passage of the July 2004 Agreement would suggest that the importance of the rise of access for NGOs at Ministerials is comparatively limited relative to the more fundamental shift taking place within the WTO with the rise of India, Brazil, and China. Whether any substantive links will be forged between these states and the transnational groups that oppose trade liberalization remains an open question. We can be sure that the WTO will continue to be a source and locus of conflict over neoliberal economic policies and that its unequal dispensations of power will reflect and reproduce the geographies of resistance to neoliberalism.

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NOTES

1. Harvey's term "accumulation by dispossession" refers to the extraordinary appropriation of value from subaltern classes (see Harvey, 2003). This is an expanded notion of what Marx calls "primitive accumulation" in *Capital*, Volume 1.
2. I focus on these two ministerials because I was able to study them firsthand through participant observation and interviewing. I went to Seattle on November 28, 1999, where I was a participant in the events leading up to and including the closure of downtown on November 30. On the 30th, I attended the "People's Rally" and then marched downtown with Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN); I left on December 1. In Cancún I attended the Fair Trade Fair and sundry NGO events as well as the ministerial proper, where I spoke with delegates, observed press conferences, and monitored events over the course of 5 days. I also conducted a thorough review of media coverage, texts, and films produced after each ministerial.
3. By "geographies of resistance," I mean a reading of the spaces that enable and are produced by political dissent.
4. This was but one of the disagreements that divided activists in Seattle. A more heated debate surrounded the question of whether damaging property was counterproductive and/or constituted violence. A less substantive (but, I believe,

more important) debate concerned whether left groups should prioritize staging “direct actions” in U.S. cities or building solidarity networks with transnational social movements (and/or particular third world states).

5. Not everyone in the People’s March followed the assigned course. I estimated that 10% of those in the march pressed through the human chain to join the protests around the convention center.
6. In 2000, the AFL-CIO and Public Citizen used the attention gained in Seattle to mobilize a campaign to keep China out of the WTO. Their campaign failed (see Bello & Mittal, 2000).
7. The AFL-CIO and Public Citizen cultivated the view that the People’s March coincided with the Direct Action Network protests that closed the ministerial. For instance, an anti-WTO edited book by Public Citizen’s Lori Wallach tells a story about a Global Trade Watch employee standing “amid a sea of 30,000 people” and shouting “the spine-tingling news” that “there will be no new WTO round!” (7). This is impossible. The talks collapsed on the afternoon of December 3, after the vast majority of the protesters had already left Seattle. The ones who remained could not protest on the corner where this episode supposedly took place; it was secured by the National Guard.
8. A colleague related to me a scene that demonstrates the degree of separation between these two events. After he completed the People’s March with PCUN, he entered a bar with other union activists from the march. The bar’s televisions were showing live coverage of the police attacks unfolding a mile away. Unaware of the events downtown, many unionists thought the coverage reflected events in another city!
9. John Sellers, co-founder of the Rukus Society and a leader of the DAN’s actions, met with the captain and lieutenant of the Seattle police before the ministerial to explain their plans: “We told them exactly what we were going to do[, but the police] couldn’t credit that thousands of people were going to come out there and risk arrest to intervene against the most powerful business meeting in the history of the planet” (quoted in Mertes, 2004: 184).
10. Regarding the battle in the Capitol Hill area, see Heyman (2004). On the protest tactics of N30, compare Starhawk (1999, 2000) and Thomas (2000) with Wainwright, Glassman, and Prudham (2000) or Cockburn and St. Clair (2000).
11. For instance, none of the essays on Seattle and urban protest in the volume edited by Shepard and Hayduk (2002) mention the subsequent ministerial. In the literature on Seattle, the few references to the ministerial negotiations and resistance by third world states tend to be written by activists from developing countries. In the volume edited by Danaher and Burbach (2000), the only writers to address the Seattle Ministerial are Walden Bello and Martin Khor.
12. Starhawk is by no means alone in suggesting that the Seattle Ministerial was derailed on November 30. For instance, in an exemplary reading of the events in Seattle, Heyman criticizes those readings of Seattle (including my own) that limit the “battles” to the downtown area, thereby ignoring the conflicts that extended into the Capitol Hill neighborhood (Heyman, 2004). Notwithstanding the value of this intervention, Heyman’s study reiterates the most important lacuna of this literature by failing to address the conflicts that followed *within* the

conference center. Insisting on the political importance of local, concretely public, acts on November 30, he downplays the importance of the resistance of third world states on December 2–3.

13. Similarly, Danaher and Burbach argue that there were at least two “battles in Seattle”: one “in the streets” and one “among the elites in the WTO” (2000: 8). Yet they suggest, incorrectly, that the outcome of the latter was directly caused by the former. Their explanation for the collapse of the ministerial is as follows: “Clinton tried to calm [U.S. labor’s] anger by giving a speech calling for international standards to defend the rights of workers. This emphasis on labor rights *scared elite third world leaders* whose main bargaining chip with the transnational corporations is to offer up their working classes at low wages” (8; emphasis added). According to this version of events, Clinton is a labor-rights hero, and fearful third world elites are the villains of Seattle. But apart from the emptiness of Clinton’s call for labor standards, third world delegates were right to oppose the U.S. agenda in Seattle, which would only further undermine development and livelihood prospects in their countries. Such refusal by white first world analysts to recognize the resistance by third world leaders within the ministerial *as* resistance deserves critical scrutiny.
14. On the failure of the WTO to reduce Quad agricultural subsidies and dumping, see Khor (2002), Richie, Murphy, & Lake (2003), and Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (2005), which document the increases in first world farm subsidies since 1995.
15. At the GATT headquarters in Geneva, a table in the small meeting room where deals were privately negotiated was covered with green cloth. The Director General of the GATT organized small, secret meetings in this room—the “green room.” The process has been carried over to the WTO.
16. This was followed by a meeting where developing country ministers refused to allow the creation of a WTO working group on labor that President Clinton called for in response to pressures from unions.
17. On the dumping of below-cost U.S. agricultural goods, see Khor (2002), Richie et al. (2003), and Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (2005).
18. It is not that subsidies have caused low prices, but rather the opposite. The liberalization of U.S. agricultural policy has driven down prices; the U.S. state has compensated for the drop in prices by increasing the direct payments to farmers. Viewed against the Republican party’s hegemony in rural areas, subsidies had to increase after 2000 to compensate for the drop in prices. This dynamic is particularly important in the case of U.S. cotton farmers, who are entirely dependent on subsidies from the U.S. government. One could argue that the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of West African cotton farmers have been sacrificed to maintain Republican hegemony in rural Texas, Mississippi, Georgia, Arkansas, Louisiana, and North Carolina (these states, along with California, have the most acres enrolled in the USDA cotton program).
19. The Africa Trade Network argued that the draft text released on the fourth day of the ministerial abused the concerns raised by West African cotton-producing countries: “No meaningful response has been made. . . . Instead, their concerns are inserted into negotiations in areas and on terms, which are beneficial to the

developed countries” (Africa Trade Network, 2003: 1). After Cancún, Brazil brought a case against the U.S. cotton subsidies in the WTO and won. The WTO Panel found that the US cotton program violated WTO agricultural guidelines in four respects, employed prohibited subsidies, and caused “serious prejudice” to the Brazilian cotton industry. The WTO upheld this ruling even after an appeal by the United States and its National Cotton Council. As of this writing (July 2005) the United States has refused to take the steps outlined by the WTO in its cotton agreement, and Brazil has threatened to take counter-measures—which the WTO has ratified.

20. The Draft Text was not released through the usual process, in which the WTO Secretariat draws up a draft text after meeting with member states, but was prepared by the Chairman of the General Council “on his own responsibility.” This text betrayed the WTO’s bias toward the largest states. The group of 21 submitted a framework proposal for negotiations (WTO Ministerial document WT/MIN(03)/W/6, of September 4, 2003) and asked that this be placed at the center of the agriculture negotiations. This was ignored (Third World Network, 2003).
21. During the ministerial this group gained a few members, then lost one, but the name “Group of Twenty” (or “G20”) stuck. For most of the Cancún Ministerial the group had 22 members; thus, I write “G20+.”
22. The final collapse in Cancún came when EC Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy demanded in the green room that the Singapore issues be agreed to before opening negotiations on agriculture. With talks on the Singapore issues at a stalemate, Ministerial Chairperson Derbéz moved to close the ministerial. On the competing explanations for the collapse of Cancún, see the Foreword to Jawara and Kwa (2003).
23. After this press conference—interrupted a second time when activists from Global Exchange held up signs that read “WTO kills farmers”—the WTO decided that NGOs could not attend official press conferences.
24. The most contentious form of resistance in the conference center took the form of shoestring lanyards that many NGO representatives wore as necklaces. The lanyards were imprinted with the expression “explicit consensus” to remind the delegates that the Singapore issues were not to go forward without an explicit consensus from WTO member states. On the third day of the conference, Mexican police began confiscating the lanyards. Some were told that the shoestrings presented a security risk; police demanded mine on the grounds that “it was not official.”
25. This constituted the first international trade fair for the many groups involved in the burgeoning fair trade movement.
26. In comparison to Seattle, the number of U.S. and Canadian activists was very modest: Seattle’s famous “Teamster–turtle” alliance failed to materialize.
27. I cannot elaborate on the subgeographies of these events as they were so diverse and widely dispersed. For photos and stories from Indymedia–Cancún, see cancun.mediosindependientes.org/.
28. This expression (roughly, “get rid of them all”) has been popular throughout Latin America since 2002, when it served as the catchphrase for demonstrations in Argentina.

29. On Lee's protest and death, see Hernández (2003) and Rosset (2003). Lee's death was given a warm tribute by the Belizean delegation in the WTO Ministerial's closing ceremony: "Let it not be said that from this podium none marked with sorrow the tragic death of a Korean farmer in the streets of Cancún pleading the cause of the poor. My country does. I would like you to join me in standing to observe a moment of silence in his memory and for the cause for which he died" (Courtenay, 2003).
30. For the agreement, see WTO (2004); for critical reviews, see International Forum on Globalization (2004) and Berthelot (2004).
31. The five interested parties are India, Brazil, the EC, the United States, and Australia.
32. Although a considerable number of NGOs received clearance to attend the Seattle Ministerial, after the events of November 30, 1999, few representatives actually gained the kind of access that many enjoyed, later, in Cancún. The NGO presence at Cancún received an unusually direct endorsement during the G20+ press conference at the conclusion of the ministerial, when the head of the Brazilian delegation thanked "the civil society groups, which gave us a lot of support" (personal notes, September 14, 2003).

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Articulating Neoliberalism

DIVERSE ECONOMIES AND EVERYDAY LIFE IN “POSTSOCIALIST” CITIES

ADRIAN SMITH

The language of power is itself “urbanizing” but the city is left prey to contradictory movements that counter-balance and combine themselves outside the reach of panoptic power. . . . One can follow the swarming activity of these procedures that, far from being regulated or eliminated by panoptic administration, have reinforced themselves in a proliferating illegitimacy, developed and insinuated themselves into the networks of surveillance, and combined in accord with unreadable but stable tactics to the point of constituting everyday regulations and surreptitious creativities that are merely concealed by the frantic mechanisms and discourses of the observational organization.

—DE CERTEAU (1984: 95–96)

NEOLIBERALISM AND “POSTSOCIALISM”

Since the collapse of state socialism across east-central Europe (ECE) and the former Soviet Union (FSU), city and national governments in the region have attempted to reconstruct city-regions through a rapid process of engagement with the global capitalist economy. The largest city-regions (invariably capital cities and their hinterlands) have witnessed the expansion of inward investment, increasing cross-border connections, and a thoroughgoing transformation of the sectoral structure of their economies. City

and national governments alike have attempted to reposition major city-regions within the network-like flows of global capital (Sýkora, 1994, 1995; Stenning, 2004). In doing so, postsocialist states have attempted to boost local economic development, to create landscapes in the image of "successful" cities elsewhere in the world economy, and to use cities to demonstrate some of the perceived successes of the "transition to capitalism." Through liberalization, privatization, and the restructuring of property rights, the relatively noncommodified urban forms of state socialism have consequently witnessed a sharp (re)commodification.¹ This geographically centered discourse and experience of urban *capitalist* transition and its attendant engagement with global and emerging local capitals has, in turn, been associated with a dramatic reconfiguration of the livelihoods of urban populations and a transformation in the everyday lives of the residents of postsocialist cities. Job loss, increasing inequality, and the commodification of many consumption practices and the built environment have all meant that eking out an existence in the postsocialist city has become a major challenge for many. While for others the opportunities of the "transition to capitalism" have brought the prospect (and reality) of significant wealth and resources.

In the same way as Henri Lefebvre (2004) has stressed the importance of the rhythmic nature of everyday life, the rhythms of daily existence under state socialism—with their own distinct temporalities and spatialities—have consequently been transformed as politico-economic, cultural, and social transformations have reworked the nature of everyday life (Stenning, 2005). Central to understanding the transformation of urban everyday life is a concern to comprehend the "practices" used by individuals and households to "get by," to create and maintain cohesive communities, and to retain standards of living reached in the past (see Smith & Stenning, 2006).

In all kinds of ways, these dramatic transformations that we have come to know as "postsocialism" have involved an engagement with global neoliberalism. In seeking some kind of blueprint to inform policy about how to make a transition to the "market," policy thinkers across the postsocialist world looked to neoliberal practices and experiences for inspiration (Gowan, 1995, Smith & Pickles, 1998; Smith, 2002a). For many, the collapse of state socialism left a turn to the market as the only alternative. Despite the existence of a debate between those emphasizing a short, sharp shock approach (Sachs, 1990) and those advocating a more gradual evolutionary approach, the hegemony of the market has been central to virtually all programs of political-economic transformation in the postsocialist world. Equally, proponents of neoliberalism saw ECE as a "laboratory" for the testing and rolling-out of their ideas about how to engineer a social and economic transition of dramatic and rapid proportions (Gowan, 1995).

In practice, the postsocialist experience has been messier and more complex than this simple transmission belt of global neoliberalism framework suggests, in the same way that understandings of state socialism could never rely upon a simple model of the centrally planned system devoid of its complex and contested practices (Burawoy, 1979; Burawoy & Lukács, 1990). Since 1989, state involvement has been restructured rather than “rolled back,” practices and experiences differ across the region, and policy implementation has (at times) been contested. In addition, micro-practices of everyday life have maintained some autonomy from the dominant discourse of neoliberal transformation. In the same way as de Certeau (1984) has stressed in the passage with which I opened this chapter, everyday tactics provide for a “proliferating illegitimacy”—a way of moving beyond/outside urban neoliberalism but always already part of it.

Equally, there has been a temporality to the “rolling-out” of neoliberalism in ECE (see Tickell & Peck, 2003, for a discussion of phases of global neoliberalism). In its early forms, postsocialist neoliberalism was informed by the policy and advising work of the then Harvard economist Jeffrey Sachs (see Sachs, 1990), first in Yugoslavia and later in Poland and Russia.² “Shock therapy” became the leading policy stance in these countries and local political elites (in some cases with close links to the former communist state apparatus) embraced the new doctrines of market reform. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Sachs, the Swedish economist Anders Åslund, and Sachs’s team at the Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID) became what Wedel (2000) has called key “transactors” in the rolling-out of a neoliberal model in Russia.³ Despite the fact that the fragmentation of the political and economic system in Russia led to what Michael Burawoy (1996; see also Burawoy, Krotov, & Lytkina, 2000) has called “economic involution” in which the productive forces of the economy are strangled by a descent into barter, asset stripping, and mercantilist behavior, the neoliberal model remained a powerful discourse in the framing of Russian (and other) postsocialisms.

During these earlier periods of the rolling-out of neoliberalism across the region there were several sites of resistance to the neoliberal project. Protests in Prague during the International Monetary Fund and World Bank summit in 2000 became part of a revolving global protest meeting that has begun to take a variety of quasi-institutional forms, including the so-called anticapitalist/antiglobalization movement and the World Social Forum (WSF). Postsocialist states, in some cases, also became “sites of resistance” to the vehement neoliberal project. Although such resistance was often bound up with the playing out of nomenklatura power and reestablishing control of political elites over the (emerging market) economy. In Slovakia, for example, despite the thoroughgoing liberalization and marketization of the economy, the state continued to retain a central role in

economic governance while ensuring that the spoils of privatization and the distribution of key assets served the purposes of the economic nationalist HZDS (Movement for a Democratic Slovakia) party (see Smith, 1998). More recently, in Russia, the de facto renationalization of parts of key conglomerates (such as the Yukos oil company⁴) also has resulted in a further, yet partial, constraint on the neoliberal model. This is despite the fact that other "entrepreneurs" who constitute the emergent class of "New Russians" have been able to use their political connections to great effect in avoiding prosecution for underhanded practices. Neoliberal policies have been placed center stage once again in Slovakia since the 1998 election, however, as well as elsewhere in the region. Informed by a group of young advisors and ministers schooled in Hayekian neoliberalism, the Slovak state has pursued a thoroughgoing onslaught on social welfare policies and dramatic tax reductions.⁵ Indeed, the Slovak government's reform efforts stimulated a very visible form of resistance in February and March 2004 with widespread social unrest among Roma communities in East Slovakia. The Roma, in particular, long excluded from mainstream society, felt the brunt of social welfare reforms, resulting in troops being sent into villages to quell the unrest (Jurásková, 2004).

TRANSFORMING CITIES AND SOCIETIES: URBAN CHANGE, NEOLIBERALISM, AND "POSTSOCIALISM"

The transition to capitalism in ECE has been a profoundly uneven process. Clear economic divides have emerged between the city and the country, albeit linked to earlier inequalities created under state socialism and before (Smith, 1998; Sociologický ústav SAV, 2004). Cities have become key sites in the process of transformation and, in the case of city-regions (particularly capital cities and their hinterlands), have seen significant economic growth notwithstanding wider national economic retrenchment and partial collapse. Economic growth has occurred alongside a restructuring of the structure of city economies. The collapse of certain sectors of industry has occurred together with an emerging tertiarization of economies. Employment structures have been reconfigured, and the nature of, and rewards for, work have changed dramatically. At the same time, cities have witnessed a dramatic opening of their spaces to global flows of capital, people, forms of consumption, and cultural identities. These have transformed the livelihoods and everyday lives of those involved, not always in positive ways, leaving many excluded. Inward investment has transformed industrial capital, sometimes with the result of significant job loss and downsizing. Producer and financial services have emerged as key sites of new activity, often linked to global circuits of capital associated with the emergence of local-

level capital and stock markets. Retail and consumption landscapes have been transformed as new investment (often from western Europe) has brought with it different consumption practices (such as the out-of-town retail center, the “integrated shopping” experience of hypermarkets, and the mall) and new work practices (such as zero-hour contracts in the retail sector, where employees are not guaranteed a specific number of hours of work but are asked to be completely flexible in their availability) (see Wrigley, 2000; Hardy & Stenning, 2002; Bodnár, 2001). The centrally located retail environments of most towns and cities, along with the complementary role of retail outlets in the main residential housing quarters, have witnessed increasing competition from the out-of-town hypermarket phenomenon. These new retail spaces have also fostered increasing use of the private car to access these retail outlets.⁶ Several major west European retailers (including Carrefour, Tesco, and Lidl, among others) have invested heavily in the construction of such new retail environments. Residential spaces have been unevenly transformed with the partial and patchy gentrification of some of the more “desirable” central-city housing and apartment stock in the main capital cities, and the emergence of new urban communities and residential forms, including gated communities and residential spaces for foreign and domestic elites (see Rochovská & Hornák, 2001; Ira, 2003; Cook, 2005; see also Wu, 2004, 2005, and Wu & Webber, 2004, for the comparative “postsocialist” example of residential space in China).

Alongside this thoroughgoing transformation has been a net loss of employment since the collapse of state socialism across the region (Smith, 2000, *in press*; Rainnie, Smith, & Swain, 2002). Even in the most dynamic city-regions net employment loss has accompanied this reconfiguration of the sectoral structure of the labor market. This has created opportunities for some but excluded others, forcing individuals to negotiate the transformation of their everyday working lives in the postsocialist city (see Stenning, 2003).

Within this context, levels of inequality and poverty have increased. Homelessness has become evident in societies in which in the past there was no visible homelessness. “Informal” economic life has arguably seen an expansion, and—for some—the difficulty of eking out a living has become a major daily task. Of course, measuring poverty is very difficult, but Table 10.1 provides standardized income measures of poverty in the new east-central European member states of the European Union (EU) in 2002. Poverty rates were higher than the EU average in half of the new member states listed. Furthermore, child poverty rates were higher than average national rates in all but two countries, while social transfers (particularly pensions) played a very significant role in the reduction of poverty levels across the region. Outside of the new member states of the EU, poverty levels in the former Soviet Union are considered to be much higher, increasing to 50%

TABLE 10.1. Poverty Rates in Selected ECE Countries, 2002

	Total	0–15 years	65+ years	Before all social transfers	Before social transfers (excluding pensions)
European Union	15	19	17	40	24
New member states	15	20	8	44	26
Czech Republic	8	15	4	39	21
Estonia	18	18	16	42	25
Latvia	16	19	10	43	24
Lithuania	17	20	12	40	24
Hungary	10	13	8	32	15
Poland	17	23	7	50	32
Slovenia	10	7	19	36	16
Slovakia	21	30	13	43	28

Note. Poverty rate expressed as percentage of population below 60% of median income. Data from DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (2005: 190, 191).

in Russia on one absolute measure of poverty at US\$4.30 per person per day (World Bank, 2001).

According to a recent United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2004) survey of the region, levels of absolute and relative poverty increased during the 1990s, notably in the former Soviet Union and the countries of southeast Europe. Even in central Europe, poverty levels have increased—albeit to lower levels than found more dramatically in the FSU—with those “at risk” from poverty estimated to amount to between 21 and 27% of the population in countries such as Slovakia (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and the Family of the Slovak Republic, 2004).⁷

Alongside increasing poverty, income inequality has emerged as a key element of social change after 1989 (see Figure 10.1). Again, there are considerable variations across the region, but in all countries (except Russia and Slovenia, where the time period is different) income inequality has increased. In the majority of countries, inequalities have increased from below the mid-1990s average for the OECD countries (0.31 on the Gini coefficient) to a higher level. Only in certain central European states and Romania and Belarus have inequalities not yet reached the levels of those found in OECD countries.

In many cases the highest levels of poverty are found in isolated rural communities where job opportunities have collapsed, where the possibility of finding alternative work is very limited, and in certain cases where Roma populations are concentrated. For example, Azudová (2000) has found that almost 70% of “farmers” in Slovakia have incomes below the national av-

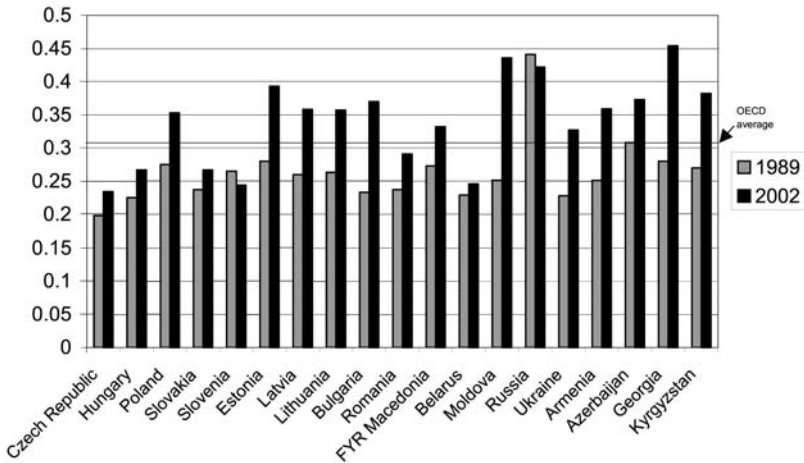


FIGURE 10.1. Income distribution, 1989 and 2002 (Gini coefficients). Data from Innocenti Research Centre (2004).

erage, placing them as the poorest social group in the country. Similarly, Michálek (2004) has identified the concentration of poverty in the largely rural and small-town environments of east Slovakia, reflecting the more general territorial inequalities involving “urban–rural” and “east–west” divides within the country (Smith, 1998). Cities have also experienced growing relative poverty and income inequalities, in particular impacting the industrial working class and those with other characteristics of social exclusion, such as the unemployed. Those with access to new economic and employment opportunities have seen a relative increase in income, while there remain quite considerable numbers of people reliant on state benefits.

Within this context of increasing social inequality, social policy has invariably seen a shift toward more targeted forms of social assistance, characteristic of the neoliberal state. As Tickell and Peck (2003: 174–175) have argued, “The 1990s witnessed the effective normalization of neoliberal modes of regulation which increasingly came to constitute the taken-for-granted context for economic policy decisions.” A recent statement by the Slovak Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family (2004) in its *National Action Plan on Social Inclusion 2004–2006*, for example, is suggestive of the kind of bootstrapping neoliberalism current in the region that individualizes the process of urban and social change. Thus, the report argued that “the social strategy of the Slovak Republic focuses on strengthening the role of the individual and his/her self-support by means of a system of social protection that strengthens and motivates his/her participation in the

labor market” (Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, 2004: 7). The aim here is to bring people out of unemployment by creating conditions in which individuals must work, regardless of whether employment provides a sustainable means of existence, making individuals responsible for working and providing for themselves and their family. Of course, this approach echoes the somewhat similar authoritarian approach concerning the responsibility of the “socialist citizen” to work in the building of the socialist state in Stalinist societies. However, new employment generation has been limited within a context of overall jobless economic growth. Equally, income derived from employment may not provide adequate sustenance for individuals and households, as the rise of the working poor in ECE to 32% of the adult population in the new EU member states suggests (Bardone & Guio, 2005).⁸ Echoing earlier forms of British and U.S. neoliberalism, the “talk [is] . . . of individual freedoms and entrepreneurial flair, of government in the interests of ordinary citizens rather than big institutions, of low taxes and bureaucratic roll-backs” (Tickell & Peck, 2003: 172).

REREADING THE NEOLIBERAL POSTSOCIALIST CITY

In much of the existing literature on neoliberalism and globalization there is a tendency to see “neoliberalism” and “resistance” as an oppositional binary.⁹ One form of “resistance” that has been identified through a variety of anthropological, sociological, and geographical research is the role of individual and household strategies to “make a living” within this broader context of neoliberal austerity. Pine and Bridger (1998: 11), for example, have argued that

By stressing local-level survival strategies we do not for a moment intend to minimise the very real power exercised by the *dominant* structures of state and market economy; rather, we wish to show that individuals *respond to those external structures*, and are neither victims of outside forces nor themselves totally in control of their own fates. (emphasis added)¹⁰

However, it is possible to position household and individual “survival strategies” in postsocialist cities not only as responses and forms of resistance to neoliberal induced austerity but also in a wider frame of culture–economy and nonessentialist economic practices (Smith, 2002b; Smith & Stenning, 2006). Taking this perspective, household strategies become transformed into complex sets of economic practices with their own logics embedded in past cultural practices as well as with logics articulated with austerity. Under-

standing such practices in this overdetermined form (see Gibson-Graham, 1996) is thus essential in not reducing them solely to neoliberal-induced austerity.

Within a context of the transformation of everyday life in the urban areas of ECE, households have developed new types of strategies to “make a living” and have also continued historically and culturally situated practices, actively reworking them under new conditions. Burawoy et al. (2000), for example, have explored how Russian households have developed strategies of either “defense” or “entrepreneurialism”:

On the one hand the loss of jobs and guaranteed wages drives most households toward *defensive strategies* of minimalist survival. They take the low road, seeking to hold destitution at bay by building and rebuilding a defensive moat around themselves. These families spontaneously knit together routines of the Soviet period into coping strategies for the new era of uncertainty. On the other side, often out of desperation rather than changed opportunities, a few households try to open channels to the dynamic exchange sector. They take the high road, wading out against the incoming involuntary tide, expanding into new forms of trade, service and petty commodity production. We call these *entrepreneurial strategies*, marked as much by their peril as by their inventiveness. They all too easily drown in the rough seas of protection and racketeering or are hurled back on to the beaches of destitution. (Burawoy et al., 2000: 46–47)

Burawoy et al. (2000) highlight the importance of four types of assets inherited from the Soviet past that position and structure these strategies. First are “inheritance assets” such as apartments, dachas, and cars. Second are skill assets, including “education, professional credentials, physical skills that can be parlayed in the labor market but also deployed in the household economy” (p. 47). Third are social assets, including “networks of relatives and friends to which individuals or households can appeal for help or to which they are obligated. They organize an economy of gifts and favors” (p. 47). Fourth are citizenship assets, including “claims that can be made on the state for pensions, child support, public assistance, rent subsidies and so forth. The state is very much at the center of the strategies of poor households, even if it dispenses very little” (p. 47).

Here I want briefly to highlight two forms that such strategies might take and to explore the ways in which they can be read as situated within responses to “neoliberalism” but always already formed through existing “contexts” and practices. The first of these practices is the production of food by “urban” households and the kind of mutualistic “economy of regard” (Lee, 2000) that emerges. The second is the form that reciprocity takes through the exchange of noncommodified labor outside of formal urban labor markets. In other words, I wish to explore the articulated na-

ture of neoliberalism with a range of practices that together constitute a "diverse economy" of postsocialism (Smith, 2002b; Smith & Stenning, 2006; see also Community Economies Collective, 2001). Both sets of practices also involve the articulation of the urban economy with rural practices, and I explore this geographical articulation to trace how the neoliberal, postsocialist city becomes inscribed on the rural economy.

