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Interventions in the Political Geography of Asia's Transborder Urban Networks

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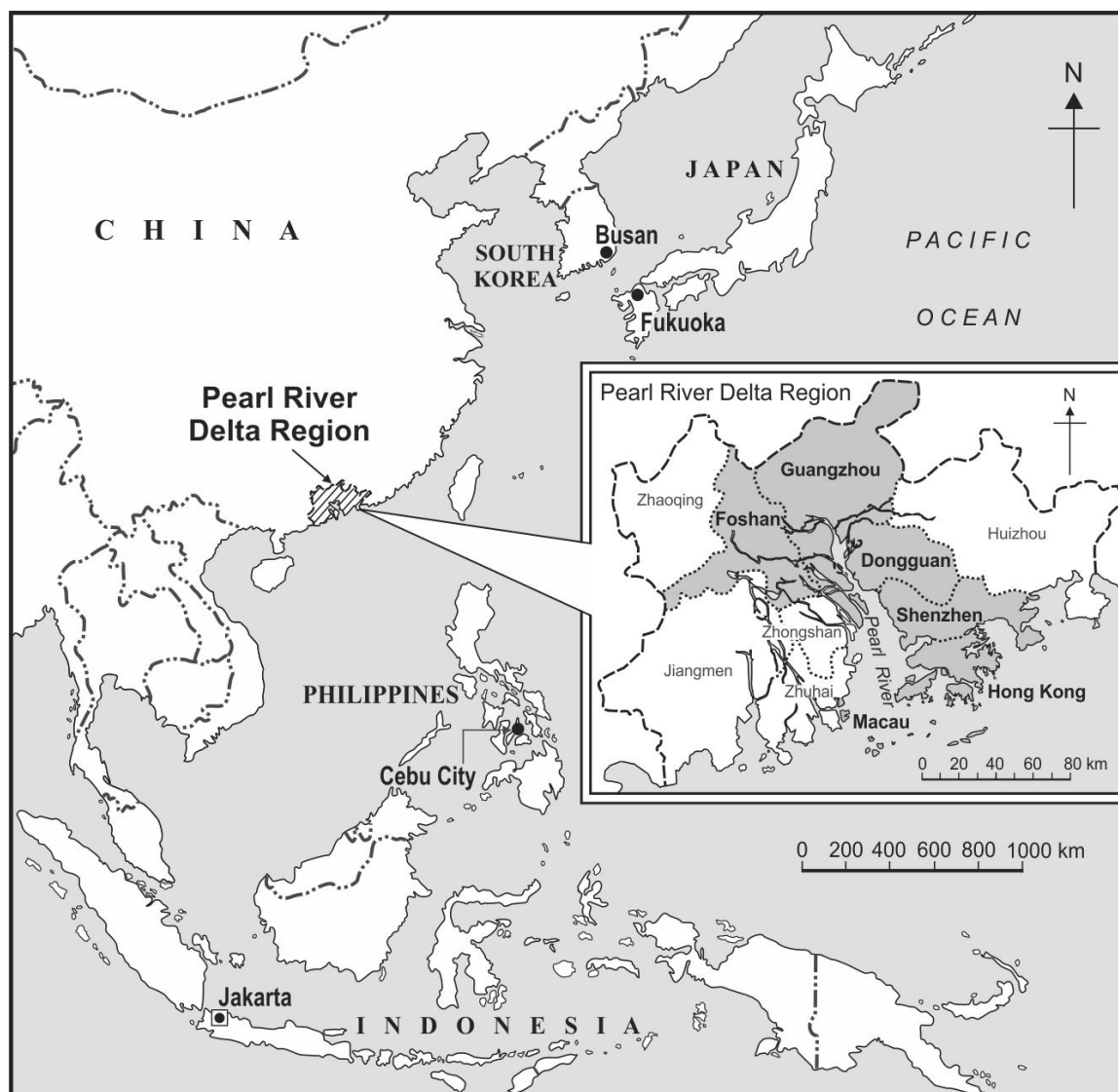
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INTERVENTIONS IN THE POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ASIA'S TRANSBORDER URBAN NETWORKS

This series of interventions speak to the wider literature on interrelations between state territorialization processes and border-crossing urban linkages. Focusing on cases in Asia, we seek to bring into view a greater diversity of transborder urban political geographies than are visible in metageographical imaginings of city networks spanning state boundaries. Specifically, the interventions address four main areas that extend beyond the dominant metageography that conceives of the world in terms of territorially bounded nation-states. The first concerns the territorial unit of analysis which forms the basis of a world of urban networks. Second, it is important to recognize that it is not merely nation-state borders that are crossed by urban networks, but also the governance of urban areas that extend beyond the official administrative boundaries of a city which often necessitate collaborative connections between city officials and their counterparts in neighbouring districts. Third, we highlight the range of actors involved in forging urban networks, especially the possibilities for urban networking 'from below'. Finally, our interventions are all viewed from the temporal and regional frame of contemporary Asia because of the region's urban density and diversity. As such, we invite further comparative engagement in relation not only to other Asian cases, but also to cross-border experiences and urban realities elsewhere in the world.



INTRODUCTION: REMAPPING POLITICAL GEOGRAPHIES OF URBAN ASIA

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Twenty-first century global imaginings are framed by the intersection of multiple ‘metageographies’ (Taylor, 2000) in such domains as culture, faith, geopolitics/economics, pan-regional configurations and so on. In political geography, the dominant metageography conceives of the world as being comprised of a mosaic of bounded territorial nation-states (Taylor, 1994). In urban studies, networked geographies tend to associate linkages between cities/city-regions in an era of economic globalization which began in the last decades of the twentieth-century (Beaverstock et al., 2000; McGee, 2002). Theories of globalization which predicted the ‘end of the nation-state’ (Ohmae, 1992; 1995) saw these two metageographies in ‘substitutional’ terms (Bunnell, 2002) of city networks replacing nation-state mosaics. However, there has now been more than a decade of work in geography and cognate disciplines that recognizes both the continued (if reconfigured) importance of the nation-state and the need to attend to transnational linkages associated in particular with global or world cities.

Arising from a conference on *Intercity Networks and Governance in Asia* held at the National University of Singapore’s Asia Research Institute in March 2012, the interventions here speak to the wider literature on interrelations between state territorialization processes and border-crossing urban linkages. Focusing on specific cases in Asia, we seek to bring into view a greater diversity of transborder urban political geographies than are visible in metageographical imaginings of city networks spanning state boundaries, including polycentric networks that traverse city-regions within nation-states.