Food Production and the "Economy of Jars"

Prior to the implementation of state socialist models of development across ECE and the FSU, the entire region was relatively underdeveloped, and large parts of the population were reliant upon agricultural activity either in the peasant economy or connected to large latifundia-type estates. In what is today the Slovak Republic, for example, during the Austro-Hungarian Empire over 60% of the population worked in agriculture, often eking out an existence on small peasant farms or working on large estates owned by parts of the Hungarian elite (Swain, 1994, 2001). Despite the large-scale industrialization and urbanization of these relatively underdeveloped rural economies after the Second World War under a model of "forced industrialization" for the war economy of the Cold War (Kaldor, 1990; Smith, 1998), these connections to land and agrarian practices were maintained throughout the postwar period. Ownership of cottage plots of land, allotments, and small-scale peasant plots connected to family homes in rural areas became the mainstay of what Cellarius (2000) has called the "economy of jars"—the circulation, often through forms of noncommodified exchange and reciprocity, of the products of household plots involving both fresh and pickled, preserved, and canned products—and what Clarke, Varshavskaya, Alasheev, and Karelina (2000) call the "dacha economy." Widespread expenditure of significant amounts of domestic labor on such plots was not uncommon, and the structure of the working day allowed for significant parts of the afternoon to be spent working on the production of food and nonfood items. The products of this labor entered into a largely noncommodified sphere of reciprocity and mutuality. What was not for one's own consumption became part of a wider circulation of exchange of use values between family members and between friends. This is precisely the "economy of jars" that Cellarius refers to.

Following the economic crisis that resulted from the implementation of neoliberal market reform policies across the region, several authors have argued that this domestic economy of household food production has become central to responses made by households to the economic crisis. Access to, and use of, a plot of land, it is argued, has become essential to household survival. For example, a study of three regions in Russia by Seeth, Chachnov, Surinov, and von Braun (1998: 1611) found that "the

majority of the [Russian] population now produces its own food supply to a considerable extent.” Food production has thus become central to the survival strategies of households. Rural households were often better positioned to respond to and survive the collapse of the formal economy, as they often had ready access to land. Yet complex networks of transactions and exchange are also used to sustain the livelihoods of urban households, many of which retain close linkages into rural areas through parents and grandparents who did not move to towns and cities during the process of state socialist industrialization and urbanization. These articulations of urban and rural spaces immediately position urban households in wider geographies of economic practice that tie rural economies to the survival strategies of urban households (see Smith & Stenning, 2006). The ability to provide labor on weekends on rural plots of land, the receipt of vegetables, meat, and fruit in exchange for the provision of labor, and the wider involvement in an economy of care for older generations by younger household members—all act to articulate the urban and the rural economy of domestic food production.

We should not treat such practices as simply responses and forms of resistance to neoliberal-induced austerity, however. Despite the increased relative importance of the subsistence economy, as formal incomes have fallen in real terms (Meurs, 2002), these practices are complexly intertwined with deep-seated cultural practices of production, in which forms of knowledge and understanding concerning the use of land become translated across generations. Nor, as we have seen, do these practices have their source solely in the period since the collapse of state socialism. They are rooted in regional agrarian pasts, and any understanding has to situate the “economy of jars” in this wider frame (see Smith, 2002b). These practices therefore draw upon resources generated in the past. This is what Burawoy et al. (2000) refer to as the assets of households, not only material assets but also a wide range of culturally situated asset structures that network households into a wider social economy.

This “context” of household cultural/economic practices matters in critical ways because it has enabled the development of the skills, resources, and assets that can be used, extended, and reworked to sustain food production in times of austerity. This production may directly sustain levels of food consumption in households; equally, it may enable savings to be made on the purchase of food, which allows for other forms of consumption in the formal economy. And so there is a very complex and messy articulation between such “informal” practices as domestic food production and the “formal” commodity economy (Smith & Stenning, 2006). Yet, research in Russia (Clarke, 2002a, 2002b) and Slovakia (Smith, 2002b, 2002c) has highlighted the central role of more affluent households in the process of domestic food production precisely because the assets and resources to sus-

tain what are quite inefficient forms of food production are more widely present in such households. In this sense, food production is less about the resistance of the poor and more about the forms of economic practice of those already possessing the assets (especially land and extended intra- and interfamily networks) needed to sustain an "economy of jars." "Context" thus becomes central to ascribing the assets, resources, and skills that households can draw upon in the production of noncommodified use and exchange values, but which inevitably, with the development of a wider market economy of commodity exchange, become articulated with that neoliberal economy. The economies of urban everyday life are thus rendered as always already articulated with the past and with different, especially rural, spaces.

Reciprocal Labor in the City

A second element central to understanding the extended spaces of economic practice that households engage in within postsocialist cities concerns the reciprocal exchange of noncommodified labor. While formal employment in the market economy, involving the production and extraction of surplus value through the labor process, has been central to the commodification of employment relations with the development of capitalism, other forms of labor are masked by an overemphasis on formal employment.¹¹ For example, over half (53%) of 100 households in two Slovak cities reported either giving labor to, or receiving the labor of, others (Smith, 2002b, 2002c). Some 45% of households reported providing labor to relatives, friends, or colleagues over the preceding 12 months, and 22% reported receiving the labor of others. The majority of the labor provided was to parents (33% of households) and involved a host of different activities, ranging from assistance with home repairs and house construction to specialized skills such as veterinary expertise. One household is illustrative of this kind of reciprocity in the exchange of labor:

The Lauko family [in Bratislava] asked a friend to assist with the reconstruction of some housing owned in a different part of Bratislava from where they were resident. In return "free labor" was given by the Lauko family . . . to the friend for building work he required on his own property and the father, who is trained as a veterinary practitioner, treated his animals and also provided free medicine for them. (Smith, 2002b: 245)

Often the provision of labor is also bound up in a wider economy of favors, in which there may not be an immediate exchange of equivalent labor, but where equivalence is "worked out" by participants over time through forms of nonmonetary exchange. Indeed, it is not unusual to offer

or to receive labor in return for other products, including those from a household's plot of land. In the study of Slovak households, a large proportion of those reporting that they gave away food from their land to friends, relatives, and colleagues also reported receiving material help and labor in return. "In this way a household's surplus labour . . . is used to sustain a network of familial and friendship relations which embed families and individuals in local communities" (Smith, 2002b: 243).

As well as providing a basis for sustaining community and social life "outside" of the neoliberal economy, it is also important to recognize that economic practices such as reciprocal labor and food production "work back" onto neoliberalism, setting limits to the "penetration" of the market and the commodity relation, and also providing opportunities for individuals to engage in market and commodity economies. An example is the role that domestic food production or reciprocal exchange of labor play in enabling resources to be "freed" for use in the formal economy (Smith, 2002b). Equally, access to formal employment opportunities is often linked to the kinds of social networks that individuals are embedded within (Smith & Stenning, 2006). For example, knowledge of and access to employment opportunities are often organized through personal networks including friends and family, allotment neighbors, churches, and other sites of social integration.

CREATING EVERYDAY LIFE: RHYTHMS, PRACTICES, TACTICS, AND NETWORKS IN THE CITY

In this rereading of economic practices in postsocialist cities, I have emphasized how difficult it is to see what some call "household survival strategies" solely as responses to the austerity induced by the economic collapse and increasing social inequality and exclusion during the "transition to capitalism." There is no doubt that the adoption and implementation of neoliberal policies have dramatically transformed the "conditions of existence" and everyday lives of urban and rural residents across ECE and the FSU (see Stenning, 2005). However, it is not possible to frame these transformations as a binary of neoliberalism, on the one hand, inducing a "response" of either resistance or household survival, on the other. Everyday city life in the postsocialist world is bound up with the (re-)creation of rhythms, practices, and networks situated within the legacies of state socialism and presocialist periods, which sometimes work with, and sometimes against, neoliberal commodification. These practices and networks are not necessarily forms of resistance to neoliberalism, nor should they be framed as such. Rather, they constitute ways of "getting by," what Schatzki (1996) has called the "held-togetherness" of urban social life. One way to

frame these practices is to consider them—following de Certeau (1984) in a different context—as “strategies” and “tactics” that constitute everyday life: “[M]any everyday practices . . . are tactical in character. And so are, more generally, many ‘ways of operating’: victories of the ‘weak’ over the ‘strong’ . . ., clever tricks, knowing how to get away with things, ‘hunter’s cunning,’ maneuvers, polymorphic simulations, joyful discoveries . . .” (de Certeau, 1984: xix). This is a particularly fruitful way of repositioning everyday household economic practices in postsocialist cities outside of a binary of neoliberalism and resistance. Turning away from this binary to explore how practices proliferate the conditions of existence of everyday life provides one way of expanding our conceptions of economic life—rendered less in relation to a centered reading of capitalist formal economies and more as a series of complexly interconnected, or articulated, proliferative forms (see Leyshon, Lee, & Williams, 2001; Smith & Stenning, 2006). Another way is to consider how the play of tactics is part of a rhythmical sense of the everyday (Lefebvre, 2004). Despite his argument that the “commodity prevails over everything” (Lefebvre, 2004: 6), Lefebvre also conveys a sense that social production and reproduction require the sustenance of activity outside, yet articulated with, the commodity relation. Thus, Lefebvre and Régulier (in Lefebvre, 2004: 73–74) argued that

The everyday is simultaneously the site of, the theatre for, and what is at stake in a conflict between great indestructible rhythms and the processes imposed by the socioeconomic organisation of production, consumption, circulation and habitat. The analysis of everyday life shows how and why social time is itself a social product. Like all products, like space, time divides and splits itself into use and use-value on the one hand, and exchange and exchange-value on the other. On the one hand it is sold and on the other it is lived.

To summarize, neoliberalism in postsocialist cities should be seen as one of many articulated social forms linking commodified capitalist-class processes with noncommodified production and exchange embedded within “other” economic/cultural practices. Such a conceptualization of an “articulated neoliberalism,” highlights the central role of diverse economies in constructing contemporary urban transformations in the worlds of “post-socialism.”

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NOTES

1. I stress here that state socialist cities were *relatively* noncommodified, given the dominance of state ownership of land and property and the overall absence of a land market (Sýkora, 1994, 1999). Of course, this is not to deny the continued existence of privately held property in state socialist cities, particularly villas and single-family housing (in addition to private ownership of plots of land in rural areas, often connected to the continuance of subsistence food production). Equally, I stress the (re)commodification of land and property after 1989, which occurred through quite diverse processes. Central was the restitution of property to prestate socialist owners or their descendants (Marcuse, 1996, Struyk, 1996) as well as the privatization of property ownership that was constructed during state socialism, including apartments in the large housing estates.
2. See Gowan (1995), Smith (2002a), and Wedel (2000).
3. See also Sachs's (2000) and Åslund's (2000) replies to Wedel.
4. See Arnold (2004) and Wagstyl (2005).
5. See, *inter alia*, Mitchell (2003). Central to the reform effort have been dramatic reforms to social policy under the guidance of Minister Kaník, and tax reform under the guidance of Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister Mikloš.
6. The use of private cars is also related to the decline in provision of public transportation and its increasing cost across the region as previously subsidized public transport systems have been marketized.
7. The 21% at-risk figure is based on individuals falling below 60% of median income. The 27% at-risk figure is based on those falling below 70% of median income (see Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and the Family of the Slovak Republic, 2004).
8. There is quite considerable variation in in-work poverty among the new member states, ranging from 18% in Slovenia to 43% in Lithuania. The average for the old EU of 15 member states was 26% in 2001 (Bardone & Guio, 2005).
9. See Rose (2002) for a critical discussion of this binary.
10. See also Sik (1994) for a discussion of the role of the “informal economy” in such strategies.
11. Paid labor does remain an important component of household budgets (e.g., the recent Slovak microcensus indicates that 69% of household income is derived from wages), but it should be seen as only one part of a diverse economy of work relations in postsocialist cities (see Smith & Stenning, 2006).

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Modes of Governance, Modes of Resistance

CONTESTING NEOLIBERALISM IN CALGARY

BYRON MILLER

. . . the crisis of the city is linked not to rationality as such, definable from the philosophical tradition, it relates to explicit forms of rationality: state, bureaucratic, economic, or rather, “economistic,” economism being an ideology endowed with an apparatus.

—LEFEBVRE (1996: 128)

the *democratic* character of a regime is identifiable by its attitude towards the city, urban “liberties” and urban reality.

—LEFEBVRE (1996: 141)

Since the early 1990s the province of Alberta has been in the forefront of neoliberal policy development in Canada. In large part by default, but in part willingly, the City of Calgary has often followed suit. But Calgary’s standing as a hotbed of neoliberal policy experimentation has not gone unchallenged; many attempts to implement neoliberal policies in Calgary have been hotly contested, and some have been defeated. In recent years inadequate funding for public schools, inadequate funding for transportation infrastructure, and privatization of the municipal electrical utility have been stiffly resisted, while attempts to increase diversity and density in some inner-city neighborhoods, and to raise the minimum wage to combat homelessness, have found significant support.

The struggle against neoliberal urban policy—in Calgary and elsewhere—can only be understood in light of the changing modes of governance that are part and parcel of the neoliberal project. To understand the dynamics of resistance to neoliberal governance, we must first consider how neoliberal governance operates as a system of social action coordination. Attention to the micropolitics of neoliberal social action coordination reveals not only specific rationalities of governance but also spatial strategies of governance. The rationalities and spatialities of neoliberal governance are central to neoliberalism's effectiveness and intransigence, but they are also its Achilles' heel.

While there are many dimensions to and variations among neoliberal forms of governance, two common characteristics are paramount: (1) a shift away from communicative–democratic forms of social action coordination toward instrumental–strategic (market-based) forms of social action coordination and (2) a differential rescaling of social action coordination, generally involving the downloading of state functions and decision making to the municipal and submunicipal scales—for example, neighborhood, school district—while simultaneously precluding increases in municipal and submunicipal fiscal capacity necessary to meet additional responsibilities.

This still incomplete transition toward localized, limited-capacity, market-based governance has implications for the mobilization of resistance, creating both barriers and opportunities for campaigns and movements attempting to challenge neoliberal urban policy. On the one hand, instrumental–strategic governance foregrounds issues of individual self-interest that can give rise to broad resistance when specific policies are shown to have wide-ranging impacts across a citizenry. At the same time, resistance based on individual self-interest and single issues has little potential to sustain long-term mobilization around meaningful policy alternatives. On the other hand, downscaling decision making to the municipal scale and below brings decision making closer to the level of everyday life-world institutions such as schools and neighborhoods, has the potential to stimulate citizen participation. But a mismatch between the scales of everyday life-world experience and higher scales (provincial and national)—where sufficient fiscal capacity resides—often results in frustration and disengagement as local activists become locked in counterproductive zero-sum contests over limited local resources.

This chapter begins by analyzing the micropolitics of neoliberal governance, emphasizing the changing rationalities of governance and the differential rescaling of governmental decision making and fiscal capacity. These are then linked to macroprocesses driving the shift in rationalities of governance. Building upon this analysis, the substantive policies, institutions, and practices that characterize Alberta's neoliberal regime, including its

specific manifestations in Calgary, are discussed. As Harrison (2005) observes, no province is more responsible for bringing neoliberal governance to Canada than Alberta. Moreover, while many Canadian provinces adopted neoliberal policies subsequent to Alberta only to later reject them, Alberta has remained a bastion of neoliberalism. The Alberta case provides some clear insights into a particularly virulent strain of neoliberalism. The intractability of Alberta's neoliberalism notwithstanding, there have been many examples of resistance in Calgary, some successful. In the penultimate section, four of these campaigns and movements of resistance are considered, paying particular attention to their logics and spatialities of resistance. It is in these logics and spatialities that we find the barriers to, but also possibilities for, transcending neoliberal governance, the theme of the concluding section.

NEOLIBERALISM AND URBAN GOVERNANCE: RATIONALITIES

Neoliberalism is many things. Frequently traced to the decline of the Fordist capital-labor pact and the hollowing-out of the nation-state (Jessop, 1994; Peck & Tickell, 1994; Peck, 2004), neoliberalism can be linked to three general trends. First, there has been a reorganization of state responsibilities involving both the downloading of functions to local levels of the state—placing local governments in competition with one another for capital investment—and the uploading of regulatory functions to supranational institutions—removing national barriers to flows of capital investment and disinvestment. Second, there has been a shift in resource allocation institutions and praxis as formerly public functions have been increasingly privatized. Creeping privatization has changed the modes of decision making—with market-based models of social action coordination (rooted in instrumental and strategic rationality) replacing democratic deliberation (Rose, 1999). Not surprisingly, the outcomes of resource allocation decisions have changed as well, with public resources increasingly allocated to promote economic growth and subsidize private firms (Jonas & Wilson, 1999; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Third, there has been a triumph of market ideology: the notion that markets are the best, most efficient, and socially optimal means of allocating scarce resources in virtually all realms of life (Dean, 1999). This has been coupled with a decline of democratic ideology: the notion that active, informed citizens should allocate resources and establish rules based on collective communicative decision making. Increasingly, public debate and dialogue over key policy issues have been replaced by an instrumental-strategic form of governance emphasizing economic efficiency, individual responsibility, low taxes, and user fees. The ideal of the communicative

public citizen is being replaced by the notion of the instrumental and strategic private consumer (Habermas, 1984, 1987).

Keeping these three general trends in mind, recent analyses have stressed the diverse forms neoliberalism can take. Peck and Tickell (2002), for instance, distinguish the 'roll-back' neoliberalism of market deregulation and welfare state dismantlement dominant in the 1980s from the current "roll-out" neoliberalism of proactive economic management and authoritarian regulation. Brenner and Theodore (2002) stress neoliberalism's "contextual *embeddedness* . . . within national, regional, and local contexts defined by the legacies of inherited institutional frameworks, policy regimes, regulatory practices, and political struggles" (p. 351). An extensive literature clearly shows that neoliberalism is a contested mode of regulation, taking on different characteristics in different places (Wilson, 2004).

How neoliberalism functions as a mode of governance is not, however, well developed in the literature. A growing literature on governmentality (Rose, 1996, 1999; Dean, 1999; Uitermark, 2005; Swyngedouw, 2005) has begun to shed light on neoliberalism's microcircuits of power, but thus far this literature remains poorly integrated with the dominant regulationist literature. As a consequence, we have a good understanding of the structural and spatial transformations associated with neoliberal political economy but very little understanding of "how subjects and subjectivities are formed and how different modes of calculation emerge and become institutionalized" (Jessop & Sum, 2001: 97; cited in Uitermark, 2005). Exactly such "subjectivities" and "modes of calculation" are crucial to comprehending modes of resistance to neoliberalism, their successes and failures.

Following Foucault, government can be defined as the "conduct of conduct," a shifting assemblage of practices that coordinate social action. The Foucauldian governmentality literature directs us to consider "the techniques and practices, rationalities and forms of knowledge, and identities and agencies by which governing operates" (Dean, 1999: 29). Liberal forms of government, including neoliberalism, try to "work through the freedom or capacities of the governed. Liberal ways of governing thus often conceive the freedom of the governed as a technical means of securing the ends of government" (Dean, 1999: 15).

Under neoliberalism, a particular field of freedom is constructed based on a social ontology of the free subject, his or her interests, and choices. Markets become the ideal playing field for these "free" subjects. Indeed, as Dean (1999: 159) argues, "all variants of neo-liberalism not only assume the importance of the market; they essentialize it." Market norms, values, and rationality not only are seen as the optimal basis for governing traditional economic activity but also provide the preferred model for the resource allocation functions of the state, even for many traditionally noneconomic social activities. Neoliberal governance, then, requires a

wholesale shift in social action coordination involving culture, institutions, and economy. Neoliberalism's market-fundamentalist ethos is

at once conservative and radical. It is conservative in its revival and restoration of the values (or "virtues") and rules of conduct associated with . . . [spontaneous social] orders, particularly those of the market. And it is radical because . . . it multiplies and ramifies these values and rules into ever-new spheres including its own instruments and agencies.

. . . these rules and values have best been condensed into the cultural form of "enterprise" and "consumer." (Dean, 1999: 162, 164)

In the governmentality account, the market presumes particular rationalities of governance rooted in specific discursive fields. These discursive fields are characterized by "a shared vocabulary within which disputes can be organized, by ethical principles that can communicate with one another, by mutually intelligible explanatory logics, by commonly accepted facts, by significant agreement on key political problems" (Rose, 1999: 28). Cobbled together in an ad hoc fashion in geographically and historically specific contexts, discursive fields are derived from preexisting discourses, practices, and procedures. Foucault's own studies of governmentality show that one can "identify specific political rationalizations emerging in precise sites and at specific historical moments, and underpinned by coherent systems of thought, . . . one [can] also show how different kinds of calculations, strategies, and tactics [are] linked to each" (Rose, 1999: 24). Rationalities of governance and the discourses from which they derive are, according to the governmentality account, coherent but very much contingent phenomena, rooted in local and historically specific microcircuits of power. This genealogical view of the rationalities of governance has proven to be a very useful sensitizing device, yielding a wealth of richly detailed, illuminating case studies—but not without blind spots.

NEOLIBERALISM, URBAN GOVERNANCE, AND THE STATE

Because genealogies focus on microcircuits of power, typically to the exclusion of higher-order institutions and structural forces, they often suffer from two problems: (1) Rationalities that may be common across different social institutions are treated as if they were separate and function-specific, for example, rationalities of policing, rationalities of markets, rationalities of training, and (2) the role of macrocircuits of power, particularly the institutional and structural forces of the state and the economy, are downplayed or considered as simply the sum total of microcircuits of power.

Foucault's focus on microcircuits of power and his rejection of sovereign power represents a very useful corrective to economistic and state-centric notions of power that ignore the myriad ways in which mundane acts of everyday life are infused with power. Foucault saw power everywhere in every social system, both enabling and constraining action (Foucault, 1977, 1980). Building from this fundamental precept, Foucault conceived of the modern state as embedded in wide-ranging relations of power, not as a sovereign entity standing above them. Indeed, the Foucauldian metaphor of *capillary* power points to the importance of "the very extremities of the social body" (Driver, 1985: 437) rather than the consolidation of power at a central core. It is precisely these diffuse networks of power, as they intersect with the state, that governmentality is intended to capture.

Governmentality studies have demonstrated the self-organizing and self-governing capacities of diffuse social actors and, in particular, the ways in which governance has come to replace government (Swyngedouw, 2005). But Foucault's rejection of state-centered accounts of power has produced shortcomings of its own. As Driver (1985: 438) argues, Foucault

observes two elements which cannot be ignored by any analyst:

1. the way power relations are reflected or, in Poulantzas's (1978) terminology, *condensed* in the state apparatus;
2. the ways in which the various (conflicting) agencies of the state (parliament, bureaucracy, etc.) act through particular *strategies*.

Similarly, Uitermark (2005: 147) argues that the governmentality literature has a "rather voluntaristic view of the decision-making process because it fails to take full account of the importance of the properties of the institutional context in which authorities operate and which facilitate as well as constrain their actions."

In short, while diffuse power relations and the self-organizing activities of social actors are clearly important in both the exercise of authority and resistance to it, the state retains the capacity to allocate and authorize resources, influence symbolic orders and modes of discourse, normatively regulate society, facilitate, and coerce (Giddens, 1984; Tilly, 1990). This capacity cannot be reduced to the sum total of micropower relations. Rather, the state exercises "*clear priority* in some respects over all other organizations within substantial *territories*" (Tilly, cited in Steinmetz, 1999: 8; emphasis in original). The state, in other words, is embedded in wide-ranging social and economic relations but retains relative autonomy from them (Poulantzas, 1978; Jessop, 1990).¹ That the state remains a crucial locus of power under neoliberalism is evidenced by numerous social movements contesting the state's role in globalization, deregulation, economic redistri-

bution, environmental protection, gender relations, and human rights, just to name some of the most prominent state-focused struggles.

Although Foucauldian analyses largely downplay or ignore state-centered struggle, Rose points out that Foucault was himself quite inconsistent on the relationship between the state and governmentality. Foucault “at one point... suggested that one could identify a ‘triangle’ of sovereignty, discipline and governmentality” (Rose, 1999: 23). This provocative suggestion has not been adopted as a core theme in the governmentality literature, but Rose and others have identified the need to examine the dynamics of “translation”: how “... alignments are forged between the objectives of [central] authorities wishing to govern and the personal projects of those [local] organizations, groups, and individuals who are the subjects of government” (Rose, 1999: 48). While exploration of such translations can be conceived in terms of the coordination of micropowers, a more comprehensive approach should also pay close attention to “macropowers”—to systemic processes and institutional structures.

CRITICAL THEORY APPROACHES TO SOCIAL ACTION COORDINATION

Critical theory approaches—most prominently represented by the work of Habermas (e.g., 1984, 1987)—provide a systems-focused perspective on social action coordination, emphasizing the changing relationship between structure and agency as it evolves over time. While Habermas’s work has rarely been applied to the analysis of neoliberal governance, it provides a number of concepts that may be helpful in attempting to bridge micro-power and systemic power perspectives.²

A crucial distinction in Habermas’s approach to social action coordination pertains to the difference between “social integration” and “system integration”:

... [social integration] attaches to action orientations, while [system integration] reaches right through them. In one case the action system is integrated through consensus, whether normatively guaranteed or communicatively achieved; in the other case it is integrated through the nonnormative steering of individual decisions not subjectively coordinated. (Habermas, 1987: 150)

Habermas’s framework highlights the difference between action oriented to understanding (i.e., communicatively rational action that, under ideal circumstances, forms the basis of democratic praxis) and action oriented to “success” (i.e., instrumentally and strategically rational action taken to

maintain material production). In this schema, communicative action is the basis of social action coordination in the “lifeworld”—the “symbolic space of collectively shared background convictions within which cultural traditions, social integration, and normative structures (values and institutions) are reproduced and transformed through an ongoing interpretive process . . . ” (Miller, 1992: 26). The “system”—the space of material production and reproduction—is coordinated on a different basis: instrumental action (following technical rules and oriented toward manipulation of material objects, including people) and strategic action (following the rules of rational choice and oriented toward influencing a rational opponent).

Habermas’s notions of system and lifeworld have been subject to a number of critiques, most related to the untenable notion that different forms of action can be neatly separated into different “spheres.” Clearly, various forms of social and nonsocial action are intertwined in virtually all realms of human existence, a fact clearly demonstrated in the governmentality literature, as Habermas (1991) has long conceded. More important than the characteristics of abstract spheres, however, are the forms of action coordination that Habermas identifies and, in particular, the shift in forms of action coordination that he observes. Commonly known as the “colonization of the lifeworld,” Habermas posits an ongoing process of “monetization” and “bureaucratization” under late capitalism. Under monetization, economic relations are extended deeper and deeper into everyday life as previously noncommodified social activities become commodified and subject to market forces. Under bureaucratization, state institutions intrude deeper and deeper into everyday life as social activities become more closely surveilled and regulated:

As the private sphere is undermined and eroded by the economic system, so is the public sphere by the administrative system. The bureaucratic disempowering and dessication of spontaneous processes of opinion and will formation expands the scope for mobilizing mass loyalty and makes it easier to decouple political decisions from concrete, identity-forming contexts of life. (Habermas, 1984: xxxii)

While all societies coordinate social action through some combination of communicative, instrumental, and strategic action, lifeworld colonization processes shift the mix away from communicative forms. Communicative action, oriented toward democratic consensus seeking on matters of collective well-being, is increasingly replaced by self-interest-oriented instrumental and strategic action. The model of the communicative citizen, with broad social obligations and responsibilities, is undermined and displaced by that of the instrumental and strategic self-interested consumer (Figure 11.1).

Neoliberal projects to rationalize society in the image of the market are, in essence, projects of lifeworld colonization. Neoliberalism's overriding, if selectively implemented, market fundamentalism entails the dismantling or hollowing-out of institutions of democratic deliberation and governance and their replacement by market-based institutions, bringing a concomitant shift in modes of social action coordination.

Habermas argues that such colonization can be attributed to the "problems of system integration (crises of capital accumulation) [and] problems of social integration (class struggle)" (McCarthy, 1984: xxxiii). Crucially, Habermas sees these problems as interrelated. McCarthy (1984: xxxiii) explains:

. . . the economy cannot be treated as a closed system. . . . It is essentially interconnected with an administrative subsystem that fulfills market-complementing and market-replacing functions. Problems arising in the process of capital accumulation can be transferred to the political system and dealt with administratively; conversely, problems arising in the political sphere can be dealt with through the distribution of economically produced values.

A critical systems approach, in short, points to underlying systemic imperatives driving creeping commodification and bureaucratization rather than simply the self-organization and reorganization of diffuse power relations. Many other political economists have come to similar conclusions. Harvey (2003), most notably, has argued that "accumulation by dispossession" constitutes an essential mechanism of neoliberalism. Maintaining accumulation in the face of stagnant demand depends on access to inexpensive inputs. In a clear parallel to Habermas's "colonization of the lifeworld," Harvey argues that inexpensive inputs may be acquired through the conversion of collective property rights to private property rights, the commodification of previously noncommodified labor, the suppression of noncommodified production and consumption relations, the enclosure and privatization of the commons, and a variety of other forms of public asset appropriation



FIGURE 11.1. Modes of social action coordination.

(Harvey, 2003: 145–147). Like Habermas, Harvey sees these measures as “vitally contingent upon the stance of the state” (Harvey, 2003: 145).