There are four main ways in which the interventions that follow extend beyond the intersecting metageographies we have noted. The first concerns the territorial unit of analysis which forms the basis of a world of urban networks. It is by now widely recognized that rather than diminishing state power, an era of neoliberal globalization has been associated with a rescaling of state territorialization, especially ‘down’ to the level of the city or city-region (Brenner, 2004; Bunnell and Coe, 2005). In a rather different way, ‘relational urban studies’ work takes cities – especially certain world or global cities – as nodes that frame the spatial organization of contemporary globalization (Derudder et. al., 2012). The nation-state, in other words, is clearly no longer the default or taken-for-granted unit of analysis in social science research. However, is it possible that having escaped the national scale ‘territorial trap’ (Agnew, 1994), researchers now uncritically accept the city or city-region as a unit of analysis? It may be argued, for example, that the kinds of transnational financial linkages that have featured so prominently in global cities research are not so much about London, New York, etc., as they are about interconnections between certain districts or enclaves *within* those cities (Amin and Graham, 1997; Rimmer & Dick, 2009). Similarly, for the kinds of networked political geographies that we are interested in, it may be more appropriate to frame analysis around (trans)localities rather than in terms of cities or urban regions as a whole (see McGee’s intervention). The second and third ways in which our examples exceed transnational inter-city networks follow on directly from the first and concern: the types of borders crossed; and the range of actors involved in border-crossing processes. Thus, second, it is important to recognize that it is not merely nation-state borders that are crossed by urban networks. Governance of urban areas that extend beyond

the official administrative boundaries of a city, for example, often necessitates collaborative connections between city officials and their counterparts in neighbouring districts (see Cañete's intervention). In addition, it is not uncommon for metropolitan areas that are conventionally imagined and referred to as a (singular) city to in fact be comprised of a plurality of administrative territories (see McGee's intervention). It should also be borne in mind that both urban and national boundaries mean different things in different times and places, and sometimes intersect (see Ritter's intervention). Third, urban networks that extend across boundaries of various kinds involve a much wider range of actors than either corporate elites (as in the world cities literature) or policy elites and consultants (as in the burgeoning literature on policy mobilities, see for example Peck, 2011). In particular, we are keen to highlight possibilities for urban networking from below (see Douglass' intervention), whether that be cooperation among citizens across contiguous local government administrative boundaries, or NGO activities interconnecting urban localities in multiple national contexts (see Park's intervention).

Fourth, and finally, our interventions are all viewed from the temporal and regional frame of contemporary Asia. Of course, examples of intercity networks often straddle regional boundaries, just as conversations about flows of people, finances, knowledge, ideas, cultures and technologies between and within cities 'create different social spaces, spaces of flows and spaces of places' (Taylor, 2007, p.133). In Asia, as in other parts of the world, it is possible to identify and articulate diverse forms of 'cross-borderness', relating to a variety of urban contexts. Hence, we make no claim to discern or formulate any specifically Asian form of transborder urban network. However, if an important goal of political geography and regional studies is to bring into comparative relation experiences of what are conventionally considered to be different kinds of transborder urban networks, then Asia is a good lens through which to begin because of its urban density and diversity. It is in this spirit that the contextually specific issues and problems of the variety of urban networks dealt with in the interventions that follow have been assembled. As such, this series of interventions invites further comparative engagement in relation not only to other Asian cases, but also to cross-border experiences and urban realities elsewhere in the world.

NETWORKING SOUTHEAST ASIA'S MEGA-URBAN REGIONS (MURS): A CASE STUDY FROM INDONESIA

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The growth of the urbanized world in the twenty-first century has important implications for the governance of urban areas and the geographies of governance networks. To date, jurisdictional systems of government are still largely embedded in twentieth century systems, raising important questions about the future organization of such networks within and between nation-states. For instance, in the future urbanized world will international meetings organized by the G7 or G22 also include the Mega Urban 30 consisting of the world's largest mega-urban regions? (Petrella, 1995) Such a scenario could be brought about by an alliance between urban governments and the private sector designed to increase the international competitiveness of the firms they are hosting. This form of alliance would create an archipelago of interconnected wealthy MURS increasingly disassociated from their peripheries, which has major implications for systems of local urban governance. It would mean a future urbanized world in which spatial divisions based upon rural and urban demarcations, national income data, trading blocs and security alliances would no longer be the only way of interpreting the global system. Rather, the rationale for the emergence of global mega-urban regions would necessitate an explanation of "a new phase of global capitalism its strategic spaces and its exclusions" (Sassen, 2010, p.10).

An alternative vision of the future argues that the increasing connectivity associated with globalization, rather than creating exclusionary spaces, is expanding the processes of 'translocality' in which 'local-to-local' connections are growing in their importance in facilitating development (Zoomers and Van Western, 2011). This vision rests upon a recognition that the pivotal components of globalization include the creation of more rapid forms of transport and communication, the development of more penetrative global circuits of capital, and the production and consumption sectors 'transcending networks' that reshape urban systems and urban space at the global, national and sub-national levels. These processes are buttressed by a neo-liberal ideology that privileges the market system and seeks to deregulate the international and national regulatory environments (McGee, 2002). In this scenario, there would be an increasing decentralization of political power from the nation-state to lower levels of government and an emphasis upon 'local participation' and 'local governance' that would fuel a growing need for interlocal connectivity.

Yet in a contradictory manner this 'space of flows' that is integrating mega-urban spaces is also creating intra-mega-urban socio-economic disparities between mega-urban core cities and the peripheries of mega-urban regions that emerge as a major fracture zone inhibiting governance innovations. The ideology of globalization also overemphasizes the importance of city cores by undervaluing the importance of local politics that exacerbate tensions of local development and resistance to change. Rather than simply reflecting the imprint of global capital, what we see are processes of both 'articulation' with global flows in certain urban spaces (and social groups) and 'disarticulation' in others. As the mega-urban regions of Southeast Asia have grown, urban space has been reconfigured into articulated networks of interaction between middle and upper class dwellers while excluding "much of the intervening or peripheral spaces from accessing networks, because the networks pass through the spaces without allowing local access" (Graham, 1997, p. 112).