HABERMAS AND HARVEY ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

While the neoliberal constellation of power relations can be understood as state-led responses to the accumulation crises of capitalism, Habermas and Harvey have different perspectives on the dilemmas of progressive political response. Harvey (1997) identifies the fragmentation of resistance movements as the key barrier to a unified and effective socialist alternative. He takes up Raymond Williams’s notion of “militant particularisms,” arguing that militant local struggles must be linked to wider, more universal, class-based struggles. Harvey decries the “single-minded concentration of much of the Marxist- and communist-inspired left on proletarian struggles to the exclusion of all else [as] a fatal mistake” (2003: 171) but criticizes the diversity of place- and identity-based resistance movements as incoherent and wracked with internal contradictions (Harvey, 2000). For Harvey, the fundamental issue of resistance politics is identifying the underlying class content in a wide range of issues, thereby providing the foundation for a more universal socialist resistance politics. His attempt to overcome the fragmentation of numerous resistance movements and to build a politics capable of bridging political activity across a variety of issues and scales is clearly a crucial project. Yet, his analysis is weakened by the assumption that class-based material interests are the only legitimate basis for a unified politics of resistance and that failure to pursue a common class politics represents, essentially, a form of false consciousness.

The diversity of movements that so exasperates Harvey comes as no surprise to Habermas, who since the early 1980s has argued that much of the potential for emancipation and resistance under late capitalism will occur along the “seams between the system and the lifeworld.” Many conflicts will arise

. . . in domains of cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization; they are carried out in subinstitutional—or at least extraparlimentary—forms of protest; and the underlying deficits reflect a reification of communically structured domains of action that will not respond to the media of money and power. The issue is not primarily one of compensations that the welfare state can provide, but of defending and restoring endangered ways of life. In short, the new conflicts are not ignited by distribution problems but by questions having to do with the grammar of forms of life. (Habermas, 1987: 392)

Habermas is not arguing that economic redistribution has ceased to be a significant source of conflict.

If we take the view that the growth of the economic-administrative complex sets off processes of erosion in the lifeworld, then we would expect old [redistributional] conflicts to be overlaid with new ones. A line of conflict forms between, on the one hand, a center composed of strata *directly* involved in the production process and . . . on the other hand, a periphery composed of variegated groups that are lumped together . . . (Habermas, 1987: 392)

Habermas clearly sees a wide variety of social movements arising—not all progressive or emancipatory—as a result of changing system dynamics, that is, the colonization of the lifeworld. Indeed, many contemporary movements can be characterized as struggles for recognition (struggles to gain a meaningful voice in social discourse and public policy) rather than redistribution (Honneth, 1996; Young, 2002). Yet, recognition has implications for redistribution, so a great many movements are concerned with both (Fraser, 1997).³

The core implication of Habermas's analysis, contra Harvey, is that system dynamics—lifeworld colonization—are producing grievances that relate to cultural integrity and social integration. Conflict over distributional issues remains important, but the processes that erode lifeworlds—privatization, commodification, bureaucratization—are experienced as assaults on communal ways of life and an erosion of collective self-determination. As a consequence, a variety of social movements have arisen focusing on the defense of particular lifeworld traditions, as well as new movements attempting to carve out new realms of self-determination.

THE STATE, CULTURE, AND BEHAVIOR

Beyond illuminating the forces underlying changing social movement grievances, Habermas's work has important implications for understanding the changing basis of collective action itself. As we have seen, neoliberal governance relies heavily on instrumental and strategic forms of social action coordination, modeled on the market.⁴ The promotion of a hegemonic market discourse centered on competition, individual achievement, economic efficiency, productivity, growth, opportunity, and merit serves to socialize individuals into individualistic and acquisitive values and action orientations. As Gough (2002: 405) observes, "Neoliberalism poses itself as the end of the social. It seeks to unshackle social actors from social and politi-

cal constraints, to enable the firm to freely maximize its profits and the individual his or her 'utility.' ”

The establishment of a hegemonic market culture, however, requires more than a discursive promotion of particular values. Hegemony also entails the “sedimentation of these values and interests in everyday practices and institutional arrangements” (Ley, 2000: 333). To maintain the tacit social consensus that hegemony implies, everyday practices and institutional arrangements must be seen as relatively functional and effective, at least in comparison to conceivable alternatives. Significantly, the cultural values and practices that form the core of any hegemonic project do not arise in isolation from the state. As Tilly (1999) reminds us,

. . . [state] structure and culture intertwine. . . . [The] picture is endlessly relational. To integrate culture into our analyses of state-linked processes . . . [we must specify] (1) processes producing links among interacting states of consciousness, simultaneous or successive, in the same individual or connected individuals, (2) mechanisms by which states of consciousness produce their supposed effects in individual action, social interaction, social process, or social structure, and 3) mechanisms of change in relevant constraints and states of consciousness (Tilly, 1999: 409).

A core regulatory mechanism of neoliberalism is the structuring of state institutions to facilitate the self-interested instrumental and strategic action of the individual or “client” and to impede the socially-oriented communicative action of the citizen.⁵

Individualism and self-interested behavior are, of course, nothing new. Over 30 years ago, Gintis (1972) observed: “The choice-set of feasible state policy instruments [in advanced capitalist societies] is severely limited. Specifically, it does not include options demanded by citizen sovereignty . . . or it renders the cost of these options exorbitantly high and/or inequitably distributed . . . ” (Gintis, 1972: 272). In his view, citizens are alienated from the state institutions that, in a genuinely democratic society, would represent their collective will.⁶ Given this deficit of citizen sovereignty, “People emphasize consumption . . . because it’s the best thing going, and it is the area over which they have the greatest degree of control. . . . It is clear in this model why the individual ‘votes’ for higher disposable income rather than the provision of social services” (Gintis, 1972: 274).

Neoliberalism has not changed the conditions or processes Gintis addresses, but has changed their extent. It is, at its core, a deepening of capitalist social relations. As lifeworld colonization proceeds, social action coordination is increasingly based in instrumental and strategic action, while opportunities for communicative action are increasingly circumscribed. Perhaps most disturbingly, people learn that courses of action that follow

the market “rules of the game” are more likely to be effective than those that challenge them. Neoliberal organizational and political opportunity structures shape experiences of efficacy, reinforcing individualistic self-interested behavior (see Miller, 2000: 52–66). Under such circumstances, political mobilization is likely to take two basic forms: (1) resistance to colonization processes, as activists attempt to reclaim or stake out new spaces of democratic governance; and (2) acceptance of and acquiescence to the neoliberal “rules of the game,” with political action largely limited to support for measures that advance individual self-interest and purchasing power.

LIMITED-CAPACITY URBAN GOVERNANCE: INTERSPATIAL COMPETITION AND MISMATCHED RESCALING

Issues of efficacy of political action, moreover, must be considered in light of changes in the capacity of state institutions to address citizens’ concerns. A central theme of much of the regulation literature, as well as much of the urban politics literature, concerns the effects of state rescaling, economic globalization, and the breakdown of the Keynesian welfare state on the capacity of state institutions to effectively carry out crucial governance functions. Peck and Tickell (1994: 281), for instance, have argued that “as the financial system has internationalized, as production and trade have globalized and as transnational corporations have progressively extended their reach, localities have been left with precious little bargaining power.” This decline in state capacity, particularly at the local level, derives from the supralocal deregulation of competition, pitting locality against locality in a struggle to attract investment. This deregulated competitive environment has given rise to urban entrepreneurialism, with local states shifting public spending away from collective consumption and toward enticements to mobile capital (Peterson, 1981; Harvey, 1989). The structural imperative to orient urban public policy toward capital accumulation may be overstated, however (Leitner, 1990; Stone, 1993; Jonas & Wilson, 1999). The local dependence of many fractions of capital calls into question the notion of wide-ranging capital mobility, and in turn the superior bargaining position of capital (Cox, 1993, 1995, 1997). Nonetheless, the combination of supralocal deregulation and capital mobility—real or strategically misrepresented—has provided the rationale behind much of neoliberal urban governance, including the notion of limited-capacity urban governance.

The rescaling of formal state powers is often as important as economic deregulation in limiting local state governance capacity. The uploading of key (formerly) national regulatory functions to democratically unaccountable global regulatory agencies has been accompanied by the downloading

of economic development and social welfare provision functions to local states (Peck & Tickell, 1994). This rescaling has produced new geometries of power, with local states taking on a variety of new responsibilities (Swyngedouw, 1997). In this context, cities have become “institutional laboratories for a variety of neoliberal policy experiments from place-marketing, enterprise and empowerment zones, local tax abatements, urban development corporations, public–private partnerships, and new forms of local boosterism to workfare policies, property-development schemes, business-incubator projects, new strategies of social control, policing, and surveillance, and a host of other institutional modifications within the local and regional state apparatus” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002: 368). From the standpoint of creating a secure, sustainable, and equitable social and ecological order, these experiments have met with very limited success (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 1994, 2002). The failure of local states to establish a coherent and effective regulatory order is usually attributed to the policy-distorting effects of interspatial competition (Leitner & Sheppard, 1998). Undoubtedly, interspatial competition skews local policy-making processes toward a variety of ineffective forms of urban entrepreneurialism. But another, often overlooked, component of state rescaling also contributes significantly to the neoliberal regulatory disorder: mismatched rescaling.

One of the ostensible merits of downloading functions to local states is that policymaking is brought closer to the scale of everyday lived experience, expanding the potential for responsive democratic decision making. Following the principle of subsidiarity, decision making is devolved to the lowest level at which policy issues can be effectively addressed. The appeal of such a principle is hard to deny.⁷ Less appealing under neoliberalism, however, is that devolution of formal decision-making processes is usually unaccompanied by an increase in resources required to meet expanded local responsibilities. This mismatched rescaling of decision-making processes, on the one hand, and resource allocation capacities, on the other, renders local states incapable of effectively addressing many of their new responsibilities.⁸ In atypical cases where the rescaling of responsibilities is congruent with the resources required to carry out responsibilities, citizens may feel empowered, stimulating participation in what are seen to be meaningful governance decisions. But where substantial incongruities between formal decision-making processes and required resources exist, local politics may come to be seen as meaningless, to be avoided whenever possible. In short, the construction of “hollow” local states with little capacity to command resources for public purposes may stem from either the distorting influence of deregulated interspatial competition or mismatched rescaling, or both.

FORMS OF RESISTANCE TO NEOLIBERAL URBAN POLICY

Keeping in mind both the continuum of modes of social action coordination (see Figure 11.1) and the continuum of forms of state rescaling, it is possible to construct a typology of forms of resistance to neoliberal urban policy (see Figure 11.2).⁹ When shifts in modes of social action coordination favor self-interested individualistic instrumental and strategic action, prospects for organized resistance may appear bleak. Yet such shifts are never absolute, and they give rise to specific forms of resistance. To the extent that citizens are socialized and conditioned to act as consumers, resistance movements increasingly take on the form of consumers' and taxpayers' campaigns. When the economic pain of neoliberalism is broadly distributed across a population—as it tends to be in the Canadian context, where most major public programs (health, education, transportation infrastructure, utility regulation) operate at the provincial level—mobilizing substantial numbers of people around specific broadly felt economic hardships is quite possible.¹⁰ There is a specific gestalt to such resistance—taking the form of campaigns rather than movements. They tend to be one-off actions based in the logic of the consumer, rarely building lasting communities or ongoing movements. Participation tends to take the form of low-level involvement (e.g., signing a petition), rarely involves meeting with others,

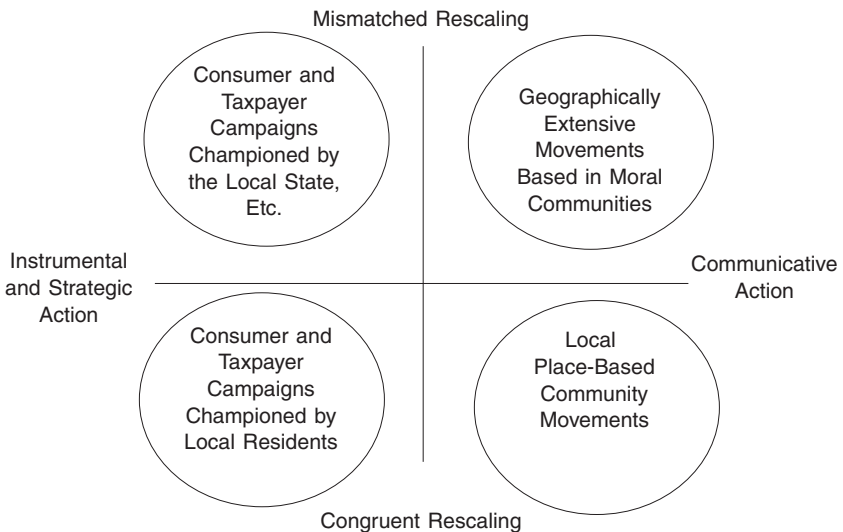


FIGURE 11.2. Resistance to neoliberal urban policy, by mode of social action coordination and congruence of state rescaling.

entails no collective identity formation other than that of the self-interested consumer, and disappears with the resolution of the issue. Depending upon the congruence of rescaling of decision-making processes and resource allocation capacities, such campaigns may be championed by local residents (when the local state has the capacity to address the issue at hand), or they may be championed by the local state itself (when the local state must seek expanded resource allocation capacity from higher levels of the state). In the latter instance, local states are most likely to possess the organizational resources needed to challenge higher levels of the state, although other well-established business and civic organizations may also possess the requisite organizational resources.

Even under highly neoliberal urban governance, however, communicative action never completely disappears. Communicative action plays an especially important role in noncommodified forms of everyday interaction. In place-based communities where a vibrant public realm creates more opportunities for noncommodified interaction, it may be easier to build a general consensus around issues of common community concern.¹¹ Consensus, combined with place-based collective identity, may provide the basis for strong but highly localized movements focused on local community issues. When such movements can draw on local state resources sufficient to address the issues of concern, members may experience a degree of efficacy that may sustain the movement over a considerable period of time. However, when local states lack the capacity to address citizens' concerns, locally-based movements may prove very difficult to sustain. Instead, activists who share a strong commitment to particular moral values may build more geographically extensive movements at scales where sufficient resources can be found. Such movements rely to a greater degree on preexisting moral commitments and to a lesser degree on everyday interaction and place-based identity.

THE CONTEXT OF RESISTANCE: VIRULENT NEOLIBERALISM IN ALBERTA AND CALGARY

To understand specific instances of resistance to neoliberal urban policy in Calgary, a clear picture of Alberta's neoliberal regime is required. When Canada began its tepid turn toward neoliberalism, Alberta led the way.¹² Proto-neoliberal policies have long been part of the Alberta scene, but the province's full-fledged turn toward roll-back neoliberalism did not begin until the recession of early 1980s. Crises in both the world economy and the oil sector—Alberta's largest industrial sector—produced growing budget deficits, leading the government of Tory (Progressive Conservative) Premier Don Getty to make substantial, but not draconian, cuts in social

spending. By the early 1990s per-capita provincial spending had declined by 15% in real terms, placing Alberta below the Canadian national average (Taft, 1997). Despite the Getty cuts, provincial debt continued to grow.

In the context of a growing fiscal crisis, internal party challenger and former Calgary mayor Ralph Klein was elected premier in 1993 on a platform of cutting Alberta's "out-of-control" spending. Under the Klein regime the roll-back of the modest Alberta welfare state began in earnest. By 1995 Klein's Tories had cut almost \$2 billion in annual provincial spending, eliminated 4,500 civil service jobs, imposed a 5% pay cut on public sector workers (teachers, professors, nurses, etc.), raised healthcare premiums, de-insured several medical procedures, closed four inner-city hospitals in Calgary, eliminated 43% of all nursing positions, and cut funding for public kindergartens in half. Per capita school funding dropped to 14% below the national average, and almost half the budget for municipal affairs was slashed, including provincial programs for municipal roads, transit, and social housing (Taft, 1997). By 1996 Alberta had the most poorly supported public programs in Canada. A shift to user fees as a means of funding public services produced a 160% increase in university tuition fees from 1991/92 to 2001/02 (the highest percentage increase in Canada), while the various fees parents pay annually toward their child's public education grew to several hundred dollars.

The Alberta Tories' roll-back neoliberalism received considerable attention across Canada and ultimately established the model for neoliberal public policy in other Canadian provinces. Less well known was the fact that Alberta Tory governments had been practicing roll-out neoliberalism since the early 1970s. Every year since 1976 the province has spent more on industrial development subsidies than it has collected in corporate taxes. From 1986 to 1995 Alberta spent over \$20 billion in subsidies to the private sector,¹³ by far the most of any Canadian province and three times as much as it spent on income support for the poor. Perhaps most shocking, from 1986/87 to 1992/93 "*the corporate sector in Alberta was a net drain on the provincial taxpayer of \$5.3 billion . . . the very period Alberta's debt increased so rapidly*" (Taft, 1997: 48; emphasis in original). Corporate welfare, rather than social spending, was the primary cause of Alberta's fiscal crisis.

By 1995 a combination of Tory social spending cuts and, more significantly, rising global oil and gas prices began producing provincial budget surpluses. By 2005 all provincial debt was eliminated. For the same year the province's surplus is estimated to exceed \$7 billion. Parallel to rising budget surpluses, provincial spending began to rise in 1996/97. By 2003/04, spending had increased by more than 50% (Lisac, 2004), but much of the increase went to targeted programs rather than traditional areas of social spending. Electricity deregulation, for instance, turned out to be an

economic disaster for consumers; as a consequence, the provincial government spent over \$2 billion in the form of electricity rebates to mollify voters before the 2001 election. Similarly in 2001, rather than use growing revenues to improve the quality of the education, healthcare, social housing, or public transit systems, Alberta eliminated its progressive provincial income tax, replacing it with a 10% flat tax. The flat tax is estimated to have cost the province over \$1.1 billion in revenues in 2001 alone. It has also resulted in a net redistribution of the tax burden toward the middle class. In the same vein, in 2005 Premier Klein decided to distribute over \$1 billion of the provincial surplus among Albertans in the form "prosperity bonuses" (tax rebate checks) rather than invest those revenues in social or environmental programs.¹⁴

The policies of the provincial Tories have been especially hard on Alberta's cities which, like most Canadian cities, lack the constitutional authority to expand their revenue streams in significant ways. The downloading of responsibilities (such as social housing and transportation infrastructure) has resulted in real municipal fiscal crises. Increased municipal responsibilities are matched neither by local tax increases nor provincial transfer payments. Provincial transfers to municipalities, for instance, stood at 21.9% of total Alberta municipal revenues in 1988; they dropped to 15.9% by 2001, despite increased municipal responsibilities (Lisac, 2004). Municipalities have gained one relatively small new revenue stream: In 2002 the province began returning 5 cents of the 9 cent per liter gas tax to the municipalities where it is collected. This amounts to approximately \$90 million annually for Calgary for infrastructure purposes: a small sum in light of years of deferred infrastructure investment and maintenance. In contrast, the education portion of municipal property tax, which goes to the province, totals approximately \$1 billion annually province-wide. It could readily be "vacated" by the province in light of its substantial surpluses, in turn allowing municipalities to collect additional property tax revenue; to date, this has not occurred. In short, new responsibilities have been downloaded to cities, but their capacity to address those responsibilities has changed little.

Insufficient local state capacity is only half the story of Alberta's neoliberalism, and probably not the worst half. More disturbing have been the provincial government's attacks on a range of democratic institutions. While the rhetoric of the provincial Tories stresses grassroots democracy and efficient management, several democratic bodies were formally abolished or eviscerated when they adopted policies at odds with the provincial government.¹⁵ More common than direct attacks on democratic institutions is the use of resource authorization and allocation powers to bring local governance bodies into line with provincial policy. As Vivone explains, municipalities, school boards, and other institutions have

been slapped around for years [with little or no response. Why such muted response?] When the question was raised with school trustees, the answer was downcast eyes and a shrug. When the question was raised with municipal councilors, the answer was more expressive—fear that the provincial government will “get even” with organizations that dare criticize it in public. How will they get even? Meetings with MLAs [members of the Legislative Assembly] are tougher to get, letters get lost, requests aren’t heard, grant money takes longer to arrive, and information channels break down. Conservative MLAs aren’t shy about it; groups that complain in public won’t get a sympathetic ear. (Vivone, cited in Lisac, 2005: 62)

Similarly, Soron (2005: 79) observes that “the Klein government has continually taken power, rights, and resources away from opposition parties, municipalities, cooperatives, school boards, universities and colleges, student unions, health boards, trade unions, nongovernmental organizations, and other groups, while centralizing political authority in its own hands.” Like many variants elsewhere, Alberta’s neoliberalism is steeped in the rhetoric of individuals freely pursuing their interests. But when it comes to democratic institutions, it can be quite illiberal. The right of free citizens to participate in *open and effective* democratic governance is highly constrained. Indeed, many of the provincial government’s policies could only be implemented in a “hollow” democracy. Berdahl (2004), for instance, shows that while the Klein government consistently stresses the “need” for more tax cuts, Albertans rank them only 10th on their list of policy priorities, well below improving healthcare and education, reducing poverty, and protecting the environment. In an environment of such limited citizen sovereignty, what forms of resistance to neoliberal urban policy might arise?

MODES OF RESISTANCE TO NEOLIBERAL URBAN POLICY IN CALGARY

Not surprisingly, broad citizen participation in Alberta’s democratic institutions has been steadily dropping. But there have been several notable instances of resistance to neoliberal urban policy in Calgary, taking a variety of forms (see Figure 11.3).¹⁶ Among the most compelling instances of resistance is the Beltline Initiative: a community planning initiative based in the Beltline neighborhood immediately south of Calgary’s downtown. Long neglected by a city planning apparatus focused on rapid suburban growth, the Beltline is one of Calgary’s most populous, dense, and socially and economically diverse neighborhoods. To counteract slow decline, in 2002 a group of community activists began developing a revitalization plan that eventually became known as the “Blueprint for the Beltline.” After holding a



FIGURE 11.3. Resistance to neoliberal urban policy in Calgary, by mode of social action coordination and congruence of state rescaling.

number of public hearings to discuss and build support for the plan, community activists successfully pressured City Hall to begin a full-fledged planning update for the neighborhood, generally following the Blueprint's recommendations. The Blueprint calls for a number of progressive measures: a near-doubling of density, increasing affordable housing, expanding and improving public space, and improving pedestrian access. The Beltline Initiative is based on a communicative process that has produced general consensus around issues of collective well-being. This ongoing community movement, moreover, has effectively engaged the local state on issues it has the capacity to address.

Another instance of successful resistance is represented by the Save ENMAX Campaign. In the summer of 2001, as the provincial government pushed electricity deregulation, Calgary City Council began to seriously consider the sale of its electrical utility, ENMAX. The provincial government considered the large electrical utilities owned by the cities of Calgary and Edmonton to be major impediments to its deregulation and privatization initiatives. As Lisac (2005: 69) summarizes, "The province relentlessly campaigned to paint the city utilities as bad actors in the marketplace, and to hedge them in with regulations that tended to create pressure on the cities to sell them to private investors." In the more volatile economic environment created by deregulation, a majority of aldermen endorsed the sale of ENMAX in a closed-door city council meeting. The lack of public con-

sultation met with widespread public condemnation. Shortly thereafter the Save ENMAX Coalition was founded, arguing that a public utility provides greater stability, accountability, and protection from high prices than would a private utility. It called for the city council to postpone the decision on ENMAX's sale until after the fall municipal election and after a strong showing of public support the council relented. The mayoral election was won by Dave Bronconnier, who endorsed the postponement of the ENMAX decision and opposed the utility's sale. Shortly after taking office the new council decided not to sell the utility. Like the Beltline Initiative, the Save ENMAX campaign was targeted at the local state, focusing on an issue that there was local capacity to address. But the mode of social action coordination was entirely different. Rather than relying on ongoing communicative action, the Save ENMAX campaign primarily appealed to individual self-interest: to voters primarily as consumers, who chose not to "buy." The irony of the Save ENMAX campaign is that it utilized the market logic of neoliberalism to defeat a major neoliberal policy initiative. Yet, also like a consumer purchase, the campaign was a one-time act, catalyzing no legacy of ongoing resistance.

The City of Calgary's campaign to recapture a 5-cent share of the province's 9-cent per liter gasoline tax represents another form of resistance to neoliberal budget cuts, based largely in instrumental and strategic action. The campaign, begun in the late 1990s and finally won in 2002, addressed a purely fiscal issue. Carried out entirely by City officials, the gas tax campaign was motivated by both the City's fiscal crisis and the desire to slow rapidly rising property taxes. The logic of the gas tax campaign differed from Save ENMAX in an important respect: The City had the capacity to resolve the ENMAX issue but not to independently create a new revenue stream. The fiscal crisis that the gas tax campaign was intended to partially address originated with the province's mismatched rescaling (downloading responsibilities without resources) in the 1990s. This ongoing crisis can only be resolved through direct engagement with the provincial government, that is, the city must try to change the policies of a higher level of the state. While the City is one of the very few entities with the organizational resources to challenge the province, it does so from a highly asymmetrical and inferior position. Indeed, while the City's fiscal situation has improved somewhat, Mayor Bronconnier argues that Calgarians are still "being asked to pay more . . . local taxes when their provincial tax account is overflowing with billions of dollars of surplus [and] the federal government's tax account is overflowing with billions of dollars of surplus . . ." (Derworiz, 2005: B1).

Finally, a variety of issues may be understood primarily in moral terms. When the origins of these issues extend well beyond particular municipalities, they must be addressed at higher scales. Implementing a higher

minimum or living wage and expanding the supply of affordable housing are two crucial antipoverty measures that, in Alberta, require provincial action. Broad civic umbrella organizations such as Vibrant Communities Calgary and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association have played vital roles in promoting such measures. Indeed, they have achieved a degree of success, as evidenced by the province's recent decision to raise the minimum wage (lowest in Canada) from \$5.90 to \$7 per hour (approximately the Canadian average). The antipoverty movement has little relationship to self-interest and, because it is based on shared moral values, tends to be a more durable movement.

CONCLUSIONS: LESSONS FOR RESISTANCE

Neoliberalism is, essentially, a form of lifeworld colonization in which democratic forms of social action coordination, rooted in communicative action, are undermined and replaced by market forms of social action coordination, rooted in instrumental and strategic action. In Alberta neoliberalism has been characterized by massive public spending cuts, heavy subsidies to private industry, mismatched rescaling of state responsibilities and resource allocation capacities, evisceration of a variety of democratic institutions, and a general shift away from democratic modes of social action coordination. Instead of engaged public *citizens* bound up in relations of mutual obligation, Albertans are expected to be smart, self-interested, individualistic *consumers*.

Under such conditions, Alberta's neoliberalism might be expected to be highly resistant to resistance. In many respects it is, and yet resistance occurs in a variety of forms. Some forms utilize neoliberalism's own logic, appealing to individual self-interest. While such campaigns can effectively block specific neoliberal policy initiatives, they do nothing to create meaningful alternatives to neoliberalism. Longer-lasting and generally more effective resistance springs from place-based and moral communities in which opportunities for communicative action and consensus building abound.

The expansion of genuinely democratic institutions is a necessity if socially and ecologically sustainable alternatives to neoliberalism are to take hold. If neoliberalism proceeds through the dismantling of democratic institutions and democratic forms of decision making, its antidote must be based on a radical expansion of democracy. This expansion cannot be separated from scalar and resource issues. Institutions of democratic governance must be constructed at scales appropriate to the issues at hand and directly tied to mechanisms of resource allocation and authorization. Otherwise, democratic institutions are simply rendered hollow.

Mirroring the downloading of governance functions to municipalities, many movements and campaigns resisting neoliberal urban policy focus on the local state, where policy decisions are increasingly made and where influence can more readily be exerted. But causal processes often operate at broader scales; the fiscal capacity required to address crucial issues may also lie at broader scales. Disjunctures between scales of systemic processes and fiscal resources, on the one hand, and scales of mobilization, on the other, pose a thorny problem. A major challenge facing activists is the construction of geographically extensive multilocal networks that allow the rescaling of resistance, as needed.

What are the appropriate scales of democratic governance? There is no easy answer to this question. Congruence must exist between democratic institutions and the resources required to carry out their decisions. In some cases governance can be highly localized, for example, when resources are locally available and capital is locally dependent. In other cases, when resource needs exceed what is locally available or where capital is highly mobile, governance institutions spanning broad territories may be required. Ultimately, the nature of alternatives to neoliberalism must be determined by resistance movements themselves as they work to construct new forms and spaces of democratic governance.

NOTES

1. Put somewhat differently, attention to capillary power should not preclude attention to “arterial” power. Indeed, attention to both is required if we are to understand neoliberal governance.
2. While the Foucauldian governmentality literature and the Habermasian critical theory literature rarely engage each other, they are in many ways complementary. The former takes a genealogical perspective on substantive processes in all their messiness and specificity but, lacking a systemic perspective, tends to reduce those processes to agency and historical contingency. The latter, beginning from a neo-Marxian analysis of capitalist accumulation, provides a systemic perspective as well as precise analytical concepts, but often operates at a high level of abstraction that pays insufficient attention to the complexity and variability of substantive processes. Both see governance and social action coordination as indeterminate fields of social struggle, with Foucauldians focusing on everyday acts of resistance and compliance and Habermasians focusing on antisystemic movements seeking to defend and advance lifeworld (communicative) institutions. A key task in this analysis of neoliberal governance is getting these two literatures to speak to each other.
3. Struggles for recognition demand procedural justice rather than simply distributive justice.
4. While neoliberal governance aims, first and foremost, at restoring the profit-

ability of firms and mitigating the accumulation crises of capitalism, it is in equal measure a project of social and political regulation.