In this intervention the primary concern is with the role that networks play in the policy environment relating to governance in MURs. These policy networks have three components: 'interaction', 'directionality' and 'associational features.' In a generic sense, 'interactive networks' form overlapping linkages between diverse entities (for example, firms, governments, civil society actors and households) that in turn facilitate processes of interactive decision-making between the entities that are characterized by flows of information, commodities, people and capital. These networks are also marked by 'directionality' with respect to global and national networks in that they tend to be focused on urban nodes. They are dominated by international organizations, governments, multilateral security organizations, multinational firms and some international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). The 'associational features' of translocal networks link localities and local entities (local governments, NGOs and civil society associations) and involve horizontal interactions forming interconnected polyadic networks between social movements, individuals, and so on.

Issues of power and control affect the effectiveness of these local networks. The idea that top-down networks operate in some organic, universal manner to share knowledge or create synergies must be critically evaluated. On the other hand, translocal networks at least in theory work on the assumption of sharing knowledge as part of the process of local development. This understanding is vital to assessing the arguments that privilege the role of 'translocal networks' in the development process.

In exploring the role that these networks play in resolving the contradictions of the MURS let us take the example of the Jakarta Mega-Urban Region (JMUR) (McGee, 2011). The Southeast Asian region with a population approaching 600 million is rapidly becoming urbanized with 42 per cent of the population living in urban areas in 2010 (United Nations, 2011) in which mega-urban regions such as Jakarta, as well as Bangkok, Manila, Ho Chi Minh, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, dominate the urban system. In this list Singapore is quite distinctive as a city-state, yet it has extended its urban economic interests to adjacent parts of Malaysia and Indonesia (Bunnell et al., 2012). As capital cities, they are centers of political power but they also generate a significant proportion of national income. They are often perceived as the main 'global gateways' of their nation-states and face significant challenges to creating sustainable, livable and effectively managed mega-urban regions, thus creating sharp differences in the nature of the challenges faced between their core(s) and hinterlands. This concern is relevant, in part, because it is the hinterlands of the mega-urban regions that will be the focus of most mega-urban growth, which is expected to absorb a high proportion of the urban population increase over the next three decades (McGee, 2011). In Southeast Asia, the historical, ecological and cultural differentiation between mega-urban regions is diverse, thereby creating great difficulties for policy makers who seek common solutions to shared mega-urban problems (McGee and Robinson, 1995).

In the case of the Jakarta Mega-Urban Region (JMUR) there are two major challenges to developing new institutional forms of urban government that incorporate translocal development and networks in mega-urban regions. The first arises from the fact that generally in the Indonesian context urban governments form a third tier of government within the national system, which only has a limited range of responsibilities. In the JMUR there are four levels of government: national, provincial, city and district. Within the JMUR, the core city of Jakarta also has a special provincial status because it is the national capital. However in the rest of the JMUR mega-urban region in which 71 percent of the population lived in 2010, there is fragmentation of administrative space between the lowest levels of government that present great challenges to any form of regional collaboration (Bunnell and Miller, 2011). In the JMUR this political fragmentation has been reinforced by the growing decentralization of fiscal and administrative powers to sub-national (especially third tier urban) governments by the central state, accompanied by reduced national fiscal transfers. This creates dysfunctions between the national and lower levels of government as well as barriers to collaborative responses to local

challenges. There is thus a need for both administrative and governance changes that incorporate the idea of 'rescaling.' In other words, as urban areas increase in size, both in numbers and territory, new systems of government and governance need to be developed as urban issues increase in importance at the national level (Brenner, 1999).

In the case of the JMUR, which had a population of almost 30 million people as of 2010 (McGee, 2011) making it one of the largest MURS in Southeast Asia, urban challenges are particularly severe. The JMUR has only a very weak regional administrative agency, the Development Coordinating Agency. This was established in 1975 with responsibilities for monitoring, planning and coordinating the development of the Jakarta Raya (Greater Jakarta) region, which has a smaller area than the JMUR. It is jointly chaired by the governors of Jakarta, Banten and West Java provinces for five years in rotation. Fiscally, it relies on support from the cities of the three provincial level governments. In 2007 a national law was passed setting up a framework for cooperation between the three provinces and the national Ministries of Public Works, the Central Planning Agency and the Home Affairs Ministry. Despite the efforts of former Jakarta Governor Sutiyoso (1997-2007) and Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to encourage greater cooperation in the region there has been little progress (Firman, 2010). Yet this region shares a common ecosystem and has an economy that is increasingly functionally integrated. As a result, spatial restructuring in the JMUR often involves the upgrading of city nodes (Jakarta, Tangerang, Bekasi, Depok and Bandung) and the leap-frogging of urban activity such as residential settlement and industry into the urban hinterlands. This creates enclaves of social and economic exclusion while the rest of the hinterland is denied access to services and public space that are important elements of livability. A major policy priority should therefore be to create an effective translocal collaborative network for the JMUR (Asian Development Bank, 2008). The most obvious policy solution would be to seek greater collaboration between the fragmented administrative bodies of the JMUR. It is not always necessary that such institutional arrangements need to replace existing political administrations managed by different levels of government. They could be formed by the collaborative membership of existing political units (municipalities/cities and districts or coalitions of interest groups that act as a form of advisory body such as the environmental health of a region) or a single region-wide authority (for example, concerning transportation). This would involve strengthening the collaborative capacity of both top-down and translocal networks.

Policy initiatives are needed to re-articulate networks in order to empower local populations. In this process, indigenous ideas and local knowledge are very significant. It is often the intangible elements of 'synergetic capital', a combination of social, human and institutional capital that can be found in 'proxemic spaces'. When spaces in which proximity permits 'localities' to generate synergetic capital are encouraged through policy choices then twenty-first century development can be catalyzed in local urban governance systems (Bosier, 2001) in ways that contribute to the creation of more sustainable and livable urban regions.

NETWORKING 'MEGA CEBU': COOPERATIVE METROPOLITAN GOVERNANCE IN THE CENTRAL PHILIPPINES

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In recent years, there has been growing interest in transborder urban networks around the world, especially in relation to nation-state borders traversed by such networks. Yet there is currently a lacuna in transborder research on inter-city borders and the bases of conflict and cooperation between neighbouring administrative jurisdictions within extended urban localities. This intervention thus destabilizes the notion of the "border" by focusing on inter-city linkages within and between bounded adjacent metropolitan districts. To illustrate this phenomenon, I consider place-specific processes in creating an inter-city governance networks among local government officials, business elites and civil society representatives in a secondary metropolitan area in the central Philippines that has undergone rapid urban change since the 1980s.

The second largest urban centre in the Philippines, Metro Cebu is a conglomeration of thirteen contiguous cities and municipalities located on the eastern side of the island Province of Cebu. With its population of 2.3 million, Cebu City is the urban core of Metro Cebu and occupies nearly one-third of its total land area of 1,163 kilometers (NSCB, 2012). Since the fall of the Marcos dictatorship in 1986, the Philippines has liberalized its economy and adopted strong policies of finance and investment deregulation, due in large part to the global restructuring of the national economy marked by hyper-mobile capital. This global-local phenomenon has facilitated foreign capital investments in Metro Cebu, especially in the sectors of finance, insurance, banking and real estate property development (Sajor, 2003). With one of the highest registered national growth rates for exports, investments and regional gross domestic product, Metro Cebu has become colloquially known as 'Ceboom' and is portrayed nationally as a 'model for growth' (Churchill, 1993).

Despite this, in recent years Metro Cebu has been challenged by rapid urbanization, population growth and the attendant problems of congestion, pollution and a shortfall in public services. With more than 2,300 residents per square kilometer, Metro Cebu is already overcrowded and its reputation for economic success attracts steady in-migration from neighbouring provinces (Flieger, 1994). The immediate implication of this demographic trend is that demand has substantially increased for public services including housing (Sajor, 2003), water supply, garbage, sewerage and road infrastructure (Gonzales, 2004). As city authorities experience growing pressure from their residents to deliver efficient services, cooperative governance among cities that share common challenges and issues is increasingly practiced. In the process, innovative, market-oriented urban governance regimes are developing that reconfigure governance mechanisms closely linked to new forms of public-private partnerships and networks (Jessop, 1997).

An emerging consciousness about the economic, political, and ecological interdependence of cities and municipalities comprising Metro Cebu has led various state, business and civil society actors to rethink the management of local governments as autonomous, discrete and disparate entities. Intercity cooperative governance is seen by various local stakeholders as a necessary and inevitable step forward if Metro Cebu is to adapt to the demands of rapid urbanization and globalization. Thus, the creation in 2011 of the Metro Cebu Development Coordinating Board (MCDCCB) was designed to promote public-private partnerships and civil society participation in local government coordination in the efficient delivery of public services.

While still in its infancy, MCDCB has begun to develop several crucial elements needed to establish a working coordinative metropolitan body. First, it has re-envisioned urban development from prioritizing inter-city competition as a 'prescription of economic growth' (Douglass, 2002, p.64) to a greater recent emphasis on inter-city cooperation in creating economies of scale. In this, efforts are being made to recast Metro Cebu as a 'city-region' rather than a conglomeration of contiguous cities and municipalities operating independently from each other. Second, the private sector has become actively integrated into the new metropolitan governance system to promote public-private partnerships that straddle local administrative jurisdictions around core sectors (such as transportation, sewage and so on). Third, the development of a comprehensive land use and transportation master plan for Mega Cebu represents a preliminary commitment towards synergizing urban management to address challenges that traverse inter-city boundaries.

Beyond these efforts to establish a more inclusive and sustainable regional governance system for Metro Cebu, intercity cooperation is seriously undermined by range of factors. In the Philippines, decentralization in governance has been celebrated as a democratizing force which allows for direct civil society participation in state decision-making processes, as well as an opportunity for local governments to practice autonomy over their own affairs. Indeed, in governing the 'micro-spaces of the city' that deal mainly with conditions and decisions that directly affect citizens' everyday lives, such devolution of state power and responsibility can arguably be a necessary precondition for effective regional governance (Friedmann, 2001, p.8).

The benefits of decentralization, however, also find their structural limitations when situated within the specific context of Philippine politics. In particular, the ingrained political culture of 'bossism' (Sidel, 1999) among state officials at all levels of government has often eroded and undermined efforts to promote inter-city cooperation and participation. Decentralization has thus been criticized for helping to reinforce the power of local power elites who are more interested in 'turf wars' rather than opening their doors to allow democratic actors into governmental processes. The dominance of elite families in the political scene has often resulted in the treatment of public administration as a personal affair and the "conceptual separation of the state from personal authority of individuals is often remote from the Philippine 'structures of authority'" (Hutchcroft, 1998, p.14).

The challenge for intercity networking through decentralized urban governance lies not only in the provision of institutional mechanisms that facilitate regional autonomy (such as the Local Government Code of the Philippines), but also in nurturing an enabling environment for deepening citizen engagement in democratic processes (Albuero et al., 2010; see also Douglass' intervention). For example, the civil society-based Movement for Livable Cebu has successfully opposed the construction of two flyovers in Cebu City by collaborating with state actors across neighbouring administrative jurisdictions who share their vision for a more synergistic and sustainable approach to urban transportation. Through their extensive public information campaign, the movement has presented an effective counter-discourse to reactive government development planning and haphazard 'solution' to the traffic problem in Cebu City. The Movement for Livable Cebu has thus become a 'created space' wherein a re-imagining of Metro Cebu is made possible and more socially progressive development alternatives can be explored.

How then can the MCDCB advance its vision of establishing an enduring metropolitan governance structure? While there has been no singular fool-proof formula or model for regional governance that has been developed and applied to ensure the success of this endeavour, I find Friedmann's (2001) concept of a 'good city' is a useful entry point for defining the nature of regional governance that the MCDCB envisages for Metro Cebu. Simply put, a good city is one that adheres to political and bureaucratic governance processes that are transparent, accountable and balanced in terms of

productivity, ecological sustainability, livability and safety (Friedmann, 2001). The wider lesson of the Mega Cebu city-region project, then, is to open up spaces for participation among civil society organizations and grassroots actors in the governance of inter-city cooperation. Forging such spaces of participation is critical to establishing power relations between neighbouring jurisdictions that are seen as legitimate in the eyes of community stakeholders and which are built on genuine goodwill and a culture of inclusiveness.