5. Any regulatory project based on the ideal of the “free” self-interested individual must minimize the scope of democratically determined constraints on, and obligations of, that individual.
6. “In a genuinely democratic society—one in which citizens were sovereign—the state would: First, . . . be *responsive* in the sense that it must reflect some democratic aggregation of individual preferences. Second, . . . be *powerful* vis-à-vis the private economy: the choice-set of feasible policies must be sufficiently wide to embrace the desired outcomes. . . . Third, . . . be an *efficient and equitable instrument* in implementing these outcomes” (Gintis, 1972: 269; emphasis in original). Gintis argues that none of these conditions substantially obtains in late capitalist societies.
7. The exception is when regulatory functions that are more appropriately carried out at higher scales become overly localized, reinforcing inequality and exacerbating uneven development.
8. Not surprisingly, the devolution process is almost always driven by higher levels of the state, with little if any consultation with local state institutions.
9. This typology should be considered a heuristic device only. Real-world movements and campaigns resisting neoliberal urban policy will often combine characteristics of these “ideal” types, as well as characteristics not considered here.
10. Conversely, when hardship is concentrated among minority populations and/or spatially segregated communities, broad-based mobilization may be extremely difficult.
11. Such communities tend to be located in urban rather than suburban areas. The reasons localized community empowerment movements tend to be concentrated in urban areas remains an open question but may well be traceable to greater opportunities for communicative action and greater benefits associated with collective consumption in urban areas. For a concise review, see Walks (2004: 272–275).
12. Compared to Great Britain, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia, Canada turned to neoliberal governance relatively late.
13. More than two-thirds of these subsidies have gone to the energy and agricultural sectors (Taft, 1997).
14. The “prosperity bonus” plan met with a very lukewarm reception. As a result, the provincial government spent additional taxpayer dollars on an advertising campaign that sought to convince Albertans that the bonuses were a good idea.
15. Examples include the assertion of provincial power over the appointment of district superintendents of education, the elimination of elections for regional health authorities, the firing of the medical officer of health at a regional health authority after he publicly criticized the Klein government’s opposition to the Kyoto accord, and the abolition of the province’s regional planning commissions.
16. While some modes of resistance do not readily fit into the heuristic framework illustrated in Figure 11.3.

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Closed Borders, Open Markets

IMMIGRANT DAY LABORERS' STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC RIGHTS

NIK THEODORE

*E*very morning, in cities throughout the United States, large numbers of men gather on street corners, in parking lots of home improvement stores, and in public spaces to search for work. These job seekers, the majority of whom are undocumented immigrants, are day laborers employed by nonunion construction contractors, landscaping companies, homeowners, and small businesses looking for no-strings-attached workers to complete manual labor for low pay. The day labor site is a spot market where workers jostle with one another for job opportunities, negotiating wages in a matter of seconds with employers who set the terms of employment and must be trusted to make good on them. Given that day laborers inhabit a zone within the labor market that lies largely beyond the reach of regulatory enforcement agencies, it is not surprising that this occupation has been associated with rampant violations of wage and hour laws as well as health and safety regulations. Day labor is a most asymmetrical employment relationship: Workers who lack legal immigration status and are dependent on daily wages gather in public spaces in the hope of obtaining work while avoiding abusive employers and evading immigration authorities. Employers are well aware of the perils faced by day laborers, and they use this knowledge to extract advantageous employment arrangements and below-market rates of pay.

The reemergence of street-corner day labor is part of wider processes of informalization that are remaking employment relations in the United States, where the causalization of work, the extension of production subcontracting relationships, and the weakening of government regulatory oversight are now well-established trends. This growth of day labor and other informal employment practices has coincided with rising levels of unauthorized immigration to the United States. With the imposition of structural-adjustment policies in much of the global south, the foundations of many national economies have been shaken, and traditional modes of family support have been destabilized. This, in turn, has catalyzed unprecedented movements of people across national boundaries. But a singular emphasis on the “push” factors that contribute to rising levels of undocumented immigration, and with them increases in day labor, is too simplistic. The growth of day labor in the United States is part and parcel of the breakdown of domestic employment institutions that placed a floor under wages and working conditions. Informalization—which has been most pronounced in low-wage industries and occupations—has facilitated the absorption of immigrants into U.S. labor markets and has exerted a powerful “pull” that has drawn immigrants into certain sectors of the economy. Immigrants, particularly those who lack legal status, increasingly are the “workers of choice” for employers seeking to cut costs and flexibilize their workforce. It is against this backdrop that day labor has been flourishing in the United States.

This chapter examines the growth of day labor in U.S. cities and efforts of community organizers, advocacy organizations, and day laborers themselves to establish a floor under wages and working conditions in the day labor market. Organizing efforts have sought to eliminate the most exploitative conditions faced by day laborers by building solidarity among workers, holding employers accountable for workplace abuses, and establishing standards regarding pay and conditions. However, day laborer organizers must confront serious challenges to collective action arising from the dire economic conditions and damaging legal conventions that expose workers to heightened risks and threats to the economic well-being of themselves and their families. Therefore, to be successful in re-regulating the day labor market, community-based efforts must contend with a range of global, national, and local factors that channel labor demand and supply to these sites. The first section of this chapter considers the breakdown of employment institutions and the growth of the informal economy in U.S. cities. This is followed by an examination of the influence of U.S. immigration policy—specifically the designation of the *illegal immigrant*—on workers’ ability to exercise their employment rights. The third section presents the case of street corner day labor, with a focus on wages and working conditions. The final section considers the strategies developed and challenges

faced by community-labor activists who are fashioning alternative labor market institutions in response to the hardships encountered by day laborers.

INFORMALIZATION: DISCIPLINING THE LABOR MARKET

One of the perplexing aspects of the current era of international economic integration is the reemergence and extension of forms of (highly exploitative) labor relations that were thought to have been sharply curtailed, if not completely eradicated. The informal economy in the United States is one example. The informal economy refers to those sectors that exist beyond the reach of government regulation, where the goods and services produced are licit but the means of production violate employment laws and basic labor standards (see Portes, Castells, & Benton, 1989; Sassen, 1998). Until relatively recently, the informal economy was associated with the newly industrializing capitalist economies of the global south where proletarianization had not been fully realized. It is now clear that this view is too limited and that the growth of the informal economy is a worldwide phenomenon (see Avirgan, Bivens, & Gammage, 2005; Ness, 2005; Stoller, 2002).

When viewed through the lens of newly industrializing countries, the informal economy typically has been regarded as a phase in capitalist development, a stage in the transition from a “traditional” or pre-capitalist society to a “modern” capitalist one (see Quijano, 2000). According to this view, once modernization policies have been fully implemented, such “backward” sectors become integrated into the mainstream economy as some activities are formalized and others are eliminated. The informal sector is described as comprising those economic activities that have not yet fallen under the control of the corporatized sector or been drawn into the web of capitalist state regulation. Seen in this way, this sector is, by definition, marginal, excluded, and anachronistic. However, such an assessment must be reconsidered in light of the U.S. case.

The reemergence and expansion of the informal sector in the United States and other advanced capitalist economies is an outgrowth of attempts to reestablish conditions for accumulation following the structural crises of the 1970s (see Castells & Portes, 1989; Tabak & Crichlow, 2000). The resurgence of the informal economy in these settings is perhaps a predictable outcome of the neoliberal offensive that was launched against the Keynesian welfare state, particularly those policies and institutions that place a floor under competition in the labor market. In the name of greater labor market flexibility, the neoliberal regulatory project has sought to dismantle or seriously weaken labor market insurance programs and job-protection

legislation, and to undermine trade unionism and worker collective action. The aim of this phase of "roll back neoliberalism" (Peck & Tickell, 2002) has been to replace state regulation with market discipline, thus restoring (hyper)competitive conditions in local labor markets.

The informal economy in the United States has flourished in the economic spaces of deregulation that have been cleared by the neoliberal offensive. Moreover, processes of informalization have had the greatest traction in sectors where incipient economic institutions were underdeveloped and fragmentary, labor standards have been least widely embraced, and government regulation has been weakest. These sectors have tended to be the domain of the underemployed, of recent immigrants, and of the economically disadvantaged (e.g., the homeless, ex-offenders, former welfare recipients). Informalization, therefore, has further extended both the logic of the market and its discipline into low-wage segments of the economy.

Not surprisingly, it has been in cities where the manifold consequences of the neoliberal offensive have been most extensive (see Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Urban labor markets have tended to come under the control of neoliberal forms of governance as worker-centered institutions have been dismantled, and it is in cities where conditions of labor market competition have been most fully restored and processes of informalization have been most influential in remaking industrial, occupational, and competitive conditions. In the wake of neoliberal restructuring, the informal economy and processes of informalization more generally have become structural phenomena in their own right. As government regulation has been rolled back, enterprises and workers have moved into newly vacated zones in the economy, establishing a presence in a variety of industries, including textile production, light manufacturing, warehousing, and construction. Informalization has become a competitive strategy that clears a path to profitability for a subset of firms in these industries. These enterprises establish their competitive position as the low-cost producers, often by employing workers in substandard conditions, evading whatever regulatory measures remain, and, above all, holding down labor costs.

Despite the tendency for wages and working conditions in informalized sectors to be substandard, these sectors are integral to production in the "mainstream" economy. Enterprises in the informal economy are involved in the supply, distribution, and production of a range of goods and services, typically as low-tier subcontractors to mainstream firms. Extended subcontracting relationships are a reflection of the economic function of informalized sectors in U.S. cities; these sectors have become the zones within the economy where a given industry's most severe cost pressures are displaced. When substantial segments of an industry are unable to achieve profitability through quality, innovation, and investment, low-road forms of competition provide an alternative route to profitability. Thus, processes

of informalization are a type of *in situ* restructuring that deconstructs and reconstructs employment relationships, opening new opportunities for enterprises to achieve competitiveness through labor sweating and other cost-containment strategies.

The existence of informalized sectors, of course, also depends on attracting a workforce. However, because the competitive position of these sectors relies on extracting cost savings directly from this workforce, recruitment and retention practices are inherently crisis-prone. Not surprisingly, job seekers with the fewest options are the ones who find themselves employed in informalized sectors. In U.S. cities, these workers have tended to be undocumented immigrants. It is precisely the lack of legal status that channels these workers into the shadow zones of the economy where they, as well as their employers, have an interest in evading government oversight.

BORDER CROSSINGS: ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRATION

The [U.S.–Mexico] Border, *strictu sensu*, is a state-sanctioned system of violence: physical, environmental, economic, and cultural. Its principal historical function . . . has been the reproduction of agricultural and industrial peonage.

—DAVIS (2002: x)

There is a symbiotic relationship between informalization and immigration that is supported by numerous mutually reinforcing connections (see Portes et al., 1989). Here, however, the focus will be on one aspect of this relationship—the legal designation of the “undocumented immigrant,” a person who has not been granted legal status to work or reside in the United States. Much of the focus of immigration enforcement is directed at deterring prospective undocumented immigrants and deporting those who successfully evade the border patrol.

Immigration policies target the border, the workplace, and the individual as the principal sites of regulatory enforcement, and in this era of economic integration, each of these sites has become highly politicized. The border, particularly the U.S.–Mexico border, has become the symbol and reification of national sovereignty. For this reason, debates on the effects of immigration are highly charged, as some have framed undocumented immigration as a direct challenge to national security, the U.S. legal system, and the employment prospects of native-born workers. Calls to defend the border against patterns of immigration that are described as “chaotic” and “out-of-control” have created an environment in which the escalating militarization of the border has been made possible. Throughout the 1990s, federal and local officials have launched a series of high-profile offensives to prevent unsanctioned border crossings. These include:

- Operation Blockade (1993), later renamed Operation Hold-the-Line, which sought to seal the border at El Paso, Texas, in an effort to entirely eliminate the entrance of undocumented immigrants at this crossing point.
- Operation Gatekeeper (1994), which included the construction of a 14-mile steel fence near San Diego, as well as sophisticated technology including motion detectors, infrared surveillance devices, and trip wires.
- Operation Safeguard (1995), which sought to secure the border at Nogales, Arizona, through increases in the number of border patrol agents.
- Operation Rio Grande (1997), which sought to strengthen enforcement efforts along 36 miles of the Texas–Mexico border by stepping up deployment of border patrol agents.

One of the effects of this militarization of the U.S.–Mexico border has been the redirection of immigrants away from traditional entry points in California to more remote and dangerous crossing points in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas (Massey, Durand, & Malone, 2002). Destination points, too, have become more dispersed, meaning that migrants embarking for the United States undertake longer journeys and have increased their reliance on *coyotes* (illegal human traffickers). In fact, one of the perverse consequences of the clampdown of the border has been a sharp rise in the fees charged by human traffickers. Likewise, the likelihood of returning to Mexico has decreased dramatically, in part because of stepped-up border enforcement (Massey et al., 2002; Nevins, 2002) and in part because local economies in the country of origin have been so severely undermined by structural-adjustment policies and economic restructuring (see Sassen, 1998).

Similarly, the workplace has become politicized as immigration enforcement policies increasingly have targeted employers, reflecting an understanding among policymakers of the underlying economic conditions that have given rise to increasing levels of undocumented immigration. The 1980s and 1990s were marked by several policy shifts that have made the workplace contested ground. These include:

- The Immigration Reform and Control Act (1986), which imposed sanctions on any employer that knowingly hires undocumented immigrants.
- The Immigration Act (1990), which strengthened employer sanctions by increasing fines and raising the profile of enforcement efforts.
- Educational Correspondence (1994), popularly known as the employer “no-match” letter program, which notifies companies that

have workers on their payroll who have unmatched names and Social Security numbers, creating the impression that these workers are undocumented immigrants, generating tens of thousands of job separations (Mehta, Theodore, & Hincapie, 2003).

Rather than effectively deterring the employment of undocumented immigrants, however, the policies identified above mainly have raised the perceived costs of hiring these workers, costs that ultimately are transferred onto the workforce. Employers have responded to sanctions by lowering wages, increasing their use of subcontracting (thereby shedding legal liability for hiring undocumented immigrants by outsourcing low-wage production to other employers), and shifting employment to temporary staffing agencies that also shield employers from a range of legal liabilities (Massey et al., 2002; Mehta & Theodore, 2006; Peck & Theodore, 2001). These policies also have contributed to increased "churning" in low-wage, predominantly immigrant labor markets as undocumented immigrants, who already are concentrated in a narrow band of mostly low-wage industries, are pushed (further) underground and toward sectors undergoing restructuring and informalization. As Massey et al. (2002, 124) show, for example, the rate of informalization increased sharply following the Immigration Reform and Control Act. Cash payments, a proxy for work in the informal economy, increased between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s in the wake of stricter border enforcement. In short, the labor market effects of stepped-up immigration controls have been perverse, exacerbating wage pressures in the industries where immigrants commonly seek work and underwriting the gains that employers could realize by adopting strategies of informalization.

Finally, during the 1990s, Congress also periodically revisited provisions in several laws that might benefit undocumented immigrants and their families. Reforms that curtailed the eligibility of immigrants (legal and otherwise) to receive public assistance and government services were included in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (1996), while the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (1996) denied undocumented immigrants eligibility for Social Security, restricted their access to educational programs, and increased the income thresholds necessary for immigrants who are legal residents to sponsor the immigration of family members. Congress enacted this latter provision with the knowledge that most low-income immigrant families would be unable to qualify as sponsors under heightened thresholds (Massey et al., 2002: 95). When combined with the criminalization of undocumented immigrants, these policies have intensified the pressures of regulatory enforcement on individual workers and their families. Together, the immigration reforms identified above have dismantled the floor under family sustainability while at the same time making more precarious residency

in the United States and increasing the costs of deportation. Perversely, these reforms also have conferred additional advantages onto unscrupulous employers, who are able to exploit the threats of deportation, using this advantage to undermine organizing drives and emboldening them to further reduce workers' wages.

The effects the immigration policy regime that was constructed during the 1980s and 1990s have been profound, though many of these effects have been unintended. First, by almost any measure, the militarization of the U.S.–Mexico border and stepped-up enforcement throughout the interior have failed to stem the flow of undocumented immigration. Rather, the primary effects have been to (1) make border crossings more treacherous and deadly; (2) raise the costs of undocumented immigration and fuel the growth of illegal human trafficking; (3) geographically disperse both ports of entry and destination points within the United States; and (4) further stigmatize undocumented immigrants, thereby swelling the ranks of the informal economy. Massey et al. (2002: 5) concisely sum up the impact of two decades of immigration policy change, stating:

U.S. policies transformed what had been a relatively open and benign labor process with few negative consequences into an exploitative underground system of labor coercion that put downward pressure on the wages and working conditions not only on undocumented immigrants but of legal immigrants and citizens alike.

One of the primary effects of the U.S. immigration policy regime has been to push increasingly large numbers of undocumented immigrants into the shadow zones of the labor market, further intensifying labor competition and cost pressures in downgraded sectors of urban economies. In these segments of the informal economy, undocumented immigrants have little recourse against employers who are free to seize upon workers' lack of legal status and to use this to their own advantage, creating a vicious cycle of cost cutting and labor exploitation. Paradoxically, these shadow zones can be found in a range of settings, including day labor sites located the public spaces of many major U.S. cities.

ON THE CORNER: THE REEMERGENCE OF DAY LABOR IN U.S. CITIES

Day labor is one of the most visible expressions of informalization in U.S. cities. Each morning, day laborers, most of who are undocumented immigrants (Valenzuela, 2002), gather in public spaces to search for work. The location of these informal hiring sites (the designation of which, in many instances, occurs mysteriously) varies depending on local circumstances: In

Los Angeles, day laborers from Mexico and Central America gather at home improvement and building supply stores; in the municipality of South Tucson, Mexican workers assemble in the parking lot of a church that was a stalwart of the sanctuary movement; in Miami, workers from Haiti and the Dominican Republic congregate under highway overpasses; in Seattle, workers from Mexico and Central America take up positions on street corners just outside the central business district; in Chicago, workers from Eastern Europe gather at a Shell gas station; in Atlanta, workers from Mexico gather in the parking lot of an apartment complex; and in New York, Sikhs congregate near a burned-down mosque in Queens. In these cities and elsewhere, day laborers gather in public spaces to wait for construction contractors, landscaping companies, and homeowners looking for low-cost workers for manual-labor assignments.

The day labor hiring site is a spot market where the terms and conditions of employment are negotiated in a matter of minutes, if not seconds. Like the (fictional) neoliberal model of a labor market, this spot market is “free” from distortions arising from collective bargaining agreements, government-enforced minimum wages, and income supports for unemployed workers. The day labor market is unconstrained by such “rigidities,” and therefore it is able to adjust to its equilibrium level through the negotiations of employers and workers. The problem for workers, however, is that this equilibrium level is so exceedingly low; work is sporadic, wages are poor, and workers are routinely exposed to hazardous conditions. Violations of wage and hour laws, as well as occupational health and safety regulations, are among the taken-for-granted conditions of day labor, since workers effectively are unable to exercise their employment rights because of their status as “illegal immigrants.”

To describe the day labor market as a self-regulating, self-adjusting labor market, however, is misleading. Like all labor markets (Peck, 1996), the day labor site is a far cry from the *laissez-faire* ideal. Rather than being the site of free exchange, it is structured by wider political-economic forces, many of which lie beyond the sphere of labor exchange but nevertheless exert powerful pressures upon it. The instruments of regulation of the day labor market are both blunt and brutal, yet they shape the interactions between prospective employers and workers and establish the terrain upon which employment negotiations occur. These include (1) U.S. immigration policies that designate certain immigrants as “illegal,” thereby stigmatizing these workers in the labor market and creating acute vulnerability to capricious acts by employers as well as to deportation by immigration authorities; (2) economic deprivation that renders workers dependent on poorly remunerated work; and (3) overall conditions of worker disorganization that result in atomized workers competing literally *mano a mano* on the corner. In addition, within the sphere of labor exchange, there are dual

“push” and “pull” factors that, respectively, dislocate workers from a variety of economic situations in their countries of origin and draw them into the U.S. day labor market. The principal push factors can be found in global/national economic conditions, the north–south divide, and structural underemployment throughout much of the developing world. The main pull factor involves the restructuring of the U.S. economy and the downgrading of key industrial sectors in major cities.

While Saskia Sassen (1998) correctly cautions against viewing the paucity of income-generating opportunities in the third world as the primary explanation for international migration, it is inescapable that economic conditions in the global south have been and remain a major contributing factor to the worldwide rise in migration, particularly in undocumented immigration. The dire economic circumstances throughout the south have left workers in a desperate situation. Juan Somavia (2001: 1; emphasis in original), then the director-general of the International Labor Organization, eloquently described the global situation:

The *employment gap* is the fault line in the world today. We estimate that there are 160 million people openly unemployed in the world. Behind this stark statistic lies a sea of human misery and wasted potential. The headline figure understates the true extent of the tragedy, because whole families are its victims. If we then consider the underemployed, the number skyrockets to at least 1 billion. The scale of the problem is astonishing.

Woefully inadequate income-generating opportunities throughout much of the world have set in motion patterns of mass migration. Yet, it is generally understood that poor economic conditions are an insufficient explanation for the startling rise in unauthorized international migration. In the case of undocumented immigration to the United States, processes of economic restructuring, particularly the downgrading of segments of key industries in American cities (Sassen, 1998; Theodore, 2003), have created new opportunities for employers to achieve competitiveness through labor sweating. As this restructuring has continued, a wider range of employment opportunities in the United States have opened to undocumented immigrants as employers reason that the profit-making potential associated with employing these workers greatly outweighs the risks faced by companies should they be caught doing so.

Day labor is one example of the low-road industry practices that are on the rise in U.S. cities. Like other segments of the informal economy, the day labor site is a port of entry for immigrants seeking access to U.S. labor markets, while for many it is also the employment of last resort. Day labor hiring sites are characterized by the persistent oversupply of workers and its counterpart, systemic underemployment. Survey research of day labor

markets in Los Angeles (Valenzuela, 1999, 2002), New York City (Valenzuela & Meléndez, 2003), and Washington, DC (Valenzuela, Gonzalez, Theodore, & Meléndez, 2005), has found that workers are rarely able to string together enough day labor jobs to earn a steady income. Rather, working only a couple of days a week, despite seeking work daily, is the norm. This oversupply of workers, paired with inadequate labor demand, effectively places a ceiling on wage rates, especially for the general laborer jobs that most day laborers are able to obtain. The day laborer surveys carried out in Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC, found that workers typically earn hourly wages of between \$7 and \$10, but because of the intermittent nature of the work annual earnings tend to be below \$10,000. In addition, wage and hour violations, typically the nonpayment or underpayment of wages, are a frequent occurrence as employers realize that day laborers have little effective recourse in the U.S. legal system through which to challenge unfair employer practices. Inadequate employment opportunities in the country of origin, combined with the costs and risks associated with unlawfully crossing the militarized U.S.–Mexico border, exert powerful inducements on workers to refrain from challenging the nonpayment of wages or other workplace abuses.

In addition to poverty-level wages, day laborers routinely are subjected to unsafe working conditions (Bourgois, Loinaz, & Schillinger, 2002; Mehta & Theodore, 2006). Exposure to dust, chemicals, and various emissions are commonplace, as are working from unsafe heights, working without safety equipment, and lack of safety training. Although technically covered by workers' compensation insurance, in practice day laborers do not receive it, nor are they likely to benefit from professional medical care following an injury.

Day labor is associated with a form of *direct* labor market competition that largely had been eliminated with the advent of formal employment institutions such as internal labor markets, human resources departments, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and trade unions. Workers on the corner vie with one another for the attention of prospective employers and seek whatever advantages are available to them, including rushing toward approaching vehicles, venturing into oncoming traffic, jockeying for position at the driver-side window, and sometimes jumping into vehicles before an invitation has even been made. In this labor market, where workers literally stand shoulder to shoulder, employers (though often overwhelmed) clearly have the upper hand. The ability to dictate wage rates and to continue recruitment until the lowest bidder is found places a downward drag on wages and conditions. More experienced day laborers may walk away from the negotiations if the prospective employer sets the terms below the market norm, but the ready supply of new arrivals and underemployed laborers ensures that someone will agree to almost any proposal that is made.

The largest hiring site in Chicago, which has been in operation since at least the early 1980s, is a gathering point for 200–300 eastern European men (primarily from Poland and the former Soviet Union). Most of these men, too, are working without legal status, either because they entered the United States illegally or because they overstayed their visas. The site is a quasi-public gathering place located at a Shell gas station on the city's northwest side. Since the late 1990s, a growing cadre of Latinos has been assembling along one edge of this established site, drawn by the promise of more numerous employment opportunities and the somewhat higher prevailing wage rates that exist at the site. Employers, who almost exclusively are nonunion construction subcontractors, are attracted to the site where they can hire workers for jobs as roofers, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and other skilled trades. Latinos, who mainly obtain general cleanup, helper, and material-moving jobs but may also may qualify for more highly paid jobs in drywall installation or flooring, rarely venture into the epicenter of the site so as not to challenge the dominance of the eastern Europeans while also avoiding confrontations that likely would ensue if employers began to play one group of workers against the other.

But this is not the case at other hiring sites in Chicago. An organizer working with day laborers in the Chicago neighborhood of Albany Park, where approximately 150 workers from Mexico, Central America, South America, and Asia gather in the search for assignments in the residential construction industry, described the destructive competition among workers:

I've seen some of the Ecuadorian workers go out for as little as \$4 an hour. They'll undermine everybody else. The Ecuadorian and Guatemalan indigenous folks are undercutting the Mexican workers and some of the Central American workers who work for [higher wages]. I've also seen employers use the Hmong workers against the Latino workers. They will offer more to the Hmong workers because they know that they can get away without paying them that much. This creates a backlash with the Latino workers, where they feel the pressure of going even lower. It's kind of a domino effect. (interview, October 2003)

The roots of this competition, according to the organizer, lie in the desperation of the (mainly rural) Central American workers, who bring few skills and little experience to the worksite, limited ability to communicate with other workers or employers (they mainly speak indigenous languages, and their facility with English and Spanish is poor), and, most of all, significantly higher debts owed to coyotes for smuggling them into the United States. Contending with multiple labor market disadvantages, these workers resort to undercutting wages as a way to make themselves attractive to

employers. This underscores the fundamental dynamic of the day labor market: Lacking sufficient institutional mechanisms to regulate downward pressures on wages and working conditions, low-road practices will prevail.

RAISING THE FLOOR: COMMUNITY-BASED RESPONSES TO DAY LABOR

The informal economy and the wider processes of informalization that have been under way in U.S. labor markets have facilitated the incorporation of undocumented immigrants into U.S. workplaces. There they often confront substandard conditions and have little effective recourse against employer abuses. Day labor, in many respects, is a microcosm of this economy. Workers routinely are unpaid or underpaid, they endure risks to their safety at hazardous worksites, they must cope with employment instability, and most fear employer retaliation if they challenge working conditions. The conditions encountered by these workers have become a force of economic restructuring in their own right; they constitute the terms of competition in a growing array of industries, and their resilience against (admittedly inadequate) regulatory enforcement efforts signals to employers and workers that informality is “standard business practice” in certain sectors.

Employment arrangements in the day labor market occur within and are shaped by a U.S. immigration policy regime that appears to give priority to immigration control over employment rights, regardless of official government statements to the contrary. Risks of deportation cast a long shadow over day labor hiring sites, conferring tangible advantages to unscrupulous employers that are intent on maintaining substandard conditions and undermining attempts at worker collective action. Immigration policy is one of the driving forces that shape employment relations in the day labor market. As the employment of last resort for workers who perceive that they are ineligible to exercise employment rights under U.S. law because of their status as undocumented immigrants, day labor will likely continue to grow in the absence of systemic immigration policy reform as it becomes established as one of the segments of the informal economy that absorbs underemployed workers during economic downturns. Under such a scenario, there is every indication that low-road practices in the market will become ever more entrenched.

In the absence of government regulatory measures that are supportive of day laborers' rights, community groups and workers themselves have stepped into the breach to design alternative labor market institutions and to attempt to raise the floor in the day labor market (see Gordon, 2005). These efforts have been varied and include entering into informal agree-

ments with other workers to demand minimum wages; launching advocacy efforts to demand that government regulatory agencies monitor practices at day labor worksites; lobbying for employment policy reforms; and devising labor market intervention strategies involving the creation of worker centers and community hiring halls that supplant underregulated street corners as the sites of labor exchange. Many of these efforts have been supported through technical assistance provided by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON), a network of community-based organizations in dozens of U.S. cities. NDLON has become the primary vehicle for disseminating leading-edge practices, as well as a resource for groups to learn about local political-economic conditions that influence the policy environment concerning day labor.

In a growing number of cases, community organizations and even municipal governments have established worker centers or other "regulated sites" (Valenzuela, 2003) to organize the day labor hiring process and to distance day labor from the underground economy. The aim of worker centers is to formalize the informal; in other words, to better integrate day laborers into the mainstream economy and to bring this employment arrangement under the logics and conventions governing mainstream employment relations. This includes adopting measures to regularize the work (through lottery systems), taking steps to hold employers accountable for wages and worker safety, and establishing rules regarding wages and basic working conditions. Some worker centers also have become the point of contact for social service providers, government regulatory agencies, and municipal human services departments. Other centers sponsor job training programs, housing assistance services, English language courses, social events, and neighborhood civic activities. In short, these centers fill multiple voids in deregulated urban economies while at the same time attempting to raise the floor of the labor market by advocating for basic labor standards. These are important first steps in devising alternative institutions to reregulate informalized sectors of local economies.