POST-COLD WAR TRANS-BORDER NETWORKS IN NORTHEAST ASIA: THE BUSAN-FUKUOKA NETWORK

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Intercity networks across national borders in Northeast Asia have developed markedly in recent decades. Market forces have been a driving factor in the development of trans-border networks throughout the region. In the wake of the Cold War and the opening of the Chinese border in the early 1990s, private firms in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan started to relocate their production bases to China, mainly to coastal cities, for a better business environment. Low labor costs and the favorable policies of Chinese local governments were key factors behind the emergence of trans-border networks such as those connecting Hong Kong and Guangdong, Taiwan and Shanghai and neighboring areas, and the Seoul metropolitan–Shandong networks (Chen, 2005; Park, 2011; Yang, 2005). In these networks, business links have been pivotal, but cooperation between the public and civil spheres is limited. In this light, it is fair to say that the trans-border networks in Northeast Asia are generally market led, asymmetrical and not very institutionalized compared with similar networks in Western Europe (Kim, 2010).

Against this backdrop, the Busan-Fukuoka trans-border network between South Korea and Japan provides a somewhat different picture. Unlike typical trans-border networks in the region, the Busan-Fukuoka network has been developed through public and quasi-public cooperation on both sides. The two cities and their surrounding areas do not have marked differences in factor prices that individual firms and corporations can easily exploit. Instead, economic and other developmental similarities offer grounds to exchange ideas and build solidarity in a reciprocal way. Unlike the asymmetrical and market-oriented characteristics shown in other trans-border networks in the region, the Busan-Fukuoka relationship is horizontal and public-oriented. Local governments on both sides are actively involved in the network, as are quasi-public bodies such as economic associations and education institutions. The cooperative atmosphere permeates civil society too, although as mentioned previously, both national governments and individual firms are largely sidelined from participation. As commentators and experts have indicated, mutual trust and shared vision are crucial to building a mature trans-border region in this particular case (OECD, 2011; Kim et al., 2011). In this regard, the Busan-Fukuoka network holds promising potential for becoming a full-fledged trans-border region.

Busan City is South Korea's second-largest metropolis after Seoul, with a population of around 3.6 million. The city is the center of the economy and culture in Gyeongnam Province, the southeastern part of the peninsula, and the largest port city in South Korea. On the other side of the Korea-Japan Strait, Fukuoka is the capital city of Fukuoka Prefecture and is situated on the northern shore of the island of Kyushu in Japan. It is the most populous city in Kyushu, with 2.5 million people, and the economic center of heavily industrialized northern Kyushu. Including the surrounding areas of the two cities, the entire trans-border region's population is approximately 21 million, and the GRDP was USD \$550 billion in 2010 (Takaki and Lim, 2011)

There is a historical background in cultural exchange between the two regions. However, the intercity network in its current form began from increased people's interactions since the 1990s. This interpersonal exchange between southeast Korea and northern Kyushu has increased remarkably, resulting in a booming tourism industry. The surge in the number of people crossing the border has been supported by high-speed ferries named Beetle and Kobe, introduced in 1991 to

link Busan and Fukuoka in about two hours. The number of visitors from both sides through air flights and ferries reached 1.05 million in 2010, up from 535,000 in 2000 (Busan Port Authority website, www.busanpa.com).

The flourishing interaction of people, combined with the historical connection and geographical proximity, has led to a number of public collaborations. Official interaction between Busan and Fukuoka was first established when the two cities signed an administrative exchange program agreement in 1989. Amid surging exchanges, both local governments launched the Governors' Conference in the Korea-Japan strait zone, in which the four prefectures of northern Kyushu (Fukuoka, Saga, Nagasaki and Yamaguchi) and one metropolitan city and three provinces on Korea's southern coast (Busan City, South Gyeongsang Province, South Jeolla Province and Jeju Province) participated. This body provided a channel for regular meetings to discuss mutual concerns. A series of studies were carried out jointly to explore the potential ways and means of industrial and business cooperation across the strait. At the same time, private sector associations on both sides launched the Busan-Fukuoka Forum as a quasi-public body to discuss ways of fostering economic cooperation between the regions. Key actors in the private and quasi-public sectors, including an economic council, journalists and research institutes, participated to come up with collaboration agendas for the two regions (Takaki and Lim, 2010; Lim, 2009).

The government-level cooperation effort culminated with the agreement between Busan and Fukuoka for building an integrated trans-border economic region in 2009. The idea of a Busan-Fukuoka integrated economic zone came from the Korean side and was envisaged to possess sufficient capacity to compete with other major economic zones in the region such as Tokyo, Seoul, Beijing and Shanghai. To set up working agendas and discuss ways to materialize the integrated trans-border economic region, the Busan-Fukuoka Economic Council was launched, comprising members such as government officials, research institutes, and key economic actors from both cities. In order to implement the agreement, the two governments established a set of four principles and 23 projects. The project list included many proposals such as a venture market, a technology transfer center, an information technology cooperation center and a hub of finance and cooperation for the automotive industry. The two cities further agreed to build a stronger collaborative business environment, develop human resources, form a common travel zone and ask their national governments for institutional and financial support to achieve these goals.

Currently, the ties that bind both cities go far beyond government-level cooperation; they are spreading into every corner of each society. For instance, in the tourism sector, industry actors have organized the Asian Gateway 2011 Committee and agreed to promote a joint tourism project for organizing the Northeast Asia Tourism Exchange Bloc. In the field of journalism, too, the *Busan Ilbo* (Busan Daily) and *Nishinippon Shimbun* (West Japan Daily) are operating a staff exchange program. Education initiatives by the universities in Fukuoka, the 13 universities in Fukuoka Prefecture and the 11 universities in Busan also established in 2008 the Busan-Fukuoka University Consortium with a view to promoting academic exchange programs for students. These linkages between the universities are multi-layered. In addition, high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools have built sister relationships with each other (Keum, 2011).

Cultural collaboration between the two cities is similarly thriving, as evidenced, for example, by the vibrant collaborations between artists in both communities. The Busan Art Association and the Fukuoka Cultural Association agreed in 2009 to launch a mass-scale cultural exchange in Busan via a Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony for the Busan-Fukuoka Art Exchange. In everyday practice, artists working with diverse genres including painting, plays, performance, and photography are also involved in exchange activities.

As described above, the Busan-Fukuoka network is unique in that it has been developed based on mutual trust and solidarity, not on the difference in factor prices for individual firms to exploit. Therefore, while the city governments are playing a crucial role in nurturing trans-border relationships, corporations and businesses have remarkably been sidelined in the development of these networks. Besides public actors, civil society actors such as journalists, academics and artists are deeply involved in the establishment and maintenance of these networks. When considering the bitter memories over modern history between Korea and Japan, this is a particularly valuable achievement.

The key driving force of the network could be a shared sense of crisis in the face of an increasingly globalized economic environment. Geographically, Busan and Fukuoka are far from the nation's economic centers- Seoul and Tokyo, respectively. In these highly centralized nations, geographical distance from the capital cities indicates an inherent difficulty in maintaining economic vitality. In previous decades, globalization and post-industrialization have created a further concentration of economic activities in the nation's capital areas, leaving the rest of the nation in an economic malaise. Under these circumstances, the sense of crisis shared by Busan and Fukuoka brought them closer and prompted them to seek transborder intercity cooperation as an opportunity for the diversification of local economies through alliances with neighboring cities across national borders. In this regard, the Busan-Fukuoka trans-border network is considered as an experiment in how local actors surmount the obstacles posed by centralized states.

Despite the favorable conditions for forming a mature trans-border region, the Busan-Fukuoka network has its limitations. First, it has yet to develop strategies that practically benefit individual economic actors in particular sectors in both regions. Cooperation in the areas of information technology, tourism, the automobile industry and the environmental sector have been discussed by both sides, but tangible benefits have yet to be felt, except in the tourism sector. In addition, there should be more interaction and exchange in terms of talent, culture and knowledge in order to create added value for both regions. A shared vision and effective governance is also important. Above all, however, it needs to be stressed that the hesitation of the South Korean and Japanese governments in encouraging inter-local trans-border cooperation has been a major obstacle to the formation of a genuinely integrated trans-border regional network. Disputes at the national level over history and territory and deep-rooted nationalism in the region should be mitigated and settled in order to provide a better environment for local-level cooperation. As illustrated in successful trans-border regions in the European Union (Perkmann, 2003), it is evident that inter-local trans-border cooperation can flourish in favorable national and supra-national environments if these challenges are overcome.

GEOGRAPHY OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE GREATER PEARL RIVER DELTA: A CROSS-BORDER CLUSTER IN THE MEGACITY REGION

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Governance in the highly urbanized Greater Pearl River Delta has been studied by many researchers since it is a complex and fragmented region with separate administrative authorities, different political systems, and diverse visions for its future development. Yet one understudied area, which is the focus of this intervention, pertains to the role of knowledge-based clusters in different cities which are interconnected. In focusing on the case of clean technology (referred hereafter as cleantech) knowledge clusters in the Greater Pearl River Delta, the contribution of this intervention to the wider world of intercity networks is therefore to note the emergence of a sub-national archipelago of interconnected and collaborative economic clusters in a context more typically associated with economic competition and infrastructural replication. As these cluster-based intercity networks are still in their infancy, however, their future sustainability is by no means assured and would seem to require additional supporting mechanisms in the form of deeper social interactions to promote more innovative and meaningful knowledge exchanges.

The Greater Pearl River Delta, which includes Guangdong, Macau and Hong Kong, is one of Asia's emerging urban megacity regions. With nearly 50 million people, the region is rapidly developing into one urban connected space, an endless city where building a sustainable infrastructure and creating a connected and well governed urban environment is a massive ongoing challenge. The mega-urban region is also undergoing an industrial upgrading process towards establishing a low carbon economy plan, making it one of China's most dynamic economic urban spaces.

At present, the border-crossing economic geography in this particular industry is governed by economic policy discourses of the Chinese national government rather than by regional governments, the private sector or civil society organizations (Caprotti 2011, p. 372). The question then arises as to whether such a densely connected socio-economic space can be conducive for innovation in establishing meaningful collaborative intercity networks and knowledge-based cluster formations between multiple stakeholders? Given the complex governance issues in different socio-economic and political systems with widely diverse regional strategies, fostering the development of a cross-border, knowledge-based cluster in a new industry (in this case, cleantech, which was only defined as industry sector in early 2000) is a challenge. Moreover, the southern Chinese mega-region's rapid expansion and densely interlinked populations has fuelled urban sprawl, rising inequalities and pollution (Vidal, 2010).

The Greater Pearl River Delta is already a powerful economic region, contributing USD 838 billion to China's USD 7.26 trillion Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2011 alone (China Briefing, 2012). Its highly industrialized and rapidly growing urban landscape comprises nine municipalities with several large cities such as Guangzhou with a population of 11.7 million, Shenzhen (9 million), Dongguan (6.4 million), Foshan (5.4 million) plus Hong Kong (7 million) and Macao (5.5 million). The latter two are Special Administrative regions of the People's Republic of China, city states with a certain degree of autonomy, which adds to the complexity of inter-regional collaboration, competition structures and the processes for joint economic development planning.

Within this national economic development zone, an analysis of the emerging networks of knowledge-based clusters in the Greater Pearl River Delta can contribute to an understanding of innovation in transborder urban networks. There are currently several agreements between the

different government agencies involved which aim to foster regional collaboration, as well as between government and businesses, such as the Greater Pearl River Delta Business Council, which is an advisory body and also serves as a forum on the future economic development of the GPRD region. The inbound investment agencies of Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shenzhen launched a joint website in 2006 to promote foreign investment, promoting the GPRD as an “ideal place” for investment. However, this website is no longer maintained, which may be indicative of the difficulties of creating an effective collaboration mechanism. Yet building the physical infrastructure within the GPRD is an area China excels in, with around 150 major infrastructure projects currently being developed to mesh the transport, energy, water and telecommunications networks of the nine cities together, at a cost of some 2 trillion Yuan (Moore, 2011).

Although the Greater Pearl River Delta is still mostly known as manufacturing centre, it is going through an industrial upgrading process towards a low carbon economy. Yet the overall efficiency of energy use is very low compared to most advanced economies, and it is well-known that the Pearl River Delta is not only China’s most developed region and the manufacturing centre of the world, but also one of the most polluted regions in the country (Mang Lin et. al., 2011). It is for this reason that the Chinese government has recognized the need for the adoption of clean technology clusters by conferring various subsidies to the industry.