It must be acknowledged that these are still early days for community-labor strategies and, in the day labor arena, local practices will grow stronger and more effective through the capacity-building activities of NDLON and others. It also is likely that through the activities of worker centers many of the most abusive practices in the day labor market can be brought under control, whether through organizing, advocacy, or direct action. At the same time it must be recognized that local strategies (such as worker centers) are poorly positioned to confront the full range of global, national, and local forces that produce conditions in day labor markets. Workers' rights organizations have sought to replace the anarchy of the day labor market with a system of rules based on universal labor standards. But in pursuing strategies to improve pay and conditions in this market, organiz-

ers must confront a set of dilemmas: Does the success of worker centers contribute to unmanageable increases in the number of day laborers seeking work? Is it possible to control the supply of labor in a market with few recognized boundaries and where self-policing mechanisms are weak, at best? And does the defense of day labor legitimize substandard employment that undermines prevailing conditions in local labor markets? Ultimately, it seems, successful efforts to reregulate day labor will also depend on favorable immigration policy reforms that eliminate the stigma of undocumented immigration so as to reduce the attractiveness of low-road forms of competition that rely on threats and coercion to hold down the incomes of low-wage workers.

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Space Patrols—the New Peace-Keeping Functions of Nonprofits

CONTESTING NEOLIBERALIZATION OR THE URBAN POOR?

VOLKER EICK

*P*rofit-oriented redevelopment of so-called disadvantaged communities and intensified control of urban spaces in general are widespread phenomena in the currently neoliberalizing urban regions worldwide (Davis, 1990; Merrifield & Swyngedouw, 1995; Ronneberger, Lanz, & Jahn, 1999; Body-Gendrot, 2000; Crowther, 2000; Websdale, 2001). In both the United States and Germany, for example, the construction of workfare states is flanked by community-oriented campaigns for cleanliness and order. The well-known if constantly shifting division of labor between the police and private security companies has recently seen the introduction of new players on both sides of the Atlantic: Nonprofit organizations acting as parapolicing agencies. This chapter focuses on these new “space control agencies” in Los Angeles and Berlin, raising questions about their capacities to challenge the neoliberalization of diminishing local welfare states and their byproducts of (in)security and (dis)order.

In both cities this further fragmentation of the security market is a result of recent turns, toward a recommodification of welfare provision in Berlin and determinedly toward marketization by many nonprofits in Los Angeles. Commodification and marketization are prevailing national trends

in both Germany and the United States, but I argue that only a subnational analysis on the city level provides for insights into the emergence of these new security regimes. In Berlin and Los Angeles, nonprofits opted to move into the security market after urban political regimes they aligned with collapsed. In Berlin, nonprofits originated during the 1970s and 1980s as social movements in West Berlin and became incorporated into the political machine. This close relationship between the local state and nonprofits providing social services for the poor was exported to East Berlin after the fall of the wall, and continued well into the 1990s—sustained by the federal subsidies pumped into the eastern part of the city to prepare the local labor force for a capitalist market system. Providing security services became an attractive alternative for some nonprofits in recent years when this arrangement collapsed and the federal state introduced much stricter performance standards. In Los Angeles, the strategic relationship between nonprofits and the Bradley regime ended with the South Central uprising following the police brutality against Rodney King in 1992. Labor market-oriented nonprofits subsequently experienced a temporary increase in funding due to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), signed into law by the Clinton administration in 1996, but in some cases they opted to become entrepreneurial and start providing security services for private contractors or city agencies.

In order to understand the potential of specific challenges to the neoliberalization of cities one has to take into account both the growing importance of the local scale and the growing importance of nonprofits. Local actions taken by nonprofits are seen as offering solutions for problems like unemployment, poverty, illnesses, and—increasingly—security and order. Both the local scale and nonprofits are said to be more flexible, that is, closer to the needs of the people and easier to manage. It is argued that nonprofits have a holistic viewpoint, and—more than the private or state sector—focus on an integrative perspective. From this viewpoint, nonprofits appeared to be “made for” the local sphere, as the local sphere seems to be the most genuine scale for nonprofit action.

To examine the localized actions of nonprofits in these two neoliberal cities, I will examine nonprofits responsible for local employment policies. These nonprofits offer job opportunities to their “clients.” They are run as either public employment programs (like community work) or like private companies. In Los Angeles I look at nonprofits working in neglected areas as well as in the privately managed BIDs (Business Improvement Districts); in Berlin I look at areas that belong to a state-run program called the *Soziale Stadt* (socially integrative city; see Löhr, 2003) that exists in “neighborhood management areas,” so-called (formerly) neglected city areas. Notwithstanding the growing importance of local nonprofits in establishing security, cleanliness, and order in neoliberalizing cities, I will argue that

such programs do little to mitigate the difficult economic and social problems brought on by neoliberalism. Nonprofit does not mean without concern for profit. Similarly, locally based programs do not necessarily benefit “disadvantaged” people who live and/or work in a given urban location.

NONPROFITS IN CHANGING WELFARE MARKETS

Since the onset of welfare reform in 1996 in the United States, and after the so-called Hartz laws became effective during the closing months in 2004 in Germany, the importance of nonprofits offering work (re)integration programs has increased. At the same time, nonprofits have been forced to compete for financial resources with public, private, and nonprofit organizations on a more market-oriented and contract basis. This competition has led nonprofits to develop a more output- and performance-oriented focus and a strong work-first orientation for (or against) their “clients.” The dwindling resources available for work (re)integration programs are underpinned with an intensified punitive workfare system targeting the urban poor (Eick, Grell, Mayer, & Sambale, 2004).

In the United States, the PRWORA devolved political and financial responsibility for social and employment policies to the individual state level. Federally administered programs that had ensured support to one category of “the needy” without time limits have been replaced by a system of federal block grants to individual states, the imposition of time limits on entitlements, and the requirement that rising percentages of welfare recipients enter the labor market.

Germany has remained oriented toward near-universal provision of social security, but recent federal legislation such as the *Arbeitsförderungsreformgesetz* (Labor Support Reform Law of 1997) and the so-called Hartz Laws (since 2002) have begun to erode some of the universal entitlements and stress insertion into the labor market (see Wohlfahrt, 2003). For example, the new legislation requires local administrations to actively transfer increasing numbers of welfare recipients into the labor market and also to reorganize their local bureaucracies. Such changes are leading to both a proliferation and an increased importance of local employment programs and local social policies. More and more nonstate actors (nonprofit and for-profit) with differing goals and organizational structures are becoming involved in the delivery of these programs. With the devolution of welfare production, we observe the blurring of boundaries between traditional policy fields such as employment, economic development, and social and security policies. We also observe, in all the sectors involved with welfare production (i.e., public, private, voluntary, and nonprofit), shifts in values, habits, and organizational structures.

These policies pay greater attention to the local level, especially in urban neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty and unemployment. Employment policies were redesigned in the United States by the Workforce Investment Act in 1998, in Germany by rescaling work integration laws such as the SGB III (1998), JobAktiv (2001),¹ and Hartz after 2002. The same is true for the redesigned welfare policies such as PRWORA (1996), BSHG reforms (HzA),² and again the Hartz laws—all of them bringing to the fore an activist welfare state. Finally a type of urban development policy emerged that specifically targets social exclusion (Empowerment Community Initiative/Empowerment Zone programs, community development programs in the United States since the 1980s; Soziale Stadt in Germany since 1999). All of these policies include a territorial orientation. The German employment office has strengthened its local branches, which cooperate with local nonprofits. Soziale Stadt, the first German national program to target deprived neighborhoods (“neighborhoods with a particular renewal need,” Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik, 2003), explicitly defines the neighborhood as the primary level for combating exclusion, and does so through installing so-called neighborhood management offices made up of nonprofit CBOs or planning and development firms—usually preexisting local renewal agencies (see Löhr, 2003). Thus, scale-specific state policies and the opening of state institutions to civil society actors merge with workfarist welfare regimes in both countries (and beyond; see Lødemel & Trickey, 2000). It is here where nonprofits, especially those focusing on work (re)integration of long-term unemployed and welfare recipients, come into play. Their local knowledge, their closeness to the “clients,” their experience, and their innovative skills seem to predestine them to bring the new activating programs to the urban poor. As Mayer (2003b: 8) states:

Nonprofits are given priority here because they are more familiar with the particular local constellations of needs and development potentials, and because they are (presumably) based on solidarity and empowerment rather than on coordination through market or bureaucracy. Thus they appear as [the] best-suited agent for implementing the strategies of local orientation and non-market coordination, and thereby to improve cooperation between state, capital, workforces, and residents in the local *Standort*. In other words, their characteristics seem to equip them to address the kind of market failure and state failure that are endemic to neoliberalism.

Thus, re-regulation of the manifold devastations that neoliberalization has produced in contemporary cities became one of the main tasks for nonprofits, especially on the local level. Indeed, nonprofits have become one of the key players seeking to transform—in terms of Peck and Tickell’s (2002) “roll-out” neoliberalism—former welfare state programs by orga-

nizing self-help structures, creating new partnerships, and introducing new governance-based approaches on the local level (Anheier, Katz, Mosley, & Spivak, 2004; Eick et al., 2004). However, cuts in funding from the (national) state, intensified involvement in the new workfarist policies, the (re)emergence of a punitive state, and the need to become much more output- and performance-oriented—again, in terms of Peck and Tickell's (2002) "roll back" neoliberalism—also has transformed nonprofits. They face growing competition as for-profit organizations enter the welfare markets. Institutionalization and professionalization has transformed them into (solely) service providers for the (local) state and the market, leading to what might be called the loss of "social capital," seen as one of their most important resources to create trust and to (re)integrate the urban poor (Mayer, 2003a). Consequently, their idealistic mindset and practices are being replaced by a "new pragmatism." Expectations that nonprofits might be the likely repository to contest neoliberalism vanish under these intensified neoliberalizing processes in both U.S. and German cities.

In the following section I focus on the most punitive parts within the current workfarist systems of the sister cities Berlin and Los Angeles,³ given that in both cities (in)security and (dis)order are of growing importance, especially with regard to public spaces and current workfare programs. The nonprofits' new pragmatism in these fields of activity has led to three new developments, which are dealt with in turn. First, nonprofits are involved in private-public partnerships to serve the business community's interests. Since the mid-1990s downtown Los Angeles Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) have taken advantage of the local knowledge of nonprofits and have integrated them into a delicate division of labor among rent-a-cops, state police, and nonprofit security guards. Second, nonprofits have been integrated into partnerships with the local state in territorially based social integration programs such as *Soziale Stadt* (since 1999) in Germany. Aiming at simultaneously stabilizing "disadvantaged" and (supposedly) "disadvantaging" urban areas, the focus of work (re)integration programs is widened from a solely target-group perspective to one that also seeks to take into account the urban environment; quality-of-life issues are of extraordinary importance. Third, maintaining security and order in the urban environment by training and employing long-term unemployed and welfare recipients as security guards also emerged as a growing field of activity in areas that face basically a total neglect by the (local) state and the business community. Here, nonprofits try to mend the worst excesses.

NONPROFITS IN CHANGING POLICING MARKETS

In this section, I seek to evaluate some of these "new pragmatism" developments within the nonprofit sector in Los Angeles and Berlin. I will argue

that cooptation and integration into the logics of neoliberal competition and state downsizing are the most difficult challenges facing nonprofits, especially at the local scale. This is particularly true in the expanding and increasingly sophisticated security markets that nonprofits have been entering during the past decade. I am not suggesting that the sector *as a whole* has entered the field of security markets. But it is clear that policy fields as diverse as place marketing, public housing, welfare provision, labor markets, and healthcare are developing new punitive instruments (Lødemel & Trickey, 2000; Flint, 2002; Eick & Sambale, 2005). Nonprofits, because of their increasing involvement of all of these fields, have become experts in what might be called the management of misery. It is on the local level where the sharpest contradictions of neoliberalization play out and where we can best observe the challenges nonprofits face in their new roles as agencies of social control.

Nonprofits and Business Improvement Districts

Business Improvement Districts can be seen as one reaction to the increasing devolution of state responsibilities to the urban scale. Cuts in public funding nationally limited the resources available locally for the provision of municipal services. Lack of municipal services limited the business community's ability to generate profits. One solution has been to promote local private-public initiatives under the auspices of private business. While there is no standard definition, most scholars and practitioners describe BIDs as self-imposed financing mechanisms implemented by business and property owners for local improvements, specifically the enhancement of public services. This includes the establishment of for-profit components in the security web controlled by BIDs: private, self-taxing urban microstates that take over the responsibility to beautify (inner-)city districts, organize street cleaning, guide tourists, and arrest beggars (see Eick, 2006). The first BID in the United States was created in 1975 in New Orleans, and they have spread throughout the United States and Canada, totaling by now more than 1,200 BIDs.⁴ The reasons for initiating BIDs are manifold, as the literature suggests (Mitchell, 1999; Hoyt, 2004). Mallet (1994: 100–102) points to five main developments accounting for the current proliferation of BIDs in U.S. urban centers:

... more value in the downtown built environment, calling for more protection from devaluation; greater visibility of the homeless on city streets and in downtown areas; extension of public/private partnerships seeking to add vitality to urban centers for the purposes of promoting greater use by tourists; failure of public policing agencies and private building security to coordinate safety services for middle-class workers and visitors; increasingly limited resources of urban government. (cited in Stokes, 2002: 9)

Germany has just started to develop BID concepts (Bangemann-Johnson, 2003; Mensing, 2003). So far, Business Improvement Districts are only in operation in the city of Hamburg, although there are business associations especially in inner-city areas aiming to re- and up-value those areas (Eick, 1998). Currently the Länder Hesse, North-Rhine Westphalia, Bavaria, and the severely distressed areas in Germany's eastern Länder (Deutsches Seminar für Städtebau und Wirtschaft, 2004) are discussing the implementation of BIDs, directly referring to North American experiences (Ministerium für Städtebau und Wohnen, Kultur und Sport, 2001; Handelskammer Hamburg, 2004). The speed with which the concept is being introduced into German cities is especially striking—even in cities lacking elites such as Berlin (Puppe, 2004; for an overview see Eick, 2006). The rise of BIDs in North America already does (and the introduction of BID concepts in Germany might) lead to the active involvement of the nonprofit sector in delivering services to the business community. One of the nonprofits providing clean and safe services to—among other areas—downtown Los Angeles is Chrysalis, through its program StreetWorks.

Chrysalis: "Loyal Service and Hard Work"

Chrysalis was founded in 1984 by John Dillon, a Jesuit, as a food and clothing distribution center to serve the basic needs of the homeless on Los Angeles's Skid Row. The demographic shift on Skid Row toward a younger, employable population with mental and drug problems in the late 1980s corresponded with a pronounced turn toward the work ethic by Chrysalis. During this time Chrysalis started employment services and job placements: "We try to find employers who will pay higher wages and reward loyal service and hard work."⁵ While Chrysalis enjoyed support from the Bradley regime from the very beginning,⁶ it started to flourish and developed intense relations with the downtown business elites under Mayor Richard Riordan.⁷

Chrysalis went entrepreneurial in 1993 when the Central City Association, representing over 3,000 businesses and nonprofits in downtown Los Angeles, invited a few nonprofits on Skid Row to take part in a program called "Safe and Clean". Chrysalis provided "clients" for temporary employment in the program.⁸ In May 1994 the Broadway Improvement Business District hired Chrysalis's enterprising entity StreetWorks to clean Broadway between 6th and 9th streets and ease the business community's concern about safety. Owing to the visibility of the Chrysalis crews, business owners reported 60% sales increases.⁹ In the same year Chrysalis expanded to Santa Monica and started contracting with the city to clean beaches and streets. Today StreetWorks provides high-powered pressure washing, litter removal, and graffiti removal to BIDs, local governments, and private companies in both Los Angeles and Santa Monica.

Although the official task of Chrysalis is to clean the streets, this seeming division of labor between for-profits providing security and Chrysalis providing clean streets is somewhat blurred (Sambale, 2003). Cleaning the streets always includes the removal of make-shift shelters, the homeless, and their belongings from the sidewalks. Downtown Los Angeles is “home” to one of the largest homeless populations in the United States—estimated as 78,600 people in 2002—at any point in time, with an annual homeless population of 253,900 in Los Angeles County, 65% of whom are located in the Supervisorial Districts of South Los Angeles/Inglewood and Downtown Los Angeles/West San Gabriel Valley (Economic Roundtable, 2004: 14, 74). Prior attempts to “sweep the streets clear” military-style with the help of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) provoked public outcries. Chrysalis, by contrast, provides an effective peacekeeping function, because its employees, formerly homeless “clients,” approach the homeless in a different style and ask them to remove their belongings for the duration of the cleaning. Currently Chrysalis has street cleaning contracts with numerous Los Angeles BIDs (see Table 13.1).

The cleaning unit StreetWorks offers temporary employment to “clients” who failed to find a job immediately after their initial job-readiness training by Chrysalis, amounting to about 30% of all clients, or 750 people annually. StreetWorks has a clear work-first orientation. There are no formal qualifications attached to street cleaning or, as the employment di-

TABLE 13.1. Organizing Security and Cleanliness in Selected BIDs in Los Angeles

BID (established)	Street cleaning	Security	Year	T-shirt
Chinatown (2001)	Sidewalk sweeping services	PEPI Security, Ltd.	1999	Red
Downtown Center (1997)	Chrysalis (white T-shirt)	Burns International Security Services, Ltd. ^a	1998	Purple
Fashion District (1996)	Facilities Support Service	Pinkerton, Inc. (1996–1998) Burns, Ltd. ^a (1998–)	1996	Yellow
Figueroa District (1997)	Chrysalis (white T-shirt)	n.a.	n.a.	Green
Historic Core (1999)	n.a.	Totally Secured Ltd.	n.a.	Green
Toy District (1998)	Chrysalis (white T-shirt)	ISI International Services, Inc.	n.a.	Purple
Industrial District (1998)	Chrysalis (white T-shirt)	ISI International Services, Inc.	n.a.	Red
Central City West	Chrysalis (white T-shirt)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Note. Data from Friedrich (2001) and Sambale (2003).

^aSubsidiary of Wells Fargo, Inc.

rector at Chrysalis puts it, "They are just sweeping the street."¹⁰ Clients should learn to get up in the morning, follow instructions, get used to working, etc. An individual StreetWorks employee may just clean the streets, but StreetWorks is also an agent for changing social relations in downtown L.A.—operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Chrysalis partners with a few BIDs (Downtown, Fashion, Toy), and other service providers (Midnite Mission, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles) in the so-called BID–Action Program introduced in 2000. This award-winning program further mixes sanitation, safety, and work-integration functions. Chrysalis "clients" in white T-shirts approach individual homeless persons and try to persuade them to take advantage of Chrysalis's employment services, or transfer them to other service providers. This workfare-centered nucleus of a privatized sublocal welfare "state" is run by nonprofits, financed by downtown elites, and backed up by the notoriously brutal rent-a-cop companies.¹¹ Business owners say it is effective; they "appreciate having someone to call to report homeless people, since calls to the police department rarely led to the kind of progress the team reports."¹²

This peacekeeping capability provides Chrysalis with a competitive advantage over for-profit rivals in the street cleaning business. So long as they control this local resource, they do not even need to compete over the price. StreetWorks was thus in a position to reject an offer by the Fashion District Improvement District for street cleaning when the district was unwilling to pay the demanded price.

The money Chrysalis generates through StreetWorks and its other businesses (see McDonough, 2002: 64–65) goes into a variety of services aimed at addressing clients' individual barriers to work (from child care to clothes, bus tokens, etc.). Chrysalis boasts a 93% placement rate (due to screening). The jobs are mostly entry-level, and the retention rate is only 30% after 1 year. Nevertheless, Chrysalis demonstrates that creating a source of unrestricted income¹³ through its for-profit entity StreetWorks can even help to integrate the former homeless into the labor market. But Chrysalis is also a highly ambivalent and strictly local phenomenon: There are not too many Skid Rows left, which are depended upon to provide a huge pool of locally concentrated male workers in the midst of a booming metropolitan region; uniquely, integration into the local labor market of one group of the (former) homeless is accompanied by better social control of those remaining out of the labor market.

Since early 2004 it appears that the repeatedly announced gentrification of Skid Row is finally getting under way. Whether this will lead to a sustained expulsion of the homeless with the willing participation of nonprofits so far remains an open question. Given that Los Angeles Police Commissioner William Bratton is best known for his Zero Tolerance pro-

ject and Quality of Life campaign while serving as chief of the New York City Transit Police in 1990 and as the 38th Police Commissioner in New York City from 1994 until 1996, such an aggressive policy also is likely in Los Angeles. The downtown renaissance and a still hesitant process of residential gentrification will certainly not sweep away the homeless entirely but will create new tensions among different user groups. New York City's 39 BIDs, already established in the 1980s, similarly augmented that city's order-maintaining apparatus by providing private security and street cleaning services (see McArdle & Erzen, 2001; Lloyd, McCarthy, McGreal, & Berry, 2003; Miller, 2006). While new programs aimed at removing the homeless and other "disorderly persons" are yet to be enacted in Los Angeles, Chrysalis and its StreetWorks program already may ultimately serve to harm the homeless of Skid Row not employed by Chrysalis more than it helps them. Employing a minority of the homeless population on Skid Row as a policing entity excludes the majority from the same area. Operating at the intersection of the commercial interests of local businesses seeking to maximize profit and the local state nonprofit interests of security and safety, Chrysalis is *enhancing instead of contesting* the outcomes of the neoliberal city.

Nonprofits and the Soziale Stadt Program

Although the language differs, the reasons for initiating district management in Berlin are strikingly similar to those of BIDs, and share comparable aims. The program Soziale Stadt (Socially Integrative City) has been described as

one of Germany's responses to the ramifications of the profound structural change in the economy, which increasing globalization reinforces, for citizens and government. Long-term unemployment and associated poverty are reaching alarming proportions. Primarily jobs in industry have diminished drastically and have not been replaced by sufficient employment opportunities in other sectors. . . . The welfare state has ultimately failed to satisfy growing claims for economic equality and finer meshing of the safety net. (Löhr, 2003: 1)¹⁴

The three main aims of district management (*Quartiersmanagement*; sometimes also translated as "neighborhood management") can be described as stabilizing the declining city districts and the social conditions of its inhabitants; mobilizing and "empowering" the neighborhood; and modernizing the (local) public administration. Therefore, it is stated that German cities thus need new forms of cooperation between various policy areas and levels, between government and business, and between cities and

their environs. The main change has been to spotlight specific localities. Attaching a district orientation to the Soziale Stadt program, that is, giving it a sociospatial approach, has proved innovative in tackling social problems. At the same time, the program is grounded on a concept described as the “activating welfare state” by the German government, which is following the logic of the Anglo-Saxon workfare strategy (Ehrke, 1999; Wohlfahrt, 2003; Eick et al., 2004).

Although there are similarities between the two programs (BIDs and Soziale Stadt), differences are also obvious. The program Soziale Stadt (called “district management” at the local level) was initiated at the federal scale, not by the local private business community. While parts of public services (i.e., cleanliness, safety) have been handed over to the business community under the supervision of the city in the case of BIDs, in the case of the district management program it is the nonprofit sector that functions as an intermediary for (re)organizing the neighborhood. Additional funding in the case of Soziale Stadt does not stem from the business community but is provided by the municipalities, the Länder (the 16 German federal states) and the federal government. While the BID concept obviously is more about identifying and controlling those who do not contribute to the profit-generating purposes of the business community and who are said to behave in a disorderly manner, the district management program *as a concept* is about (re)integrating or at least coalescing disadvantaged people (and the respective city districts) into the whole city. Notwithstanding such important differences, and two totally different conceptualizations of urban space, nonprofits manage to play their specific role in both the quasi-privatized areas of the BIDs and the public realm of the Soziale Stadt program, reinforcing their growing importance as “successful stakeholders” of the neoliberalizing city. Ambivalent practices reminiscent of those of Chrysalis are also known in Berlin. Some scholars have even called Berlin “the capital of cleaning squads and private security guards” (Krätke & Borst, 2000: 44). Nonprofits are engaged in the management of cleanliness and disorder as well, bringing to the fore the argument that disorder and insecurity can be tackled successfully by connecting labor market (re)integration programs with safe-and-clean programs. Nonprofits such as Berlin macht mit (Berlin Takes Part) or Jugend für ein sauberes Berlin (Youth for a Clean Berlin) force their “clients” to collect garbage in forests and inner-city areas, others like LowTec deploy their clients as removal teams against illegal advertisement posters or graffiti in public and private spaces. In 2003 alone, more than 700 welfare recipients and long-term unemployed performed cleaning and security services (see Table 13.2). Out of these, 60 have been deployed by the municipality Kreuzberg of Berlin to, among other duties, collect garbage. They are equipped with uniforms and overseen by the nonprofit organization Jahreszeiten (Season). Jahreszeiten, established in 1993

as a subsidiary of a for-profit security company,¹⁵ has been put in control of inner-city parks. The garbage removal team is called GreenCops, and deployment of its 60 workers enables the municipality to simultaneously replace regular city jobs.¹⁶ Their deployment creates complicated situations, especially in public spaces, given that they are supposed to both clean the parks and maintain order (but are accorded no state-backed policing powers). Their duties include ensuring that dogs are kept on leashes and enforcing by-laws such as “no bicycle riding” in parks to help raise a so-called subjective feeling of security, but have resulted in direct confrontations with local residents such as dog-keepers, including battery, attacks, and even demonstrations (see Eick, 2003a: 373).¹⁷

In addition, work integration programs have been put in place that accept if not directly leading to, direct confrontations between residents and nonprofit security guards. Whereas nonprofits such as Jahreszeiten focus mainly on cleanliness, another group of nonprofits goes one step further by establishing programs directly targeting the urban poor. Such nonprofits and their respective programs are promoting repressive, exclusionary processes. By recruiting the so-called hardest-to-employ, they end up treating

TABLE 13.2. Selected Nonprofits in (In)security and (Dis)order Markets, Berlin, 1999–2003

Nonprofits (year program established)	Social space	Target group	Partners
Jugend für ein sauberes Berlin (1993)	Lawns, parks, forests	Environment-“sinners”	State police: pollution-control police
Jahreszeiten (1993)	Public space	Dog-keepers, bicycle riders	For-profit: Securitas
Internationaler Bund (1999)	District management	Migrants, drug consumers	For-profit: Gegenbauer
Berlin macht mit (1997)	District management	Homeless, alcoholics	—
IHS BQ/BIQ (1991/2003)	Public transport (subway, railway)	“Fare dodgers,” homeless	For-profit: IHS (founder)
Social Cop (1992)	Public space	Migrants, prostitutes	For-profit: Deutscher Wachschutz
Lowtech (1994)	Public space	—	Local state: municipal office
bbw (1999)	Potsdamer Platz (privatized space)	Homeless, punks	For-profit: Securitas

Note. Data from Eick (2003b).

the worst-off of society as undeserving poor, in effect criminalizing by association such residents as the homeless, beggars, (foreign) youths, drug addicts, and prostitutes. Such workfare programs are closely linked to the Zero Tolerance concept of the “broken-windows” approach, which has been extensively discussed in Berlin since the early to mid-1990s.¹⁸ Although the Berlin government declared that such approaches and concepts will not guide official policing policy, they have been put into practice wherever possible (Eick, 1998, 2003c). In April 1999, for example, a public housing company, together with the local administration of the district Schöneberg and a nonprofit, started a work integration program¹⁹ aimed at (re)integrating young welfare recipients aged between 16 and 25 by deploying them as security guards to patrol the district’s streets, to forestall drug trafficking, and to control prostitution and the homeless in public spaces. Financed through the local administration, the regional employment office, and the housing company, the young welfare recipients are supervised by the nonprofit Internationaler Bund (International League). Training is provided by a private security company, and as the manager of this rent-a-cop company states: “We will send our private and nonprofit guards wherever youngsters, alcoholics or drug addicts are hanging around” (Eick, 2003b: 86). Similar programs are run in the Spandau, Steglitz, and Kreuzberg districts.

Berlin macht mit: “So That They Don’t Drink That Much . . .”

Approximately 20 nonprofits currently run such security programs in Berlin, one of which is Berlin macht mit.²⁰ Formerly unemployed are working, among other places, at the Helmholtzplatz, situated in Prenzlauer Berg district, which is considered to be a “problem area.” Helmholtzplatz is one of the 15 current neighborhood management areas. These management programs are aimed at stabilizing locally specific situations that are seen as “problematic” (Holm, 2001). Helmholtzplatz also is one of the 24 so-called dangerous places (Eick, 2003b) where, according to the General Security and Order Law of Berlin, police officers reserve the right to suspend citizens’ rights (resulting in personal checks without suspicion, bodily search, eviction). While Helmholtzplatz is a meeting place of the homeless, punks (with dogs), and alcoholics, it is also under gentrification pressure. Its homeless, punks, and alcoholics are thus a thorn in the side of district politicians, middle-class-oriented neighborhood organizations, and wealthier recent immigrants. The poor population on the Helmholtzplatz is seen as inhibiting their efforts to re- and up-value the area.

On the suggestion of the district management and district administration (Bezirksamt), four former welfare recipients were stationed there under the supervision of Berlin macht mit. Dressed in berets and black jackets,

equipped with walkie-talkies, and trained in citizens' rights and public garden laws (see Eick, 2003a) they are appointed, the nonprofit's chairman stated in an interview, "not to chase away the people, but ensure that everything takes place in a justifiable scope. That is to say, to take care that the lawn won't be entered constantly by the dogs, and that the playing-ground won't be muddy with dog-shit, and that they don't drink that much. And that's what they are doing, and somehow it works" (cited in Eick, 2003a: 374).