A cluster-based approach is useful in examining the clean technology sector in the case of the Greater Pearl River Delta to consider the spatial dimensions of knowledge creation and sharing between interconnected cities in the region. This approach differs from the traditional regional conglomeration view by emphasizing knowledge networks and interconnections that move beyond physical space. Theories about clusters have been around since the early days of industrialization and tend to focus on the advantages of economies of scale and network effects that can be achieved through locating similar industries in geographical proximity. The idea of co-locating interconnected industries to create value has become a cornerstone of economic policy-making. With increasing globalization and the transformation from industrial to knowledge-based economies, questions about the importance of physical space become increasingly important. Chang (2008) argues that a knowledge-based cluster is a non-geographic space, where social relations go beyond physical contacts in the cluster to include knowledge flows between entrepreneurs moving and working in different regions within and between countries.

In knowledge-based clusters, formal information knowledge diffusion and networking are considered the most important capabilities to increase the learning, creation and absorption of new ideas. While the importance of professional stakeholders in a knowledge-based cluster is widely acknowledged in the literature (Kajikawa, 2010, p.169), there are very few in-depth empirical investigations of intra- and inter-cluster linkages given the complexity of human networks. Most studies focus on an analysis of network structures through interview data. Yet the practice of cluster research is difficult due to its “fuzzy, polycentric, and hybrid nature” (Fromhold-Eisebith, 2005, p. 1250).

While industrial cluster research is mainly focused on the reduction of transaction costs because of proximity, knowledge-based cluster research primarily examines the production of knowledge as output or input. This is because “knowledge clusters have the organizational capacity to drive innovations and create new industries. They are central places within an epistemic landscape, i.e. in a wider structure of knowledge production and dissemination” (Evers, 2010). Whether the development of such an epistemic landscape can be created by top-down, institutionalized cluster promotion by a government agency or whether it is to a large extent an emerging development through an interrelated set of competitive, collaborative and cultural factors among stakeholders in

a particular industry over time is widely discussed in cluster research (Fromhold-Eisebith 2005, p. 1252).

In the case of the Greater Pearl River Delta, the Chinese government has declared cleantech a national pillar industry and wants to position the region as a leading centre and one of the most dynamic urban spaces in this sector. This industry is therefore intended to serve as an example of how intercity collaboration successfully develops. Cleantech comprises a broad range of clean technology fields, such as energy efficiency, green building, renewable energy, smart power, green grid, energy storage, and the sustainable transportation, treatment of air, water, and waste. The term clean technology, as embodied in the knowledge cluster cleantech, is used to explain the concept that both efficiency and productivity can be increased by using new processes, products and services, whilst at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting natural resources (DCTI, accessed March 2012).

While China has a reputation of building infrastructure fast, the socio-economic aspects of urban development, effective channels of dialogue and exchange between the different governmental agencies at different levels are developing at a slower pace. The Chinese government, in collaboration with Hong Kong and Macau has therefore in recent years promoted new initiatives to intensify the exchange between cities in the GPRD. One of the new collaboration initiatives related to cleantech is the “Regional Cooperation on Building a Quality Living Area” launched in 2011 by the environmental government agencies in the GPRD. Building collaborative channels and mechanism is the basis for any cluster formation, and the goal is for informational exchanges to lead to transactional exchanges and collaboration between government agencies, business and universities and other stakeholders in the field of low-carbon economic development.

An agglomeration of companies of a particular industry, however, is not enough to build a sustainable cluster. The knowledge flows and exchanges, as well as leveraging the economic value creation through them determine the quality and importance of a cluster. A dense urban infrastructure can contribute to a dynamic knowledge infrastructure and enable continuous monitoring and comparing of activities among stakeholders in a particular industry and beyond. For an organization, locating in a cluster does not automatically provide an advantage; building linkages and connections is an active socio-economic behaviour, an engagement in the knowledge market and culture. Such behavior and activities may lead to a certain atmosphere, vibrancy or “buzz” (Bathelt et.al. 38 ff), which can be described as the unique information and communication ecology of a cluster. It shapes the distinct character of a particular knowledge cluster and becomes an intangible asset of a region: companies and individuals want to locate there because there is an advantage of “being there”. Becoming such an attractive location which pulls in “brains” and expertise from all over the world is an aspiration of many cluster agencies, but very few knowledge-based clusters actually achieve this. In the field of clean technology, Copenhagen’s cleantech cluster is often cited as successful, although there are currently no empirical studies to substantiate this claim.

Understanding and shaping interactive processes in urban knowledge clusters need to take socio-technical, organizational, commercial, political and cultural aspects into account. While the existence of dynamic clusters could serve as an indicator for the quality of intercity governance, in the case of cleantech much needs to be done in the way of developing the socio-technical construction of a new regional economy driven by government actors who are shaping the transborder linkages of the Greater Pearl River Delta.

TOWARD PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE OF TRANSBORDER INTERCITY REGIONS IN ASIA**Mike Douglass**

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The worldwide expansion of intercity networks is creating ‘mixed assemblages’ of denationalized spaces traversing national borders (Sassen, 2003, 2006; Axford, 2007). In some areas of the world this has fostered the idea of transborder intercity regions emerging through diverse networks of civil society organizations and collaborative transborder governance (Rumford, 2007). Throughout Asia, however, elite corporate and state interests that inhibit rather than support such forms of transborder governance are the drivers of intercity networks. In creating “secessionist” networks of free-trade and export-processing zones, global business hubs and gated housing enclaves linked together by “premium networked infrastructure” (Graham & Marvin, 2001; Park, 2005), these networks have “generally failed to offer effective channels of communication for local governments or communities” (Elliott, 2011, p.2).

These urban networks also magnify spatially and socially uneven processes as they concentrate state and global corporate power in a few mega-urban regions while producing widening social disparities (WTO, 2012). Asia accounts for 60 percent of the shrinking cities in the developing world, signaling that many secondary cities are now in steep decline (ADB, 2009). At the same time, increasing shares of labor are being reduced to precariat status (Choe, 2009; Wang, 2009; Bernier, 2011; Ueno, 2007) as social rights are also being dismantled (Sassen, 2003).

In contrast to earlier debates about “development from above or below”, urban development today cannot be viewed simply as a government - grassroots dialectic to be resolved within the nation-state (Stöhr and Taylor 1981). Rather, they are about the corporatization of cities and intercity networks, the delocalization and denationalization of urban economies, and the possibilities of new forms of participatory city region governance spanning national borders. In this light, creating alternatives to counter uneven development processes calls for ways to combine the social and economic dynamics of intercity networks with localized, socially inclusive modes of territorial governance that are capable of overcoming the divisiveness of cultural and national identities while working toward socially just economies (Appadurai, 2006). Moving in these directions requires basic advancements in three areas – democratization, devolution, and transborder cooperation.

Trends in all are encouraging and daunting. Democratization has made major advances; yet as measured by a composite democracy index, more than half of the countries in Asia fall into the lowest quartile of democracy in the world, with just four countries – Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and India – among the top fifty (World Audit, 2011). Since 2001, many governments in the world, including in Asia, have turned to anti-terrorism justifications to systematically curtail freedoms of speech and assembly (Gomez, 2004, Lutfia, 2011). As a result, according to the World Bank (2010), over the past decade government accountability across much of Asia has not made significant gains and corruption remains a serious government deficit (Katsu, 2011).

Concerning devolution, progress has occurred in some countries, such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Korea, but local autonomy remains very limited in most (World Bank, 2008, Langran, 2011). Even where mayors are elected and other authority has been transferred to cities, financing still relies heavily on central governments, which decreases local autonomy.

Transborder social interaction in Asia is equally restrained. National borders continue to be used to insulate nation-states from international flows of people, enforce international divisions of labor and discipline foreign workers. They are thus fraught with contention and insufficient levels of trust needed for cooperative transborder governance (Long, 2011). In the Pearl River Delta, for example, social relations among Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangdong have not been able to flourish due to “differences and gaps in values of residents, political institutions, culture and economic regulation” related to strict border controls (Luo and Shen, 2012, p.134). As noted above by Ritter, simply agglomerating firms in a transborder region connected by transportation and communications infrastructure is insufficient for long-term regional viability without supporting socio-cultural interactions needed to create a regionally unique foundation for knowledge production and sharing.

In contrast to prevailing uses of state borders to control population movement and reify national differences, experiences in Europe show that local state and civil society organizations which can develop relations of trust are able to establish transborder governance mechanisms that can:

- build capacities for dispute resolutions over contested issues;
- co-manage environmental and other shared resources;
- co-develop public infrastructure and services;
- routinely vision cooperative futures;
- build alliances for political leverage and funding;
- learn from other experiences to enlarge capacities for problem solving;
- share costs and benefits of cross-border networking

(Balsiger & Debarbieux, 2011; Scherera & Zumbusch, 2011; Gualini, 2003; Hettne, 2003).

Such experiences do not require a supra-national form of government that is being attempted with the European Union, which is unlikely to occur in Asia in the foreseeable future. Rather, in the context of Asia, they can build on current trends toward decentering democratic governance to city regions and allowing transborder networks to expand autonomously via social as well as business networks. Through a localization of governance capable of extending with social networks across borders without overt central or corporate authority over public decision-making, intercity networks can seize opportunities for creative solutions to social inequities and lackluster economies that are better suited to their aspirations and realities.

Despite recent setbacks, movements to advance participatory governance are on the rise throughout Asia (Mayhew, 2005). Transborder relations are embedded in many of these movements. In several countries citizens have organized to support rights of foreign workers and their spouses (Douglass & Roberts, 2003; Courville & Piper, 2004). Some, such as the Bangkok based Asia Coalition for Housing Rights, have formed long-term transborder coalitions around poverty and human rights issues (ACHR, 2012, Loh, 2008; Tan, 2005). The potential of transborder networking facilitated by ACHR is exemplified by the formation of the Urban Poor Coalition composed of non-government organizations from 10 countries in Asia organized in solidarity to give voice to poor people and help generate proactive poverty alleviation projects.

The increasing diversity of populations within countries is also leading to social networks emerging across national borders. In particular, the rapid increase in transnational marriages and the use of foreign domestic workers in forming and managing households in Asia involve social networks that forge intergenerational social bonds across state borders (Douglass, 2010a). The scale of transnational household formations has been so great that the government of South Korea has officially declared the nation to be a multicultural society, and local governments are establishing programs to assist foreign spouses and their children. In Japan, as indicated by the Kanagawa Prefecture slogan, “foreigners are citizens, too” (Tegtmeyer-Pak, 2003), local governments have been leading the push for new forms of “post-national citizenship” (Sassen, 2003, p.20).

City governments are also directly initiating new forms of cooperative governance across national borders. For example, Busan and Fukuoka (see Park intervention) are intent on creating a transborder co-living sphere centered on the two cities. Rather than being constructed by deterritorializing spaces, it is based on cultural and educational exchanges and other people-to-people activities that entail opening borders to routine movement of people between the two city regions. This is an extraordinary step for two countries that historically have had strong barriers to such exchanges, and it lends support to Acharya's (2003, p.388) hopeful findings that "democratization is reshaping Southeast Asian regionalism by redefining official attitudes towards state sovereignty and opening space for the involvement of civil society."

In addition to securing its institutional foundations, participatory governance requires a city in which people can freely meet, have spontaneous social encounters at arms distance from commerce and the state, and build social capital through everyday forms of civil engagement. As in most of the world, in Asia these spaces of public life – open markets, public streets and parks, walkable cityscapes – are massively disappearing (Douglass, *et al.*, 2010). Skyscrapers that absorb the public street life of commercial areas, condominiums integrated with shopping malls and gated housing enclaves creating insular living spheres dedicated to consumption, mega-projects that erase entire middle and lower class neighborhoods, and the selling off of public land are all happening at breakneck pace in Asia's cities (Douglass, 2010b). Without these spaces of associational life, participatory governance is without a solid foothold in the city.

The accelerating corporatization of urban space rests on an inversion of the idea of the city. Prior to the ascendancy of neoliberal policy regimes, the city was said to be a "theater of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity" in which "its industries and its markets must be subservient to its social needs" (Mumford, 1937, p.3). It was a "form of collective life" with a "common interest" (Friedmann, 1962, p.73). Along with the current celebration of global accumulation as provider of all human needs, the city is now being presented as a sum of private interests in command of an urban "engine of growth" that is dedicated to ensuring that "cities everywhere are makers of wealth" (World Bank, 1996, p.2).

Lost in this neoliberal ideological and physical transformation of the city are the spaces in where residents can "make public opinion be heard and seen" and are the "the first step in the development of a public sphere" (Kürten, 2011, p.3). For transborder intercity governance to make any gains, the idea and practices of a public city must be claimed both institutionally and spatially in and among city regions. For this to happen, a new discourse is needed that acknowledges that human progress can no longer be posed as a national development project orchestrated from a corporate-state nexus in the capital city, but can arise instead from a decentered public sphere of governance capable of networking among city regions across national borders.

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