In recent years, the methods of the police and the nonprofits have changed. From 1998, when reconstruction began, until the reopening of the square in 2001, there have been regular expulsions and a threatening permanent presence of police on the square. Expulsions have been flanked with a so-called concept of social work, whereby social-pedagogic nonprofit organizations and social workers have been obliged to provide their services to the homeless, punks, and alcoholics, but only outside the vicinity of Helmholtzplatz. For the responsible coordinator of the social work concept, "discharging the square of the [homeless] group is the prerequisite for integrative social work. Only when positive use is possible without disturbance attempts can be made to integrate these persons and their deviant behavior" (cited in Holm, 2001: 9). Meanwhile, permanent patrolling has been replaced by a police tactic of systematic detainment in the side streets. The nonprofit organization functions as an information service for the police and the atmosphere of Helmholtzplatz has worsened, particularly for Arabic-looking young men constantly accused by the police of dealing drugs.

Nonprofits such as Chrysalis in Los Angeles provide optimized environments for the profit-generating purposes of the business elites and their customers in de facto privatized inner-city areas. Nonprofits such as the aforementioned ones in Berlin take over responsibility for containment and cleansing policies in so-called disadvantaged areas, benefiting from a plethora of public subsidies and serving the interests of the (local) state and the better-off residents. All these examples illustrate the flexibility of nonprofits and their pragmatism in the current neoliberalizing urban environments, including the close cooperation between nonprofits, rent-a-cops, and state police, so long as the police agree to it (Eick, 2005, 2006; see also Hoogenboom, 1992; International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2004)—and are present in the wider urban setting.

Nonprofits in Neglected Areas

While the Los Angeles Police Department concentrates on the core functions in the production of security, private security companies focus on the so-called less important sites in the city (Davis, 1990; Herbert, 1997; IACP,

2004; Wakefield, 2003). In effect, such a security regime produces geographically and socially uneven security to the respective neighborhoods. Of course, areas such as Boyle Heights, Watts, Skid Row, and similar areas are patrolled by police forces, but it seems officers on the beat are not able (or willing to) to protect the respective neighborhoods from gang violence and procurement crimes. Unlike the situation in Berlin, juveniles in Los Angeles are in fact frequently locked in the public housing estates divided among competing gangs. They see the entering of “their” estates by neighboring adolescents, therefore, as a territorial infringement. And again, unlike in Berlin, where graffiti stretches well into the suburbs, it is much more concentrated in central Los Angeles and indicates gang territory. Inasmuch as this implies violence and a threat to public order, some nonprofits, such as Homeboy Industries, therefore concentrate on graffiti removal on an ongoing basis. Graffiti removal under such circumstances represents less a beautification program than a community service to curb gang violence and therefore impinges on both security and cleanliness.

This is not to say that cities like Berlin do not know neglected areas; especially in the large (former) public housing estates mainly in the east in districts such as Marzahn or Hellersdorf²¹ the state police started vanishing once the so-called unification process began, and intensified with the burgeoning privatization of the social housing stock.

Youth Club Rhizome: “To Protect against Permanent Oppressive Measures . . .”

The “evaporation” of state police presence is particularly evident in public housing estates sold almost exclusively to U.S. realtors such as the Texas-based Lone Star Fund; it is here where nonprofits remain as the last resort for so-called disadvantaged youth. Unlike in Los Angeles, neofascist mobilization is a strong force in the Eastern parts of Germany, even though the number of new migrants is low; youth cultures, such as punks or German immigrants from Russia with German passports (Russlanddeutsche), are the fascists’ main targets. Moreover, rent-a-cops recruited by real estate owners have become a decisive force in helping to shape private as well as public space.

This is the case with children from poor and often divorced families supervised and supported by the church-run nonprofit Youth Club Rhizome.²² In some 5,300 dwelling units controlled by Lone Star, management responsibility for the units has been reassigned since December 2000 to the commercial housing company WVB Wohnpark (WVB). WVB in turn hired the rent-a-cop firm Flash Security to patrol the then 5,300 privatized flats. From the beginning, Flash Security denied neighboring youths, including those from Youth Club Rhizome, access to the privatized playgrounds and

expelled them from the nearby privatized pedestrian zone; such toys as footballs and bikes were illegally confiscated, and even the deprivation of liberty, and occasional bodily attacks were not unknown to occur. The private security company still maintains a database and distributed it to the public in an attempt to intimidate social workers, neighbors, and even parents (Eick, 2004). Once the attacks became public and the nonprofit began soliciting for help at human rights' groups and lawyers' associations, Flash Security started to advertise itself simply as a "noise police." All the same, its Internet homepage states that its personnel—trained combatant sportsmen—"do not stand aside confrontations."²³ Even more, the security company has been able to take over responsibility for a current total of 23,000 dwellings housing almost 60,000 renters.²⁴ Even the adverse publicity and more than 10 affidavits from parents, social workers, and victims did not stop the maltreatment, but only helped to stem the worst excesses while a judicial hearing was held against those magazines that published the maltreatment by Flash Security in June 2004. The magazines won the right to publish the incidents but no action was taken against Flash Security. Although the nonprofit was considering closing down the youth club in October 2005, it was still in operation as of April 2006. It appears that, owing to such rude roll-out neoliberalization processes, many localities are left with little practical choice other than to pursue for themselves a neoliberal path that in some cases includes total neglect of the neighborhoods, as in the case of this nonprofit stranded by the municipality. In other cases, such as the following example, the nonprofit sector takes over responsibility for certain functions and fields of activity, again trying to mend neoliberalism's worst excesses. At the same time, however, this takeover does not necessarily contest neoliberalism, but instead employs nonprofits as institutions that impose a form of punitive or disciplinary neoliberalism locally.

Homeboy Industries: "Nothing Stops a Bullet Like a Job"

Homeboy Industries is the business offspring of Jobs for a Future, a nonprofit offering employment services in Boyle Heights.²⁵ Father Greg Boyle, a Jesuit priest, founded Jobs for a Future in 1988 to curb the gang violence in public housing projects of Aliso-Pico. Homeboy Industries was added in 1992 after the Los Angeles riots to allow the addition of profit-generating businesses otherwise prohibited for nonprofits, and it also has had a pronounced peacekeeping function. Their website states in the first paragraph: "By giving a gang member a reason to get up in the morning, we provide them with a reason not to gang bang at night. For every gang member that we help get off the streets, we help make the streets that much safer."²⁶ Jobs for a Future offers employment services and job referral, while Homeboy Industries takes at-risk youths directly off the streets and employs them.

Currently there are four businesses: Homeboy Bakery, Homeboy Silkscreen, Homeboy Merchandising, and Homeboy Graffiti Removal. Homeboy Graffiti Removal articulates the peacekeeping function directly.

The city of Los Angeles runs an Operation Clean Sweep program to remove graffiti. Unlike other nonprofits engaged in work (re)integration programs Homeboy Industries directly focuses on gang activities. By order of the city, its graffiti removal teams remove those tags by which competing gangs claim their entitlement to and control over “their” territories. Residents report graffiti (there is even an online form), and the city sends a contracting community-based organization (CBO) for removal. The CBO usually utilizes persons needing to complete community service. These workers are supervised by one of the six permanent employees of the graffiti removal program, each overseeing a crew of two to four youths doing community service. The vans leave at 9 A.M., and workers whitewash graffiti past noon. They react to complaints from residents and landlords who seek to take advantage of the free city service. The permanent employees at Homeboy Industries are former gang members who would not fit into the labor market. As former gang members, these employees can differentiate graffiti that are merely eyesores from graffiti that presents a clear and present danger. The latter must be removed by any means, and immediately—otherwise it might provoke more violence. Since the latter kind of graffiti does not fall within regular work hours, the permanent workers work two shifts: They remove the threatening graffiti from 5 A.M. to 9 A.M., and from 9 A.M. until past noon they take care of the rest with the community service workers.

These employees of Homeboy Industries, former gang members, provide the nonprofit with a specific knowledge resource about subcultural symbols and behavioral patterns, resources neither the police nor the private security guards have access to. LAPD officers are generally recruited from outside of central Los Angeles and cannot distinguish eyesore graffiti from the more serious variety. This is also the case for private security guards and the police of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA). This specific knowledge thus advantages Homeboy Industries in winning competitive city contracts, which totaled \$150,000 in 2001 and \$225,000 in 2002 (Sambale, 2003).

Homeboy Industries’s response to the far-reaching neglect of such neighborhoods as Boyle Heights by the local state must be seen as ambivalent with regard to several related aspects. On the one hand, trying to prevent (armed) conflicts among (gang) youths by giving them work opportunities certainly can be seen as a helpful intervention. Attempts to disengage youngsters from gang structures, however, confront the precarious relationship between the LAPD and the private security companies, on the one side of the barricade, and the (gang) youths, on the other. Both police and private security members frequently and harshly attack youngsters, perhaps at

times merely because their clothing or personal accoutrements create suspicion that they are gang members. Given the close connection between Homeboy Industries's graffiti removal program and potential (criminal) offenses, the necessity of interacting with the police or private security firms may on occasion emerge; this, in turn, can create ambiguous relationships with the "official" agents of the security web, perhaps to the detriment of their "clients," the former gang members. Confrontations between overseers and "clients" within the nonprofit cannot be verified, but Homeboy Industries reported that graffiti removal tools worth \$70,000 were stolen in July 2002.²⁷ Confrontations between former gang members and current ones is also an ongoing problem. In June 2004 a former gang member employed by Homeboy Industries in the graffiti removal team was shot several times as he whitewashed a warehouse wall in the Boyle Heights area of East Los Angeles. Police reported that one of the two suspects, who had been released 3 months earlier after serving 10 years in prison, had opened fire on him. Police officials believe that the gunman fired in anger at having his gang's graffiti removed (Gahee, 2004). A few weeks later another former gang member was killed. As a result of these incidents, Homeboy Industries closed down its graffiti removal program in August 2004, and Mayor James K. Hahn announced that he had asked several trade unions to find new jobs for members of the graffiti cleanup team (Office of Mayor James K. Hahn, 2004).

Homeboy Graffiti Removal has to be seen as an ambivalent program, as it tries to combine work integration with security issues. The maintenance of public order, an issue the local state wants to shed responsibility for in such areas as Boyle Heights, is simply handed over to nonprofits. These employ so-called disadvantaged groups such as former gang members in their workforce, who thereby are made responsible for eliminating deficits in public order. Furthermore, it sounds cynical to refer to bullets—*"Nothing stops a bullet like a job"*—in such areas as Watts and South Central, where many black youths are killed by police bullets each year. Focusing on a job perspective alone is no panacea to the ongoing cycle of gang-related urban violence. Attempting to reduce a problem to a slogan doesn't really solve it, nor does it address the lack of human rights enforcement in such areas.

CONCLUSIONS

In general, nonprofits are able to work in almost all environs and with what might be called "ambivalent success" under neoliberal conditions, at least on the local scale. This is also true in fields like security and order that have gained such prominence during the past two decades.

In Los Angeles the trend for nonprofit organizations engaged in work

(re)integration programs can be described as a distinct trend toward for-profit service delivery as nonprofits such as Chrysalis and Homeboy Industries no longer rely on public subsidies alone and actively search out commercial contracts. In Berlin, on the other hand, a nonprofit security market emerged somehow “in the shadow of the Leviathan” in a highly subsidized labor market, in which private security companies try to take advantage of labor market (re)integration programs by selecting, recruiting, and employing former welfare recipients and the long-term unemployed; these nonprofits no longer care about socially integrative programs, instead focusing on profit generation. Nonprofits doing work (re)integration that is not being accomplished by rent-a-cop companies—the majority among the 20 nonprofits involved in this market—still emphasize their local knowledge and social-pedagogic capacities that are of benefit in stabilizing disadvantaged areas and the unemployed therein. Nevertheless, they are responsible for new exclusionary processes affecting the worst-off even in the areas managed through programs such as Soziale Stadt. It is within this program that nonprofits working with “disadvantaged” youth and refusing to cooperate with the state police have lately been excluded by canceling their subsidies in some areas (Eick, 2005) or, as the example of Youth Club Rhizome has shown, nonprofits aiming at defending their “clients” and thus refusing to take part in roll-out neoliberalism have been suppressed.

At the same time, however, neither this roll-back policy against nonprofits nor the local work (re)integration programs are discussed openly. As for work (re)integration, the publicly financed security and order services instead remain as a mainly unrecognized niche market within local employment programs that so far have not received any meaningful critique. This is problematic, given the fact that the employment of long-term unemployed and welfare recipients contributes to a new and highly questionable “culture of control” (Garland, 2001). The emerging control regimes in both the high-consumption areas as well as the declining parts of the cities of Los Angeles and Berlin (and beyond; see Helms, 2004) are at the least a disturbing development. For one thing, nonprofits are integrated into urban private–public control regimes that lack formal qualifications for its employees (unlike the state police) and at the same time embody (informally) almost all the power and privileges of the state but bear none of the responsibilities and limitations of democratic government. Through misleading resort to headlines such as “integration of disadvantaged groups” or “stabilizing declining urban areas,” surveillance and control structures start to emerge that lead to strategies of the “poor policing the poor” (Eick, 2003a, 2003c).

In both cities nonprofits start to act as parapolicing forces, on the one hand securing a containment of the urban poor in designated areas while evicting them from others, thus becoming part of those well-known for-

profit and state policing agencies already active in redefining access to public and private space (Simon, 2001; Rigakos, 2002; Eick, 2003b; Glasze, Webster, & Franz, 2005)—including the dumping of the “troublesome” persons (Eick, 1998; King & Dunn, 2004)—and the right to the city in general (Mitchell, 2003). Berlin’s containment and expulsion strategies are deployed by, among others, nonprofits and are mainly financed through public money, underpinned by state-run programs, and are aimed at keeping (at least) a status quo in disadvantaged areas. The strategy in Los Angeles is different. Here, a pronounced market-driven strategy brings in more private capital aiming to “to reduce disorder through the enforcement of polarization” (Flusty, 2004: 71).

Indeed, focusing on market-driven “solutions” for almost every kind of identified “problem” is one of the central challenges nonprofits in Berlin and Los Angeles are facing under neoliberal conditions. Even though, as we have shown elsewhere (Eick et al., 2004), the spread of practices ranges from good to ambivalent to bad practices, there is no substantiation for the hope that the current nonprofit-sector is the likely candidate for challenging the ongoing neoliberalization process on any scale whatsoever. Expectations that nonprofits will compensate for market failures and state failures by bringing the civil society to the fore and helping, at least, to mend the worst outcomes of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalism have to be viewed in a much more critical, and realistic way.

All together, it seems indisputable that the extension of the low-wage sector and the introduction of exclusionary security-and-order programs run by nonprofits do not qualify them as “an instance of negotiating differing interests and an instance of social integration into society” (Zimmer & Priller, 1997: 262)—just to cite the typical sanguine assessment of certain scholars. The same remains true for the highly problematic mingling of work (re)integration and security programs.

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NOTES

1. JobAktiv stands for the new placement regulations: activate, qualify, train, invest, and mediate.
2. BSHG = federal social assistance law; HzA program, Hilfe zur Arbeit = Help toward Work.

3. For further similarities (and differences) of both cities and the important role of nonprofits, see Eick et al. (2004: 56–91); for details on socioeconomic decline during the 1990s, see Eick et al. (2004: 77–78).
4. Hoyt (2001: 4) states: “Although relatively new, BIDs exist throughout the world. The first BID worldwide emerged in Ontario, Canada in 1965. . . . The BID concept has roots in other regions of the globe including, but not limited to, the United Kingdom, France, Holland, Japan, and South Africa.”
5. John Dillon in the *Los Angeles Times* (LAT), “A New Woe for Homeless on Skid Row: Hopelessness,” December 26, 1988, Part 5: 1.
6. LAT, December 5, 1985, Part 5: 1.
7. Additionally, the Hilton Foundation gave a 2-year grant of \$185,000, some of which went into planning for new businesses; McKinsey & Company did some market research on the temporary help industry (McDonough, 2002: 61).
8. LAT, June 13, 1993: 23.
9. LAT, July 7, 1994: 6.
10. Interview, August 21, 2002.
11. Interestingly enough, the rent-a-cop industry in downtown Los Angeles advertises their conflict-settling capacities as “verbal judo” (Mason, 2002; see also LAT, November 22, 1999).
12. *Los Angeles Downtown News*, May 18, 2001.
13. Under U.S. and German law, nonprofits are not allowed to generate profit, because they are subsidized by the state and, therefore, should not compete with “regular” (i.e., nonsubsidized) companies on the market: the legislation is not really convincing, as for-profit companies such as Lockheed Martin or Siemens also receive subsidies from the state. Nevertheless, the legislation is still in operation to protect the market, and U.S. nonprofits especially started to set up for-profit subsidiaries in the 1990s (Eick et al., 2004: 69–70, 87–89).
14. The Soziale Stadt program in Germany grew from 162 districts in 1999 to 291 in 2002; today there are more than 300 (see DIFU, 2003: 9).
15. For private security companies, nonprofit subsidiaries are an effective means of recruiting publicly financed personnel, because the municipality and the employment offices pay for observing, training, and employing welfare recipients and unemployed within programs such as GreenCops.
16. Berlin’s welfare offices make extensive use of work requirements for welfare recipients, forcing them to do community work in public parks, forests, in public baths, and even in cemeteries, thereby replacing regular jobs with low-wage community work.
17. Additionally, studies have shown that residents are becoming more unsafe because of their inability to distinguish for-profit from nonprofit policing agencies as well as from state police and their respective authority (Obergefell-Fuchs, 2000).
18. In brief, the “broken-windows” approach suggests that, as physical and social incivilities increase, informal social control weakens and fear increases. As fear increases, the chances of criminal invasion increase, as disorder catalyzes an increase in serious crimes.
19. In 1999 more than 60 youth were deployed. The work integration receives additional money from the federal government and the European Union (EU); 1.5

- million Euros stem from the regional employment office and about 100,000 Euros from the EU, while the housing company brings in only 20,000 Euros.
20. About 100 nonprofits run local employment programs.
 21. Marzahn had 167,400 residents, mainly in large housing estates, in 1990 (in 2000: 137,000); Hellersdorf; by comparison, had 121,000 residents in 1990 (2000: 127,000), out of 535,000 residents in such estates all over East Berlin in 2000 (Knorr-Siedow & Droste, 2003: 61–63).
 22. The name has been changed to protect social workers as well as children and youngsters.
 23. See www.flash-security.de (retrieved October 23, 2004).
 24. *Der Tagesspiegel*, April 10, 2005: 16; *Berliner Morgenpost*, January 30, 2005: 26.
 25. The following is adapted from Sambale (2003) and Eick et al.(2004).
 26. www.homeboy-industries.org/ (retrieved October 2, 2005).
 27. See *AP Wire*, July 14, 2002.

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From Possible Urban Worlds to the Contested Metropolis

RESEARCH AND ACTION IN THE AGE
OF URBAN NEOLIBERALISM

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*I*n this chapter we examine the activities and publications of the International Network for Urban Research and Action (INURA) from 1991 to 2005, paying attention to two aspects of the work INURA has been involved in.¹ First, we explore the most important organizational transformations INURA underwent and second, we trace the major theoretical, practical, and political developments linked to these changes. We will argue that INURA has been a network that has translated local urban social movement demands and debates into an entirely new—transnational—scale. We are specifically interested in how the understanding of urban reality has shifted over these years in terms of the intellectual and experiential practice of INURA members. We work on the assumption that INURA offers an excellent opportunity to study the “glocalization” of urban politics and the rescaling of urban activism in cities around the world (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002).

INURA is a mix of social movement organization, alternative professional organization, and network. Its strength has been in this specific mix. It has distilled the lived experiences of struggles and debates in member cit-

ies. Individual members are representatives not in the sense of being delegates but of lived collective urban experience. INURA has functioned as an international learning mechanism, an unlikely alternative think tank and workshop of ideas and practices: The Network has been an institution of social learning. As a social movement/network organization, INURA has been involved in processes of knowledge production (Conway, 2004) as a laboratory of research and action. Research and action are mutually defined practices: therefore it is praxis (Keil, 1998). INURA's general ideology has been an amalgam of a variety of influences from classical Marxism, feminism, community activism, environmentalism, urbanism, etc. Philosophies of practice have been informed by the flavor of the day, as members have attempted to combine fundamental belief systems built on the grand narratives of post-1968 critical theory with novel and more opportunistic modes of practical engagement and fragments of conceptual innovation in planning, design and social critique as well as identity politics. Insofar as INURA is an alternative professional organization, it carries with it the contradictions of professional work in the neoliberal environment: For many INURA members, work has been casualized, careers have been unconventional, and biographical pathways have been fragmented and winding.

ORIGINS: THE INURA STORY

The International Network for Urban Research and Action was founded in the Swiss alpine village of Salecina in May 1991. Proposed and promoted by three young Zurich activist-scholars, Hansruedi Hitz, Christian Schmid, and Richard Wolff, the first INURA meeting drew participants from a handful of European and North American countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States) for 1 week of debates and presentations. The motley crew of urbanists and activists came from a mix of urban movement milieus, where some or all of the social, cultural, ecological, and political elements of "revolt" and rebellion were present that fired up particularly European urban centers throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In Zurich, a culture of urban revolt unrivaled in Europe had taken hold since the 1980/81 youth movement had forever changed the everyday of that financial metropolis, and in London, the dismantlement of the Greater London Council (GLC) in 1986 had created a particularly defensive anti-Thatcherist groundswell that made itself felt in many community-based activities and lastly in the Poll Tax riots in the spring of 1990. In the German and Italian cities, there had been hard-fought battles over urban space, ecological issues, cultures of liberation,

and redistributive questions, beginning in the 1970s. Squatter cultures had been visible outposts of liberatory praxis in many of these places.

By the end of that week a new organization was founded that gave itself statutes and programmatic statements in the form of a set of first principles (Figure 14.1) that were the result of intensive discussion among individuals who brought their particular experiences of struggles over urban space with them to the meeting in the bucolic landscape of the Swiss mountains.

While the participants were not delegates from their various cities, they nonetheless represented activist practices/experiences and scholarly work as diverse as the places where they were from. Incipient (but recurring) topics of discussion during the early days of INURA were the fights against large-scale projects, planning participation on the neighborhood scale, and attempts to define theoretical and practical urban positions. During these early years of INURA activities, a number of characteristics and historical developments were prominent cornerstones of the incipient organization. We highlight some of the most important of these characteristics in the following paragraphs.

INURA Principles

- 1 INURA is a network of people involved in action and research in localities and cities. We are committed to sharing our experiences and information in order to further the understanding of the problems affecting our areas.
- 2 We are committed to the empowerment of people in their neighbourhoods, communities, cities and region.
- 3 In our work we recognize the importance of ethnic and cultural diversity, and the need to oppose racism, class and gender discrimination.
- 4 Changes in forms of work and of community and domestic life must be understood and planned in relation to each other.
- 5 We must resist and reverse the process of polarization of income and quality of environment, both in the social fragmentation of our cities and the divergence of core and periphery regions.
- 6 Our network particularly wants to broaden its links with housing, employment and environmental campaigns.
- 7 We aim to further the process of environmentally sustainable urban development.
- 8 We seek to resist centralization and the damaging effects of globalization.
- 9 We are working to create strong and diverse visions of the future urban life. INURA will work with a variety of methods of research, communication, interaction and dissemination of information, including scholarly work, media productions, activist documents, debates and stories of urban experience. INURA invites future contributions from academics, the arts, political activists and social movements.

Salecina/Switzerland 1991

FIGURE 14.1. The INURA principles: Unpacking the 1980s.

The Myth of the Progressive City

When INURA was founded, participants' imagination was still largely captured by the predominant presence of urban reform that characterized most of our cities of origin. Red-green governments were in power in Frankfurt and Zurich; Hamburg was a social democratic stronghold, and the cities of the German East were sites of democratic experiment and citizen roundtables; Florence and environs were in the heart of the "Red" Tuscany, where a network of small cities was governed by predominantly communist administrations and their allies; Newcastle was one of the lone northern English Labour stronghold; David Dinkins was mayor of New York City; and democracy had started to sprout in Mexico City after the devastating earthquake of the mid-1980s.

The Melancholy of Lost Struggles: Zurich Youth Revolts and the Greater London Council

The meeting in Salecina abounded with the practical understanding of lost urban struggles. Zurich participants, for example, were veterans of the so-called Youth Rebellion (*Jugendunruhen*) from 1980/81 as well as the militant squatter movement, which had its roots in the 1970s but reached its zenith in the mid- to late 1980s. While direct action was key in those years, people who were involved experienced a theoretical and practical vacuum and were searching for ways to continue with their struggles in different ways. How could the urban crisis be explained? How could the momentary and symbolic successes of the urban struggles in the 1980s be turned into something more concrete and something that would last? These questions that came out of direct action were also shared among the other participants of this founding INURA meeting, since the encounters and histories of urban struggles at other places were quite comparable to the Swiss case.

The one experience that stood out at the time was London: Still under shock of the abolishment of the Greater London Council against the expressed opinion of a majority of the city's population (only 16% of Londoners were in favor of dismantling the GLC), the London story told of a tragic if temporary loss of the grip of progressive forces over their natural home, the city. While overspending by the council was presented as the reason to abolish the GLC, in fact it was the rising popularity of a leftist urban agenda—mainly proposed by Ken Livingston—that led to the removal of grants by the national government and ultimately to the termination of the GLC. In addition, the bloody Poll Tax Riots² of March 31, 1990 were still very "fresh" in participants' memory. The documentary *The Battle at Trafalgar Square* (Spectacle TV, 1991), produced and directed by British INURA members, was shown and discussed at the inaugural meeting. The

images of a demonstration with the police provoking and carrying out violence against ordinary citizens was immediately reminiscent of similar experiences in other cities where squatters, transit activists, and homeless people had endured similar brutalization.

Annual Meetings as the Backbone of the Network

The INURA annual meetings are the most important communications revenue of the network and the only forum for major decisions in the organization. Although they are by no means the only area of membership activities, they deserve special examination as a barometer of network developments over the years. The annual gatherings are structured around a theme that local INURA members have selected and have two main purposes: to learn about specific struggles at the conference site (and to a limited extent to get involved in local politics) and to discuss ongoing points of research and action. Thus, each INURA conference is divided into two distinct parts, beginning with a city tour, meetings with local organizers, discussion panels, and then a retreat in the countryside. The meeting is not like normal academic conferences in that the structure of the retreat is often in flux and negotiated on the spot, and presentations of papers are reduced to the minimum necessary to provide ample opportunities for discussing various aspects of urban research and action. In addition, accommodations at the retreat are often reduced to the level of simple arrangements that are subordinated to the primary concern of sharing a common social space. It can be argued that the annual conferences are the glue that keeps INURA going as a network, in spite of all the difficulties that networks encounter (chiefly power relations and how they manifest themselves within any network). For the purposes of this chapter we divide the conferences between 1991 and 2006 into three distinct phases: “phase of formation (1991–1997)”; “the new INURA” (1998–2003) and “expansion” (2004–present).

THE PHASE OF FORMATION

Conferences during the phase of formation took place in Salecina, Switzerland (1991), Rostock, Germany (1992), Durham, U.K. (1993), Florence, Italy (1994), Amsterdam, Netherlands (1995), Luton, U.K. (1996), and Zurich, Switzerland (1997). In these seven meetings the structure of the annual conferences evolved from defining the purpose and the agenda of INURA to linking urban research and action to specific places. Some of the meeting places showed the potential of an international network, such as INURA, to be relevant both locally and internationally, on both macro- and microlevels—in other words, working simultaneously on various scales.

The choice of the location for the second meeting was intended to be a symbolic expression of solidarity with communities in East Germany, which were undergoing dramatic restructuring after the end of the Cold War. As the first postfounding conference, it worked well in that it set the network on a track that proved to be highly influential and successful in subsequent years: working closely with local groups in planning and conducting the conference and establishing a process of mutual learning. This pattern was successfully repeated in most INURA annual meetings and led to INURA's being able to demonstrate its internationally based urban expertise in a variety of urban settings. In Rostock ties were developed with local groups dealing with such issues as the reorganization of large-scale housing estates after socialism, the emergence of openly racist right-wing political groups, and the deindustrialization of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR).³

During the Newcastle (U.K.) meeting in 1993, INURA made the local press with a note in protest of local shipyard closures that had ravaged the regional economy at the time. The deindustrialized Newcastle situation resonated with the experiences of people in cities as different as Hamburg, Toronto, Kattowice, and other places from which INURA members came. The conference in Luton (1996), when INURA returned to the United Kingdom for the second time, had an immediate impact for the local organizers there. Exodus, a group that had become a member of INURA during the preceding year and which was involved in alternative living arrangements by squatting a farm and producing their own social and economic space, had been in a dispute with the local council over the question of legalizing the squat and its attendant consequences. Since Luton's local councilors had previously refused to meet with representatives of the Exodus collective in order to find a solution for legalizing the squat, INURA used its weight as an international organization to set up a meeting, where the local councilors were made to believe they would talk with INURA members. In reality, however, the purpose was to trick the local councilors into sitting down with the Exodus collective and listen to their demands before an international audience. In this instance, the network not only functioned as a mediator but also demonstrated outside support for the Exodus collective and its unique approach of dealing with the poverty, unemployment, disenfranchisement, and criminalization of local youths. While this conference probably most successfully demonstrated INURA's potential impact on local politics, it also showed its members that the network possessed moral authority that could be summoned on behalf of empowering local groups and endorsing local tactics.

Trying to build on the increased interest in INURA, the 1997 conference in Zurich was very different than its predecessors. Entering its seventh year of existence, the conference still had two distinct venues—one in the city (Zurich) followed by a retreat in the countryside (Amden). However, the city component became much more like a traditional conference orga-

nized as a large-scale event with several hundred people participating in guided tours, panel discussions, and cultural events. In addition to INURA's regular members, the local organizers also had invited well-known academics to speak at the conference. While this conference was highly successful in terms of its impacts and effects externally, internally it almost destroyed INURA. A fundamental conflict erupted over the question of accessibility and the allegedly prohibitive cost. Since many early INURA members were closely associated with the squatter movement and alternative cultures, the increasingly formal and professional character of the Zurich conference dismayed these members as well as new participants from radical milieus in such cities as Frankfurt and Berlin, who made their objections known on site and subsequently distanced themselves (in some cases indefinitely) from the network. Retrospectively it can be said that this conference took INURA to a juncture at which it had to decide whether it wanted to hold meetings in the mold of any regular academic conference—with an added sense of local spectacle—or whether it wanted to continue in its traditional ways, keeping its conference small and locally based, always a bit chaotic and fluid, and certainly not inviting “big-name” academics who would attract much outside attention. During the 1997 Amden retreat, it felt as though INURA had reached its limits as an alternative organization of urban research and action and might simply implode. Therefore it was important that the next INURA meeting take place in an entirely different cultural and social environment. For the first (and so far the last) time, INURA held its annual conference outside of Europe, in Toronto, which fortunately turned out to rejuvenate the network.

THE NEW INURA

The conferences of the “new INURA” took place in Toronto (1998), Glasgow/Durham (1999), Brussels (2000), Florence (2001), Paris/Caen (2002), and Berlin (2003). We call this phase the “new INURA” because while, on the one hand, it continued with the well-established formula of a two-part conference, it was also the first time that the convocation took place outside of the European context. While the leading theme of the first phase of INURA conferences is typically economic restructuring, the second phase's focus is primarily on the question of diversity and difference. Toronto's “DiverseCity” conference theme focused on the everyday practices of a multicultural society both in terms of the definition of social relations, socioeconomic inequalities, sociospatial relations, etc., and in terms of progressive politics and policies of multiculturalism. In Brussels (2000) and Paris/Caen (2002) we dealt with the specific issues related to Europeanization and postcolonialism in these urban areas. In Florence (2001) INURA engaged with John Friedmann and Leonie Sandercock in discussions of

“cosmopolis” and “insurgent planning”—both topics that have become staples in INURA discussions ever since.

In all cities during this phase, INURA made connections to the local community and its political initiatives through public events. In Toronto, for example, the group conducted highly acclaimed public panel discussion on various cities’ relationship to the Olympic games, analyzing critically the experiences of several cities that bid for and were awarded the games. In Caen, France, local cultural producers described their work to a large audience. In Berlin, a multinational panel of movement activists from South Africa, the United States, Germany, Italy, and Romania spoke about the challenges of global social movements in the age of empire. In all cases, INURA managed to live up to its own principles of staging successful exchanges in both research and action between a specific place and the traveling roadshow of the network.

FLEXSPACE: REGIONALIZING URBAN RESEARCH AND ACTION 1992–1994

We interrupt the chronological analysis of INURA’s development to examine some of the research output and actions that the network produced. We shall return to the latest stage in INURA’s history toward the end of the chapter.

During the founding meeting in Salecina, it became clear that comparative urban research is much needed in order to understand the dynamics that are affecting different places in similar ways. While most of the urban struggles we had experienced took place in the inner cities, INURA members also directed their attention to the periphery, where the dynamics of economic restructuring on a global scale left their imprints in the form of spatial and social transformation of various regions. We were intrigued by similarities in how new commercial and office developments were mushrooming on the periphery of such cities as Frankfurt and Zurich while the inner cities were experiencing the effects of deindustrialization and increased social polarization. This led to a common research project among members from Frankfurt and Zurich and a number of publications, including a special issue of *Society and Space* in 1994 (Lehrer, 1994; Keil & Ronneberger, 1994; Hitz, Schmid, & Wolff, 1994). It was remarkable that inner-city activists and urban intellectuals, who had cut their teeth on struggles and issues of the inner city—in squatting campaigns, collective-consumption conflicts, fights against the resurgence of right-wing groups, megaprojects in city centers, etc.—were now turning their attention, both activist and scholarly, to the entire urban region and to the oscillating growth dynamics between the core and the periphery. This interest in the

urban region has sustained itself in many projects beyond the original cases of Frankfurt and Zürich.

LOS ANGELES (1992), BERLIN (1997), VANCOUVER (1997): PUTTING INURA ON THE MAP

Early on, INURA members had been keen on contributing their place-specific urban experiences to the larger context within which new urban social movements were formed during the 1980s. One way of doing this was by participating in international conferences. A special INURA-based panel was organized for the meeting of the International Sociology Association, Research Committee 21, in Los Angeles in 1992. While this first international appearance of INURA representatives was focused on the question of the relationship between economic restructuring and new urban forms at the periphery of urban centers, the goal of the organization's participation at the International Critical Geographers Meeting that took place in Vancouver in 1997 (August 10–13) was to elucidate the relationship between theory and practice in urban research. In the panel discussion, titled "Linking Theory and Practice: Experiences from the International Network for Urban Research and Action," members sought to present the core ideas of INURA while also integrating them into a transnational and cross-cultural context. During the same year, some INURA members had presented their research using the principles of INURA to an international audience at the International Sociology Association, Research Committee 21 (Berlin, July 20–22, 1997).

Another way of transposing place-specific urban experiences into the larger context was through publications. Three books have been published and numerous journal articles have resulted from attempts to share our individual experiences not only with the specific network we were part of but also with a wider community. In each case, publication projects were designed to appeal to both scholarly and activist audiences.

The first book (Hitz et al., 1995) was based on the already noted collaboration between some INURA members in Frankfurt and Zurich and the empirical findings on the two financial centers' economies, politics, and movement cultures. This work was complemented by key texts on urban theory from John Friedmann, Margit Mayer, Walter Prigge, Saskia Sassen, and Edward Soja. These texts contextualized the work of INURA in contemporary debates on global cities, social movements, urbanity, and post-modern urbanism in Europe and North America. While most of our praxis in engaging with urban politics was focused on the inner city, it became increasingly clear that cities from now on had to be understood within their metropolitan regions as related to the wider global economy.

INURA's intention of linking theoretical and practical knowledge led to its first English-language publication, *Possible Urban Worlds* (1998). This book demonstrated the wealth of various understandings of urban transformation and its alternative possibilities, not only in textual contributions but also in an unusual book design that reflected on and contributed to the multiplicity of perspectives and forms of cultural expression. The main source for *Possible Urban Worlds* was the 1997 Zurich annual conference of INURA. It showcased myriad approaches of critical urban theory and practice. The carefully crafted and edited book created a lively and productive dialogue with such urban theorists as David Harvey, Margit Mayer, Giancarlo Paba, and Saskia Sassen, on the one hand, and squatters and community activists from Luton, Amsterdam, and Berlin, on the other; it confronted the urban theory of Henri Lefebvre with new forms of urban practice in places as diverse as Toronto and Medellín, Florence and London.

The success of *Possible Urban Worlds* inspired the Florence INURA group to put together a follow-up book project, which led to the publication in 2004 of *The Contested Metropolis: Six Cities at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. This book presented written and artistic contributions from Berlin, Brussels, Florence, London, Toronto, and Zurich. It provides a kaleidoscope of urban experience at the beginning of the new century. The six sections were autonomously conceptualized, authored, and edited by the individual groups, which gives the volume a variegated character. In the emphatic words of Raffaele Paloscia, the book is about "the 'contested metropolis' meaning an objective, non-eliminable condition, structurally innate to the very idea of metropolis, a complex, structured, multi-faceted city thronged with ways of life, cultures, languages, hopes in a natural consolidation of every kind of relationship and social confrontation" (Paloscia, 2004: 9). This concept of the "contested metropolis" implies the double sense of contested as "fought over" and "not accepted," constantly in motion.

INURA DECLARATION

Both of the English-language INURA books have enjoyed a strong reception among activist and academic readers worldwide. The overall message of both books was perhaps best summarized in another common INURA document, the INURA Declaration, which picked up from the original INURA Principles from 1991 and "updated" them for a period of urban debate worldwide:

INURA's urban imagination is fundamentally opposed to and in struggle with the neo-liberal urban project. . . . Based on the hopeful experiences in

- Demand 1: Disempower global players
- Demand 2: Make profits unsustainable
- Demand 3: No borders for peoples
- Demand 4: Autonomy and social justice in everyday life
- Demand 5: Liberate the Urban Imagination

FIGURE 14.2. Demands from the INURA Manifesto. From INURA (2003).

the shadows of the globalization and neoliberalization of our cities, we are proposing enthusiastically the construction of a new global urban world based on the solidarity and cooperation of human collectives in justice, democracy, and harmony with non-human nature. We emphatically defend radical and redistributive notions of social and environmental justice, equality of opportunity and rights to diversity. We understand these substantive rights to be enmeshed with the liberation of decision making processes, particularly enhancing the participation of all relevant parties in decision making and modes of collective (self) organization that avoid unjust hierarchies and discrimination. INURA sees it as its mandate to support the liberation of urban everyday life from the false demands and constrictions of neoliberal globalization. This, in other words, is fulfilling the promise of the “right to the city.” (INURA Declaration)

Besides the prose of the Declaration’s substantive points, it contained a set of five “demands” that are deliberately reminiscent of previous—Dadaist and Situationist—urban manifestos (see Figure 14.2).

EXPANSION: INURA GOES NORTH/SOUTH

The third and current phase in the development of INURA started during the retreat in Berlin (2003) when a proposal was made for a common research project for INURA members. As a consequence, a specific research meeting took place in March 2004 involving about two dozen INURA members who assembled in Toronto. While smaller than the annual meetings, the Toronto workshop included members from most membership regions. A set of research proposals for a joint INURA research project (or projects) was designed to examine the dimensions of global urbanization at the beginning of the 21st century. The theoretical base for these projects is a novel interpretation of cutting-edge urban theory of the late 20th century; the projects’ empirical base comprises the lived experiences of researchers, activists, and inhabitants of major cities around the world—from Melbourne to Amsterdam, Toronto to Hong Kong, Florence to Porto Alegre, and London to Cape Town. The ideas for the projects are built on the prin-

ciple of a pluralism of critical urban theories. These theories are themselves an object of study and change through praxis. The research projects are not the first common projects undertaken by members (see the preceding section), but they are the first of a new series that would coordinate such work from the earliest stages of conceptualization.

Both the expanded research project (which obtained input from Australia, the Americas, Africa, Asia and Europe) and the INURA Declaration, with its ostensible goal of intervening in global debates on urban change (such as the World Social Forum), took the largely European-based network into strikingly new territory. While gender-related power differences were articulated (but never resolved) from the first meeting onward, class, ethnic, racialized, and religious conflicts in both material and ideological terms started to manifest themselves more starkly than they had in the early years, when the network had consisted predominantly of white, Western, middle-class members who increasingly gained a foothold in mainstream academia. At the workshop meetings in Toronto (March 2004) and at the annual conference in Amsterdam (June 2004), these conflicts flared open on a number of levels, which signaled to the network that it had to invest as much effort in building democratic and egalitarian structures inside the network as in the cities where members are active. The convulsive and momentarily explosive effects of the debates on the global north and south, diversity and racism, and homophobia and sexism provided a sudden wake-up call to a growing group of activists and intellectuals, who had disregarded members' subliminal differences potentially at the peril of INURA's possible demise. At the time of this writing, there is guarded optimism in the network that these differences can be overcome productively through a proactive policy that emphasizes mutual learning and political debate. The retreat at INURA's 15th annual meeting in Italy (2005) was organized by a group of women who deliberately took this task off the often overbearing hands of white male members (who had tended to monopolize INURA's decision-making power in the past).

The presence of INURA representatives in Porto Alegre during the World Social Forum in January 2005 also went a long way toward reconceptualizing the urban north-south problematic in the INURA network.⁴ A miniconference organized by the emerging local group in Porto Alegre was modeled after the city-tour format of regular INURA conferences. It provided the participants from the Americas and Europe with an insider look into the social, environmental, and political urban problem of this city in the southernmost Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. A workshop held at the World Social Forum itself afforded INURA the opportunity to showcase its work to the global community assembled in a concerted effort to provide an alternative to neoliberalism. While there is no space here to provide a detailed report of this meeting (see Allahwala & Keil,

2005, for a discussion of the context of the event), it was a significant step toward making INURA visible to more than its usual (predominantly academic) European and North American audience. Both dialogues were continued at the Rome meeting in June 2005.

NETWORKED SEDIMENTATION

It is our main contention that, while INURA is clearly a *network*, the network qualities of the organization need explanation beyond the usual assumptions in network theory. And while INURA is rooted in the tradition of urban movements, its strength and success rest on its ability to translate locally generated urban movement experiences into a network, which is *not* a social movement. In this light, INURA can be seen as one of the precursors of the kind of anticapitalist movements that have swept the globe since the late 1990s and that arrived on the global scene during the Seattle World Trade Organization meetings in 1999.⁵

If we understand INURA in the context of contestation and social movements in globalizing and neoliberalizing cities, we can make the following observations.⁶ Many social movements seem not to be easily categorized as progressive. Most cannot even be pigeonholed in any meaningful way as being about identity, justice, gender, ethnicity, class, collective consumption, etc. There is no singular social goal behind the combined (but often fractured) efforts of communities to reshape their urban lives. Individual groups may be contradictory and even oppositional to one another. Ash Amin has cautioned us about what he calls a “cosmopolitan politics”: “Such a politics remains open-ended and highly dependent upon cultural context and the balance of power for its outcomes; resulting not in a formative place politics of militant particularisms, but a cosmopolitan politics that is xenophobic and reactionary here, progressive and hybrid there, tolerant or particularly militant elsewhere” (2002: 397). Others are more optimistic. Andy Merrifield, for example, thinks that, by means of social movements, which take shape “by bonding, by wedding critical thought to practical struggle and action, everyday people—people like you and me—can construct real cities from below, not inherit phony utopias from above” (2002: 172). We believe that the INURA experience falls somewhere between these extremes of distanced relativist resignation and involved unshaken emphasis—between the multidirectional politics suggested by Amin and the revolutionary optimism of Merrifield, between the pessimism of the mind and the optimism of the heart, to paraphrase Gramsci.

The terrain of activity of urban movements (Pickvance, 2003), while often limited and defined by single-issue activity on collective consumption and related fields, ultimately is what Henri Lefebvre called the “urban,”

that space between the general and the particular in which our lives are spatialized and lived (1991, 2003). Regarding social movements in general Warren Magnusson explains: "Social movements express the goals, identities, aspirations, and resentments that have not been completely incorporated into the routines of day-to-day politics within the state. Thus the movements always represent a threat of some sort to the good order of the state" (Magnusson, 1997: 108). Moreover, Magnusson looks at the "world as a huge city, with economies, cultures, and systems of governance that recall the patterns of the great metropolises of the past and present" (1997: 108). Devoid of a state as an overarching order, "It is the life of the metropolis that encompasses the activity of state agencies and puts them in play in relation to a variety of other activities. To analyse such political complexity, we have to remember that the phenomena we are observing are not fixtures but movements" (Magnusson, 1997: 109). This reformulation, indeed, throws new light on the very idea of a social movement in the globalizing city. It rests on a generalized urbanism in which social movements are immediately political movements:

Urbanism is *our* way of life, and it is our responsibility as humans to recognize how we are living, to take responsibility for what we are doing, and to consider what we can do politically to improve our own practices. In this context, we need to recognize that we are involved in a number of activities, the most important of which we can conceive as social movements. (Magnusson, 1997: 111)

We believe that this view of social movements is crucial to the understanding of the space that INURA has occupied through its network structure, and therefore it is particularly helpful in looking at the milieus from which INURA developed. It is important that virtually all founding members of INURA came from local activist backgrounds, where the political debates and struggles in which they had been involved prior to the first INURA meeting had resembled the kind of urban social movement activity Magnusson has theorized.

Members of INURA have been products and producers of the kinds of social movement activities that were typical for the period of neoliberalization in various urban regions. INURA members also counted themselves among the early analysts and critics of these developments. As just noted, INURA members came with a strong set of localized experiences that were ripe sharing in a larger setting. In this sense, the establishment and continued existence of INURA can be understood as a process of networked "sedimentation." In order to define this term, we need first to return to Magnusson, who notes that "these movements are not necessarily directed at particular fixtures. On the contrary, they create their own spaces in rela-

tion to other ongoing activities. In truth, the human world is a world in movement in which the apparent fixtures are just sedimentations or reifications of earlier movements” (Magnusson, 1997).

More specifically, the concept of “sedimentation,” according to Lise Nelson

refers to the processes through which discourses (including “identities,” political vocabularies, and practices) deployed in moments of collective action and protest are translated and socially embedded by a variety of actors in place. The concept captures change over time *and* it highlights the unevenness and open-endedness of these processes. Sedimentation is premised on the spatiality of social relations, defined not only in material terms but as constitutive of social meaning and a medium through which “difference” is constructed and maintained. (Nelson, 2003: 561)

This metaphor seems to describe well how multiple practices and discourses are becoming sediments of praxis in INURA. Only, while in Nelson’s case sedimentation is strongly linked to the notion of “place,” in our case it is linked to the scale of the network itself. INURA as a process and organization is effectively a scaling-up of local movement activities through a layered network of international actors; the sedimentation that occurs is not at all tied to place but rather to the more or less real-and-imagined space of the network itself. A larger framework for this sedimentation was provided by translating the local to the international scale and by transposing the praxis of movements into the praxis of the network. We can summarize then that, in the case of INURA, local actors have been able to “scale-up” their activities to the realm of a network, which has given some of its members a distinctly more powerful base for research and action.

A Politics of Scale

INURA has been involved in a process of a *politics of scale*. Its members have taken their individual grievances from the milieus of their respective towns of origin to a different scale of activity—not even the next ones up, the national or the European scales, but the transnational one. As it turned out, in the language of today, we can say that INURA is global. It really has never operated in the way inter-national networks have, where nations delegate authority upward. Instead, INURA has created new kinds of relationships among individuals from various cities in Europe and North America and ultimately around the world. In fact, INURA has effectively been a continuous *scale-jumping* operation. Its activities and the real relationships among members through and beyond the annual meetings have always violated any singular logic of scalar logics and hierarchical organization. Prac-

tical and financial problems aside, the politics of the network has never considered boundaries, such as national borders, as impediments. The jumping of scales, the overcoming of given scalar arrangements, has been one of the major strengths of INURA.

At first glance, one fundamental problem of INURA seems to be its scalar incompatibility with the scales on which urban globalization proceeds. For all that it matters, the regional regimes of global cities stake out their terrain in the city region, which are considered strategic terrain, and make connections to what they consider the global scale of action: the field of inter-urban competition. In Berlin, Frankfurt, Toronto, Zurich, and London, for example, global city formation is largely a regional project that unites and divides regional elites. INURA activism, however, is forced to occur mostly at the local or sublocal level and then jumps to the international network scale through the network's channels. INURA analysis is sharp and breaks down conventional divisions and scalar hierarchies, but our practice suffers from being caught between the extremes of localized resistance (neighborhood plans, social centers, tent cities, etc.) and cosmopolitan urban utopia.

We recognize INURA as part of what Amin and Thrift describe as "a kaleidoscopic urban world, crammed full with hybrid networks going about their business" (2002: 30). INURA is part of this kaleidoscopic world on the several scales it inhabits. As it has translated local concerns into a *networked scale-jumping* discourse and action, INURA has effectively and primarily operated as a credible interface and translator institution between localized social movements and a variety of networks, including itself. Other networks, informal and professional organizations, associations, etc., have been tied into INURA and have established meaningful ongoing organizational overlap and sometimes collaboration. At the international scale, they include American Association of Geographers (AAG), Association of Collegiate Schools in Planning (ACSP), Planners Network, Association pour la taxation des Transactions pour L'Aide aux Citoyens (ATTAC), and the World Social Forum. On the regional scale, INURA has had impact on, for example, the Network of Small Cities in Tuscany, a voluntary city network in that region. Locally, INURA has given support to and has shared political activities with the SSenter for Applied Urbanism (SAU) and Konzeptgruppe Städtebau (Zurich), Urbi et Orbi (Frankfurt), and Planning Action (Toronto).

It is critical to note that it is in direct comparison to these local urban movement organizations, associations, and groups that INURA's sustainability has been most pronounced: The network has survived all but a few of these local groups; it is almost as if the network has taken on the significance of a "next step" in the career of these organizations. Borrowing a term from Herod and Wright (2002: 219), we can speak of INURA as a "scale-stretching" network, as it explodes and annihilates local

scales of research and action and replaces them with newly defined spaces and topologies of activity. By constantly rebelling against the fixity of the scales at which it operates, INURA partakes in what Amin calls the “perforation of scalar and territorial forms of social organization” (Amin, 2002: 395).

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE: A SUSTAINABLE STRUCTURE?

As the network grows, it has to deal increasingly with its self-governance. INURA is a distillate of social movements, a network of networks, social movement groups, and single-issue campaigns. It operates through shared substantive and ideological beliefs that are remarkably sustainable over time, and politically radical, too. There is a culture of a national cosmopolitanism and certainly a culture of trust, which has long defied an incipient but never significant suspicious competitiveness that characterized some of the early meetings. One structural given, and the organizational backbone, has been the Swiss “central office” of INURA. It has been the determination of the members of the Zurich office that provided the necessary organizational continuity even in times of disorientation during the past 15 years. Another structural strength, and the next “moment” in the shallow hierarchy, has been the remarkably stable and sustained participation of the majority of the founding members. A third structural element has been the annual meeting: Each year a local INURA group has the responsibility of organizing a local meeting consisting of a city part and a retreat. This responsibility is shared democratically and rotates annually. While it is a difficult task that often leaves local groups struggling to find the financial and organizational means to hold the event, it is considered an honor by members to host the meeting, and one will often find competitive bids, reminiscent—ironically—of the international processes by which Olympic host cities are chosen. Part of the job is the publication of two INURA Bulletins, which serve as the preparatory and postevent means of communication in the network. The 27 Bulletins issued over INURA’s long history bear witness to the huge variety as well as intellectual and activist depth of the network.

INURA is here to stay. It has established itself as a lively entity on the landscape of international urban research and action in the context of a hotly contested urban neoliberalization process. As we hope to have demonstrated in this chapter, even as the urban movement sector is constantly being reshaped—leading to identity challenges of existing movement groups and their networks—INURA presents a good case study for these changes. While remaining localized agents of contestation and protest, urban intel-

lectuals, urban activists, urban movements, and their organizations continue to play a role in the reshaping of the globalizing city state. They have also become relevant actors in the shift from the *government* to the *governance* of cities. This is apparent through the activities of many INURA member groups, whether they remain critical observers and analysts of urban change or positive contributors to it. That the myriad decentralized urban groups now have organizations like INURA to network their localized activities into a newly sedimented yet constantly changing transnational reality has been a tremendous advantage for the coordination of fragmented “militant particularisms” (Harvey, 2000) in the struggle against neoliberalization.

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NOTES

1. Methodologically, we examined some of the major publications of INURA, its annual bulletins, and related documents among them the original INURA Principles and the recent INURA Declaration, and the two major volumes *Possible Urban Worlds* (1998) and *The Contested Metropolis* (2003). Arts projects, film and other media have been key components of INURA’s work and have also been part of this research. Both authors were founding members of INURA and have participated in most annual conferences, as well as additional thematic meetings in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and Toronto.
2. The poll tax, which officially was called the “Community Charge” for local government services such as garbage collection, became effective on April 1, 1990, and meant that the proportional system that used to be in place for collecting taxes was replaced by a “head” tax. Therefore, both the owner of a castle and a working-class flat paid the same amount of taxes, whereas before it was in proportion to the real estate value.
3. A few weeks after the INURA meeting, neofascist groups attacked and set fire to housing projects on the outskirts of Rostock where immigrants lived. These attacks were documented on video footage from inside the buildings by people who had previously received training and the equipment from INURA member Mark Saunders. His method of training laypeople how to use video cameras produced in this case (as well as in others) a literal insider view of the neofascist

attacks on immigrant housing. The dramatic video footage later was edited into the film *The Truth Lies in Rostock* (Spectacle TV, 1991).

4. INURA members had already held a smaller workshop during the World Social Forum 2003 meeting in Porto Alegre, which presented the work of INURA in general and the INURA Declaration in particular to the public.
5. See the debate on the World Social Forum in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 29 (no. 2, June 2005): 409–446.
6. The surge of social movements in the current era of globalization has generated much academic and political interest in recent years (Klein, 2000; Shepard & Hayduk, 2002; Starr, 2000). Among this work, some authors have also specifically commented on the role of social movements in shaping globalizing cities (cf. Kipfer, 1998; Hamel & Maheu, 2000; Hamel, Lustiger-Thaler, & Mayer, 2001; Schmid, 1998; Köhler & Wissen, 2003; Conway, 2004; Pickvance, 2003).

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Squaring Up to Neoliberalism

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Neo-liberalism may be insatiable but it is not invulnerable.
—SUSAN GEORGE (1999)

URBAN FRONTIERS

Frontiers are complex entities. In one interpretation, they represent the edge of civilized life, to be pushed back in order to incorporate the uncivilized. This is the usage associated with the settlement of the western United States by Europeans. Applying this interpretation, the neoliberal offensive—in its various guises—seeks to extend the frontiers of the market order to embrace the urban realm, perhaps in the face of heavy opposition, in the name of progress. Indeed, Smith (1996) documents its use to promote and legitimate the gentrification of working-class and minority neighborhoods. Alternatively, frontiers are liminal zones of struggle between different groups for power and influence—each seeking to expand their influence by shaping these zones on their own terms. In this view, the frontier is a fuzzy geographic space where outcomes are uncertain. Whereas borders and walls create well-defined barriers to be breached or defended, frontiers have a complex geography whose very outlines are the products of contestation. Contestation may break out within seemingly stable localities, threatening to fracture frontier zones from within or to extend them to new

territories. Furthermore, instead of asking how some shared definition of civilization and progress can be extended, the very definition of what counts as progress is at stake in frontier zones. Frontiers are sociospatial zones of contestation, rich in the generation of social imaginaries, norms, and practices. They are also associated with uncertain, unpredictable, path-dependent trajectories, with every success—the conversion of a frontier into relatively “stable” zones of hegemony, where certain principles become common sense—being potentially subject to future challenge. In this way, today’s frontiers may become tomorrow’s bulwarks; but as soon as the new frontiers are fortified, they become targets for new kinds of resistance and counterattack. The relationship between neoliberalism and cities is a case in point: Cities contain some of the more audacious examples of neoliberal governance, but at the same time they are also among the principal sites and stakes for the generation of oppositional movements and alternative social visions. Cities may count as bastions of the market order, but they also define many of its most vulnerable flanks.

The chapters in this book illustrate the complexities of neoliberalism’s urban frontiers. On the one hand, neoliberalism itself comes to power by successfully challenging preexisting alternatives, creating frontiers in places that once seemed secure for such practices as Fordism/Keynesianism or socialism, thereby metastasizing across space. In recent times, frontier zones have been converted into arenas of neoliberal control, albeit precariously, and cities have been key nodes in this process (Sites; Mayer; Leitner, Sheppard, Sziarto, & Maringanti; Peck & Tickell; Martin; all this volume). By adopting different strategies in different places, reflecting the particularities of context, neoliberalism emerged and developed in a geographically variegated and hybrid fashion. On the other hand, the dominance of neoliberalism, and its definition of progress and the good society, has been increasingly subject to contestation, generating yet more variegated landscapes of governance. Neoliberalism has no pristine place, and its every hybrid is haunted by alternatives, some progressive, others less so. But again, the frontiers are perpetually remade, exhibiting critical (and, in some cases, just raw) facets of the contemporary condition while also opening windows on the future. As the contributions collected here richly illustrate, urban frontier zones entail multiple oppositional and alternative imaginaries and practices—playing out in multiple spaces in, beyond, and across cities, and in varying social realms from communities to state agencies—just as they reveal some of the many faces of neoliberalism. What counts as frontier zones is up for grabs, particularly dramatically revealed in the battle for Seattle, but so are the trajectories and long-term effects of contestation, and the question of what kind of society we want to create.

NEOLIBERALISM: ALL OVER THE PLACE?

The ascendancy of neoliberalism over the past three decades has been associated with a series of momentous consequences. Among its more significant landmarks, the animated map of neoliberalization includes the “Chicago boys” (Latin American economics graduates of the University of Chicago) invited to Chile by Pinochet to transform socialism into a free-market economy, the phase-shifting regimes of Thatcher and Reagan, China’s long march toward market capitalism, the imposition of structural adjustment programs across large parts of the developing world, market transition by shock therapy in the former Soviet bloc, and the neoliberal apologia of Bill Clinton and Tony Blair’s “third way.” We should not be surprised, perhaps, that this metastasizing of free-market capitalism has generated proclamations of the end both of history and geography, triumphalist rhetoric of a “borderless world,” even sightings of a new kind of flat earth (Friedman, 2005; Ohmae, 2005). Critical assessments of neoliberalization, while steadfastly refusing to accept that time and politics have somehow stopped, likewise point to the sobering—if not daunting—character of this form of free-market *realpolitik*. For Perry Anderson (2000: 17), neoliberalism is no less than “the most successful ideology in world history.” Others see it as having achieved a kind of policy monopoly, with a hegemonic status among elite decision makers shaping new kinds of common sense and subjectivity (see Bourdieu, 1998; Rose, 1999; Centeno, 2001). And the effects, if not ubiquitous, are undeniably pervasive. “There has everywhere,” David Harvey (2005: 2) writes, “been an emphatic turn towards neoliberalism in political-economic practices and thinking since the 1970s.” Anderson’s (2000: 17) millennial assessment was that “neoliberalism as a set of principles rules undivided across the globe,” and Saad-Filho and Johnston (2005: 2) conclude that “by persuasion and by force, neoliberalism [has] spread everywhere.”

Acknowledging but not succumbing to these arguments, the contributors to this volume share a concern to destabilize neoliberalism, both analytically and politically. Analytically, they seek to underline how neoliberalism is, and has always been, interwoven with other sociospatial projects. On the one hand, such contestations shaped the emergence, forms taken by, and hybridity of really existing neoliberalisms. On the other hand, emergent neoliberalisms coexist with contestations, each shaping while also being shaped by its others. Thus *Contesting Neoliberalism* means looking *beyond* neoliberalism, to the social movements and political projects that coevolve with it. Politically, this destabilization makes it possible to visualize the limits of neoliberalism while underlining the importance of alternative imaginaries and practices. This volume’s focus on the nexus of neoliberalism and contestation is therefore intended to illuminate some of

the alternative visions and trajectories that are being generated outside the new mainstream of market-oriented politics, delving into sources of resistance and opposition to the neoliberal offensive while underscoring the creatively contentious nature of neoliberal, anti-neoliberal, and extra-neoliberal politics in, beyond, and across cities. Each of the contributors squares up to neoliberalism in her or his own way, but there is a shared unease with monolithic and functionalist conceptions of neoliberalization as an undifferentiated global behemoth, running on autopilot or guided by some invisible hand.

It is vital to recall that neoliberalism's "market order" did not spring into existence, fully formed some time in the 1970s. It did not emerge spontaneously from innate human desires to truck, barter, and exchange; nor was it generated as an inevitable by-product of the regulatory needs of financialized capitalism. It is, above all, a *constructed* order, emerging in variegated ways in different places, in response to local challenges as well as nonlocal influences, rather than diffusing worldwide in stable form from a single birthplace (Peck & Tickell; Leitner et al.; both this volume). Neoliberal trajectories—in Chile, Germany, South Africa, the United States, and elsewhere—have always been made, and in conditions not even of the choosing of local neoliberal elites. "Domestic" politics thus always matter in the timing and character of "local" neoliberalizations, giving each hybrid composite formation its homegrown features. As Patricia Martin aptly argues for Mexico, "Rather than a clearly bounded temporal and geographical transition, neoliberalism gained hegemonic status through a multisited overlapping sequence of ideological and lived confrontations that had deeply political origins and implications" (p. 58, this volume).

It follows that geography matters here in a much more than trivial way, another conviction shared by the contributors to this volume. The strategic priorities, tactics, and practices of neoliberalism have been shaped, in more than merely "contingent" ways, by place-specific struggles—as Larner and Butler show for New Zealand, Martin demonstrates for Mexico, and Peck and Tickell argue in the British case. Even if the family of local neoliberalisms shares a number of generic features, each member of the family is nevertheless socialized in different ways. Each is shaped by its local environment and by the struggles that brought it to life—be this forebears like the British variant of Keynesianism, say, or the Mexican form of authoritarian developmentalism. Neoliberalisms, in this sense, were all conceived and birthed in rather different contexts; neoliberalization was unevenly developed from the start. It follows that some degree of context-specificity is essential to the understanding of neoliberalism, though this stands in various degrees of tension with more abstract formulations of neoliberalism as an interpenetrated transnational phenomenon (see Peck, 2004; Castree, 2005). These analytical challenges notwithstanding, a col-

lective insight from the literature on neoliberal transformations, reinforced by many of the case studies assembled here, is that no two pathways to neoliberalism have been exactly the same, and neither is every contemporary trajectory headed for the same destination. The multiple geographical origins of neoliberalism and its spatially disparate contemporary character are both enormously consequential, again both analytically and politically.

If much of the literature on neoliberalism has been dominated by nationally specific accounts of market transition (see, for example, Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002; Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2005), the contributors to this volume focus more insistently on the subnational and urban politics of neoliberalization/contestation. Cities have served as command centers, relay stations, and experimental sites in the roll-out of neoliberal modes of governance; they have been battlegrounds in strategically significant moments in the process of neoliberalization; and they have been epicenters of contestation and transformative struggle. New York City, for example, experienced what many consider to be the paradigmatic urban fiscal crisis of the 1970s, subsequently becoming a laboratory and export platform for neoliberal policy innovations like workfare and zero-tolerance policing (Wacquant, 1999; Harvey, 2005). In turn, each neoliberal-urban formation, New York City included, has its own unique vulnerabilities, zones of overextension, undefended flanks. Anti-neoliberal forces are consequently confronted by spatially differentiated political opportunity structures, just as they draw upon distinctive political capacities, cultures, and visions of their own. If neoliberalization is far from monolithic, the contemporary politics of contestation are also anything but unitary. We cannot make do with monochromatic images of neoliberalism and its others. Critiques of such binary thinking feature in several contributions (see, especially, Leitner et al.; Oldfield & Stokke; both this volume).

Conceptions of neoliberalism, and of its limits and others, themselves have political consequences. In this respect, some of the most basic geographical questions—*where is neoliberalism, where did it come from?*—can yield productive and intriguing answers. To start with, we are confronted with a quite elementary geographical paradox in that the *neoliberalism* that for many is a synonym for “Americanization” or the “Washington consensus” is, as Doug Henwood (2005: 2) points out, “a word that is wide usage everywhere but in the U.S.” While the term has relatively little popular currency in Los Angeles or Washington, DC, neoliberalism can trigger street protests in Hong Kong, Cape Town, La Paz, and Paris. Subjective understandings of neoliberalism vary geographically, just as a complex spatial politics attends to the *naming* of strategies and actors as “neoliberal,” or otherwise. The naming of market-reform projects in, say, Seattle or Cancún as “neoliberal”—itself largely a critics’ term—brings political consequences: It may help to establish connections between oppositional movements oth-

erwise engaged in “local” struggles, but it may also lead to misattributions of political responsibility or misconceived responses. Hence the importance of the kind of context-specific *situated* analyses of neoliberalism that Smith, Larner and Butler, and others exemplify in their contributions here.

“Locating neoliberalism” is not simply a matter of splitting hairs between one local variant of neoliberalism and another, or of celebrating local contingency for its own sake; it is about coming to terms with—and explaining—the real conjunctural complexity of what Brenner and Theodore (2002) call “actually existing neoliberalisms,” their conditions of (re)production, characteristic features, and contradictions. In order to assess the character and depth of neoliberalization, then, it is necessary to decipher the structures and dynamics of particular political formations—as exemplified here by Miller’s analysis of Calgary and Martin’s rereading of Mexico—since neither neoliberalism’s precise form nor even its presence can be presumed at the outset. “Knowing your local neoliberalism” also means figuring out its relational and constitutive connections to extralocal sources, channels, and agents of neoliberalization; a careful cross-referential mapping of the shifting political terrain; and relational analyses of those local conjunctures that together constitute the wider regime. In circumstances of putative or extant neoliberal hegemony, these geographies of governance also establish the terrains and targets for resistance.

The challenge of “locating neoliberalism” is also one of conceptualization. In some readings, it is a form of economic imperialism, an institutionalized rule regime firmly anchored in the “Washington consensus.” Others see it in more ideological terms, as a quasi-religious belief system or new common sense, deeply implicated in the production of new forms of marketized subjectivity. In other interpretations, it is a very loose bundle of political practices and governmentalities, stitched together by post hoc discursive rationalizations. While many of the chapters in this volume engage with these alternative conceptualizations, Miller and Sites parse some of the attendant political challenges in particularly suggestive ways. Is neoliberalism a diffuse regime of political-economic power, closely interwoven with the dynamics of globalizing financialized capitalism, one that increasingly shapes the “rules of the game” for a host of national and local actors? Or should we view neoliberalism as a much less than coherent bundle of practices and projects, contingently interwoven by agents and through networks in a wide variety of open-ended ways? The former political-economy-oriented perspective tends to foreground the “structural” dynamics and logics of the neoliberalization process, which are seen to have a powerful extralocal reach. The latter approach is more typical of Foucauldian analyses, attentive to the institutional creativity and agentic potential found in and around neoliberal strategies of rule. Peck and Tickell visualize neoliberalism as an ideologically embedded rule regime, consonant with major

sources of contemporary political-economic power, even while they recognize its diffuse and socially produced origins in a range of local struggles and transformations. Larner and Butler, for their part, emphasize the creative and opportunistic bundling of neoliberal governmentalities with other coevolving strategies of rule, seeing no necessary tendency to structural coherence, even as they are sensitive to the particular modalities of neoliberal policy transfer.

These different ways of “seeing” neoliberalism tend to yield distinctive insights that are also suggestive, as Smith, Miller, and Sites point out, of different political strategies. Those focused on the logics and illogics of neoliberalization often portray its limits in structural terms, as incipient contradictions, such as financial crisis, deregulatory overreach, or “market failure.” But there is a kind of political fatalism involved in waiting, on the basis of theoretical faith, for these contradictions to work their damaging course. Those concerned with the diverse practices and subjectivities of neoliberal rule, on the other hand, are more likely to detect productive (even transformative) potential in (local) agency, resistance, and coping strategies. But such analyses run the risk of underestimating the very same fiscal, institutional, and ideological “constraints” that political economists may be prone to exaggerate. Miller examines the intersection of such “top-down” and “bottom-up” pressures in the context of his account of Calgary, revealing both the potential of and the limits to neoliberalized local governance. Here, neoliberal devolution triggers countervailing tendencies, opening up opportunities for local decision making and political mobilization, which quickly bump up against the limitations of fiscally constrained, market-oriented urban governance.

The emergent scalar politics of neoliberalization/contestation are a recurrent theme in many of the contributions. While Miller, Sites, Bond, and McInnes, and Eick call attention, in different ways, to some of the deleterious consequences of neoliberal downloading, regulatory dumping, and unfunded mandates for local-democracy and urban institutional capacity, Wainwright’s analysis exposes the democratic deficits that exist around the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the new forms of transnational urban protest that have emerged around its peripatetic—and now acutely politicized—meetings. If, tendentially speaking, neoliberalization is often associated with elitist and technocratic decision making at the global scale (power without responsibility), and a combination of regulatory dumping and fiscal downloading at the urban scale (responsibility without power), then this scalar configuration is clearly an inherently precarious one (Peck & Tickell, 1994). These unstable scalar architectures hold serious implications for the preferred sites, strategic stakes, and transformative potential of anti-neoliberal politics. Contestation at the local scale is not just a delaying tactic, a means of impeding the roll-out of neoliberal modes of gover-

nance; very often it also enriches the repertoire of workable progressive alternatives—some of which may have potential either for “scaling-up” or for network-like transfer to other localities. And it also tends to build political capacity, ripe for future battles.

The examinations of progressive local responses to the neoliberalization of labor markets by both Mayer and Theodore exemplify these issues. On the other hand, the potential of such progressive localisms may be blunted if they remain confined within a neoliberal policy environment of regulatory undercutting and intensive interlocal competition. These “systemic” features of neoliberalized extralocal relations, in turn, underline the need for a parallel program of political action, in this case targeting its command centers, peak institutions, transmission belts, and its “central nervous system.” As Wainwright shows, this has also been a strategic goal of “post-Seattle” forms of transnational urban contestation.

Another recurrent theme of *Contesting Neoliberalism* is that processes of neoliberalization and contestation operate simultaneously, not sequentially. There is certainly scope for oppositional and resistance politics to morph into truly transformative and antisystemic movements (see Prashad, 2003), but clearly not all forms of emancipatory and progressive politics are organically connected to neoliberalism and its contradictions; many grow from their own soil. The scope of contentious politics therefore exceeds the long shadows cast by neoliberalization (Leitner et al., in this volume). Equally, it is important to remember that neoliberalism itself, far from being some kind of natural or preordained order, was a (constructed) product of contentious politics (Peck & Tickell; Leitner et al.; both this volume). Hence the need to open up conversations around the complex nexus of neoliberalism and contestation, in all its historically and geographically variegated forms.

SPACES OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

Sharing a broad consensus about neoliberalism’s shortcomings and the importance of contestations, the chapters collected here document the multiplicity of contentious politics circulating around neoliberalism as it seeks to confront and redraw the urban frontiers now patrolled by, if not commanded by, neoliberalism. Contributors to this volume share the conviction that such diversity is a source of strength, notwithstanding the well-known dangers of particularism and dissonance. This diversity can be parsed in several ways: in terms of the general orientation of contestations with respect to neoliberalism; in terms of how contestations articulate with neoliberalism; and in terms of the transformative potential of contestation, particularly in light of the politics of alliance building and spatial strategies.

In doing so, we emphasize that the purpose here is not to classify or “rate” individual struggles or analytical-cum-political positions. The hybrid and open-ended nature of contestations resists any such categorization. Taken together, the contributions collected here shed light on various facets of contestation, and here we draw freely, stylize, and abstract from the specificities of particular cases with this broader objective in mind.

Contestations are most frequently interpreted as responses to the hegemonic force of neoliberal capitalism. Such responses range from issue- or problem-oriented contestations of particular deleterious impacts of neoliberal policies, such as resistance against evictions or utility cutoffs, to contestations that challenge key claims of neoliberal ideology and promote alternative non-neoliberal social and spatial imaginaries, such as anti-WTO activism. Issue- or problem-oriented struggles are often seen as limited in scope, or particularistic, by comparison to antisystemic struggles, but in practice the two bleed into each other. Thus, protests against utility cutoffs may be motivated by a broader critique of privatization, just as anti-WTO protests are catalyzed by the conglomeration of groups mobilizing in response to a range of different and often very specific problems (from Korean farmers protesting American agricultural subsidies to American workers protesting low-wage Asian industrialization). Whereas Miller is concerned with the limited and short-term nature of certain issue-oriented contestations appealing to individual self-interest, Bond and McInnes illustrate how problem-oriented protests articulate with broader agendas challenging neoliberalism. In the former case, there is a sense that the channels and architectures of neoliberal governance are distorting and corrosive of capacities for effective social change; in the latter, even particularistic struggles infused with a counterhegemonic imaginary are seen to be potentially generative of regime transformation.

Thus, contestations are more than a reaction to the deleterious effects of neoliberalism (Leitner et al., this volume). Even those directly responding to neoliberalism often draw on agendas and alternative imaginaries that predate or exceed neoliberalism, such as progressive liberalism (Keynesianism), socialism, radical democracy, or nonmarket forms of economic organization such as community economies. They might promote collective rather than individual welfare; collaboration rather than competition; consensual rather than hierarchical decision making; recognition and respect for diversity rather than promotion and commodification of individual identity; equity, justice, and social welfare rather than efficiency and competitiveness; and care for the environment rather than productivity, growth, and exploitation. Such alternatives are also mobilized in alternative livelihood practices that continue to operate alongside and within the interstices of neoliberalism (Smith, this volume). The persistence of such alternatives in the presence of varieties of neoliberalism is recursively reflected in

neoliberalism's own hybrid form. Their sometimes depleted, sometimes resurgent, character is also testimony to both the presence of neoliberal hegemony and its limitations.

The articulation of contestations and neoliberalisms can follow a variety of trajectories, as the chapters in this book illustrate. One trajectory is *engagement*, whereby non-neoliberal interests opt for (or see no alternative to) cooperation with neoliberal corporate and institutional power. Several authors describe such engagement, albeit with quite different consequences in different contexts. Both Eick and Mayer describe partnerships that result in the cooptation of local community-based nonprofit organizations into neoliberalism, since they end up training and employing the long-term unemployed and homeless in such tasks as security and policing, instead of representing and lobbying on their behalf. By contrast, Larner and Butler identify a process that they dub the "communitization" of neoliberal governance, in which community organizations and leaders, acting as strategic brokers to connect community agendas with state agencies, effectuate change in both the agendas and the operation of state institutions.

A second trajectory is *opposition* to neoliberal corporate and institutional power. Sites describes community-based struggles in Chicago against energy price hikes and cutoffs; struggles whose lack of effectiveness is traced to limitations of local collective action in the face of neoliberal policy hegemony, and to racial and community-labor cleavages within and beyond the locality. Bond and McInnes detail the dynamics of community opposition toward electricity privatization and other neoliberal policies of the African National Congress. They show how a local civic organization used diverse forms of collective action—from street protests to payment boycotts and self-help illegal restoration of electricity operation—and built alliances with other antiprivatization movements and think tanks, culminating in the formation of a political party seeking to advance and test its socialist imaginary through electoral politics. This more positive outcome is explained by an ability to build mass-movement campaigns, emanating from well-organized democratic communities and networks and supported by an antiapartheid imaginary openly challenging the neoliberal agenda of the ruling party.

While Bond and McInnes stress the possibilities of opposition, others identify ways in which activist practices strategically combine opposition with engagement in order to advance their agenda. Oldfield and Stokke find that civic organizations creatively and successfully combined oppositional practices such as street blockages with engagement with local officials, the courts, and the police in seeking to secure housing tenure, services, and livelihoods in Cape Town. "Many [civic] organizations combine diverse kinds of protests, employing the more radical tactics to solve problems and resist only when negotiations and legal demonstrations fail to

yield acceptable outcomes” (Oldfield & Stokke, p. 148, this volume). They conclude that the urban activism emerging in South African cities neither rejects outright, nor is it simply coopted by, neoliberalization strategies. Wainwright also highlights the selective combination of engagement and antagonistic modes of contestation by different actors and groups among WTO opponents. In Cancún, the WTO provided access for a select group of NGO representatives, mostly from the global north, to participate in the deliberations about trade policies, albeit on WTO terms. Others were allowed within the compound but kept away from the negotiations, but the majority of the protesters were completely excluded by a fence. This effectively separated NGO representatives from the “multitude” an allegory for the segmentations and divisions that can exist or emerge within anti-neoliberal politics, between the various reformist, confrontational, and transformative projects that make up this heterogeneous “whole.”

Physical spaces, such as streets and buildings, and embodied resistance—bodies moving through, occupying, and resignifying space—are crucial to anti-neoliberal struggles. Wainwright (this volume) highlights this physicality of spaces of resistance in Seattle and Cancún—carefully planned and orchestrated mass rallies and marches toward Seattle’s convention center, site of the WTO ministerial; protesters blocking streets to prevent WTO participants from reaching the center; violent clashes between police and protesters; the state/police containing and suppressing protest by blocking access to space and restricting bodily mobility; and self-immolation on the fence separating protestors from the WTO in Cancún. Bond and McInnes and Oldfield and Stokke (both this volume) also bring to light diverse spatial tactics of civics in Soweto and Cape Town, South Africa: mass mobilization to target centers of state power, persistent street protests, residents digging holes in the street, occupying state-owned land, patrolling neighborhood streets, forceful blocking of evictions, and sit-ins. The physicality and liminality of such strategies are all the more important since neoliberal strategies seem increasingly associated with technocratic and authoritarian forms of governance. They also suggestively mobilize values and vocabularies of distinctively non-neoliberal politics, the long-run consequences of which certainly offer hope, even as they remain inherently unpredictable in terms of their specific outcomes.

Both Theodore and Mayer reflect, however, on the unintended consequences that can accompany contestation—consequences that may end up furthering neoliberalization. Workers’ rights organizations, for example, intending to improve the livelihoods of day laborers in U.S. cities, seek to “replace the anarchy of the day labor market with a system of rules based on universal labor standards [by] pursuing strategies to improve pay and conditions in this market” (Theodore, p. 263, this volume). Yet, such practices can have the unintended consequence of increasing the supply of day labor-

ers (by undermining their bargaining power) and inadvertently promoting the expansion and societal legitimacy of substandard employment conditions in and beyond the day labor market. However contradictory, these efforts also effectuate forms of “bottom-up” regulatory pressure in the labor market—a strategically creative response to neoliberal downloading and “deregulation.”

A third trajectory involves decentering neoliberal truth claims through *alternative knowledge production*. Calling attention to the purposive construction of neoliberal rationalities and forms of governance can therefore be seen as part of the wider project of critiquing and destabilizing the market order. Peck and Tickell, for instance, show how right-wing think tanks have played a major role in the dissemination of neoliberal ideas. Taking a leaf from this playbook, anti-neoliberal think and think-act tanks have joined the war of ideas by disseminating alternative interpretations, facts, and arguments (Leitner et al., this volume). Lehrer and Keil describe the activities of the International Network of Urban Research and Action, a transnational interurban network of academics, activists, and practitioners seeking to challenge neoliberal norms by developing alternative narratives of urban change, meeting annually to share and debate their diverse perspectives and ideas, and engaging directly in anti-neoliberal activism and policymaking in the cities in which they reside and meet. They argue that this has provided space for diverse local groups to network their activities, thus helping coordinate, advance, and transnationalize localized struggles against neoliberalization.

A fourth trajectory is *disengagement*, that is, developing spaces within which alternative practices can be pursued in their own right and on their own terms. This includes nonmarket forms of economic organization such as community economies, as well as everyday livelihood practices. Smith indicates how everyday practices in Slovakia, pursuing nonmarket rationalities, fill some of the spaces vacated as a result of neoliberalism’s failure to provide adequate possibilities for employment and income. Some would regard these practices as “flanking” or coping mechanisms that are only modestly disruptive of neoliberal norms, and may even contribute to their reproduction by providing low-cost means for meeting basic needs, but Smith sees a different dynamic at work. He argues that such practices can also become a foundation for validating and reinforcing non-neoliberal subjectivities, “rendered less in relation to a centered reading of capitalist formal economies and more as a series of complexly interconnected, or articulated, proliferative forms” (Smith, p. 217, this volume).

Given the multitude of contestations (see also Leitner et al., this volume, Table 1.1), and of trajectories through which contestations rub up against neoliberalism, it is little wonder that the effectiveness of contestation has become such an intensely debated issue. Assessments in the chap-

ters of this volume vary from qualified optimism (Leitner et al.; Lerner & Butler; Oldfield & Stokke; Bond & McInnes; Lehrer & Keil; Smith; all this volume) to skepticism if not pessimism (Peck & Tickell; Martin; Sites; Eick; Theodore; all this volume). Differences in the degree to which contributors are willing to subscribe to Gramsci's "pessimism of the intellect"—skepticism that action will result in meaningful change—may, as we argue above, reflect differences in how neoliberalism and contestation are theorized. But they also reflect the multiplicity of really existing trajectories of contestations, and contributors' concrete experiences of and engagements with these. For example, Oldfield and Stokke explicitly separate themselves from Bond and McInnes's political economic conceptualization and its structural leanings. Yet, Bond and McInnes share Oldfield and Stokke's ultimately optimistic assessment as a result of engaging with really existing contestations in South Africa that made a difference. Thus, optimism reflects not only academics' theoretical inclinations but also activists' concrete achievements.

Debates about the potential of contestation to effectuate social and political change have tended to polarize. Some argue that the surest path to success is systemic challenge capable of rewriting the rules of the game (Peck & Tickell, this volume), criticizing "militant particularism" for creating divisions that undermine the possibility of allying in the name of systemic change (see Harvey, 2000). Others argue that local alternatives are the best way to undo neoliberalism by thinking and acting in ways that consciously stand outside the project (Gibson-Graham, 2006), or alternatively that we live in a poststructural world where the multitude can directly take on empire (Hardt & Negri, 2000). In the realm of really existing contestations, the World Social Forum is similarly motivated by the idea that another world can be made possible by bringing different contestations together around a shared rejection of neoliberalism: *one no, many yes's*. The chapters in this book suggest, however, that a binary separation of systemic from particularistic challenges is unproductive, and does little justice to the complexities of contestations of neoliberalism in, beyond, and across cities.

Paralleling the binary between systemic and particularistic challenges, in many ways, are disagreements about the most effective scale for contesting neoliberalism. Some see potential in the local (Smith; Oldfield and Stokke; both this volume), whereas others emphasize the limits of the local, seeing it as constraining, or even a kind of "trap" (Sites; Theodore; Mayer; all this volume). Those who tend to emphasize the potential of the local in collective political action stress the importance of tightly knit place-based communities where frequent highly localized social interactions breed familiarity and strong bonds (Miller, 2004). As Sites's chapter reminds us, however, such an emphasis on communities as places of cohesion can over-

look the deep-seated racial, class, and other social cleavages—the city trenches—that constitute an obstacle for successful mobilization from below and seem in many respects to have become more pronounced under neoliberal urbanism. Scholars across the social sciences have proposed alliances as the ideal political form to acknowledge and bridge across gender, race, class, and other differences, as well as across space and scale (Bystydzienski & Schacht, 2001; Jakobsen, 1998).¹ Sites and other contributors echo these sentiments, stressing the importance of coalition building across community cleavages, combined with strengthened linkages between local and translocal scales of political action. In the face of neoliberal hegemony, these represent some of the most formidable political challenges.

Alliances among civil society organizations are not new phenomena, but collective action against neoliberal policies has increasingly involved alliance politics. Civil society organizations are learning to identify, negotiate with, and build alliances among diverse civil society groups—labor unions, community and neighborhood organizations, welfare and human rights organizations, and church groups or faith-based organizations. For example, labor–community coalitions and labor–consumer alliances in U.S. cities, sometimes bridging racial divides, have broadened support for workers’ centers and living wage and fair-trade campaigns (Mayer; Leitner et al.; Theodore; all this volume). Similarly, anti-WTO protests have brought together a diverse constellation of interests and organizations—AFL-CIO affiliated labor unions, hundreds of diverse NGOs, the Direction Action Network, university students, activists, and workers from around the world (Wainwright, this volume). However, as Wainwright and others point out, these emergent movements confront numerous challenges: both from within, in negotiating differences among members of the alliance; and from without, such as the neoliberal project’s divide-and-rule strategy and its colonization of key command centers.

Place-based alliance formation is complemented by translocal and transnational networking, extending organizing to the regional, national, and global scales (Lehrer & Keil; this volume). The majority of the contributors to this book recognize, and stress the need for, extralocal networking across space and scales to effectively respond to the shifting politics of neoliberalism. A multiscale politics implies scale jumping—transforming local into regional, national, and global movements or networks; and escaping the traps of localism, parochialism, and particularism by simultaneously expanding their geographic and political reach. Bond and McInnes, for example, describe how the SECC, a place-based community group contesting electricity cutoffs, rising prices, and service failures in Soweto, joined forces with other local and national civics to form a national alliance of “Social Movements Indaba” in order to fight for a common agenda “to turn basic needs into genuine human rights” (Bond & McInnes, p. 173, this volume).

Yet scaling-up must be complemented by attending carefully to the local. Thus, Mayer notes that transnational social movements, such as ATTAC, have recognized the need to build stronger, broader bases of support among residents in participating places. Similarly, Oldfield and Stokke stress the need for urban activists to “scale down” to, and engage organically with, residents in localities, both to keep them informed and to build stronger neighborhood support.

ANOTHER CITY IS POSSIBLE

It is appropriate that the collective conclusions of this volume are somewhat open-ended, since this is the case for all politics. In emphasizing the nexus of neoliberalism and contestation, we have sought here to confront neoliberalism—squaring up to the causes and consequences of this pernicious market order—while at the same time analytically privileging some of those political moments that might illuminate pathways beyond neoliberalism. In part, our concern has been to destabilize the concept of neoliberalism itself, the rise of which has been associated with the pervasive naturalization of market outcomes, relations, and solutions, together with the necessitarian politics of “There is no alternative.” Recognizing that neoliberalism itself is a political creation, rather than some preordained ultimate stage of market capitalism, is a prerequisite for visualizing politics beyond neoliberalism. What was made can be unmade.

But since the political landscape itself has been substantially transformed by the neoliberal onslaught, any move beyond neoliberalism must operate on a different terrain—with different targets, objectives, tactics, modes of organization, and so forth. *Contesting Neoliberalism* has foregrounded one aspect of this reconstituted landscape—the role of cities, urban movements, and metropolitan ideas in both the roll-out and contestation of the neoliberal project. Contributors to the volume broadly agree that the neoliberal program was, from the outset, geographically differentiated yet transnationally interconnected, and subsequently evolved unevenly both within places and across space. While projects of market-oriented reform, *qua* neoliberal projects, share some distinct features—such as a preference for individualized over socialized strategies, for competition over coordination, for market distribution over sociospatial redistribution—they are all also prosecuted in context-specific ways, and associated with geographically particular outcomes. Political responses to neoliberalism have been no less variegated. Mobilization at the local scale has impeded the roll-out of neoliberal projects like welfare reform, privatization, and trade liberalization. Some of these struggles have enriched the repertoire of workable progressive alternatives, including new forms of social ownership, green

development, fair trade and basic income proposals, and labor market re-regulation. Many of these progressive projects have the potential for “scaling-up,” while others are being propagated through translocal and transnational networks.

The fact that many of today’s progressive movements *begin* as urban or local struggles represents, however, a more than trivial condition. Even those who share the progressive commitment that, to coin a phrase, “another city is possible” differ on the question of strategic political priorities. Will the full potential of local alternatives only be realized once the extralocal rules of the game are altered, so as to reduce the whip of interlocal competition? Or might we witness a process of transformation “from below,” in which a diverse range of local forces ally according to shared priorities? On what political capacities, resources, and imaginaries might such alternative movements draw? Are we seeing the first stirrings of distinctively *transnational* forms of urban activism? There are many remaining questions and few conclusive answers. Yet, there is a broad consensus among the contributors to this volume that the central question for anti-neoliberal movements cannot be reduced to a simple choice between local or extralocal networking; or between local, national, or global organizing. Rather, the recognition that local, regional, national, and global scales of governance and struggle are radically intertwined means confronting the challenges of a different kind of politics. The eruption and persistence of challenges to neoliberal rule, in cities across the globe; the proliferation of translocal and transnational networks, and of alliances among diverse social groups and movements; are each suggestive of such innovation, providing hope and inspiration that alternatives to the market and consumer monoculture are alive and thriving.

NOTE

1. We are indebted to Kristin Sziarto for this formulation and for her comments on an earlier draft.

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