Global Political Cities

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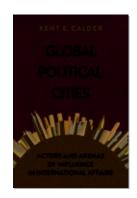
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Conclusion
CITIES AND THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

From the days of ancient Greece, and even before, cities have been seen as ideal organizing units for human society. Across most of human history, up through the tragic Thirty Years' War of the seventeenth century, they in fact filled that role. Now, after close to four hundred years of nation-state dominance and its mixed governance heritage, it is time to reconsider anew the role of cities, as both actor and arena for decision, in dealing with the distinctive challenges of the future.

In thinking about the changing role of cities across history, it is important to start with a firm appreciation of their underlying potential. As Edward Glaeser points out, cities have an innate underlying "power of proximity," flowing from the distinctive way that they juxtapose people of diverse backgrounds and specializations close to one another. Such proximity gives cities comparative advantage relative to other geographic units, in both manufacturing and the generation of ideas. Advancing communications technology intensifies their advantage in the latter realm, making cities increasingly important centers of intellectual creativity and policy initiative in the twenty-first century.

Cities are by no means the only major actors or arenas of influence in international politics, which operates at multiple levels. Nations, as noted above, have been dominant for nearly four centuries, and supranational actors, such

as empires, were once prominent forms of organizations. Together with cities, and reconfigured supranational variants, like the European Union, both subnational and supranational actors have become important once again, joined now by transnational organizations, like C40 and U20. A rich profusion of subnational bodies apart from cities has also recently emerged—many nurtured by social media. Their advent is steadily strengthening the ability of grassroots groups to engage in self-representation.

The evolution of human society in recent years, however, has led to downsizing in professions like civil and military bureaucracy where civic roles are limited, and conversely expanded the magnitude of nongovernmental sectors, where they are central. Since the 1970s, for example, the number and intensity of interstate wars has sharply declined while terrorism, drug trafficking, and ethnic violence—all within the province of cities to combat—have expanded. Meanwhile, global health and environmental challenges—areas where cities can also play central roles—are growing more formidable worldwide.

Urbanization has accelerated of late, with over 55 percent of the world's people now living in cities. Both industrial and developing societies have grown markedly more complex and interdependent, collectively confronting serious new challenges in a freshly globalized age. Meanwhile, however, societies worldwide have also become more polarized, rigid, and internally unequal, making solutions at the national level increasingly difficult to achieve. The clear difficulties of the United States, one of the most affluent, technologically advanced, and traditionally democratic nations on earth, in addressing such elemental problems as environment and infrastructure are simple illustrations of the deepening crisis of governance confronting nation-states around the world.

In the Information Age, cities can be powerful arenas for action, as well as actors. With global connectivity rising and the economic constraint of physical distance declining, dispersed global idea nodes—Washington (in global diplomacy) or Geneva (in human security), for example—gain increased capacity to convene credible worldwide dialogues. The findings of such cities can powerfully influence international thinking at diverse levels of both public and private decisionmaking.

Problems for Analysis

In this diffuse, volatile, and protean new global environment, which has emerged so rapidly since the 1970s, what latent capacities do global cities have for addressing key international challenges? On what issues are those capacities relevant, and where does the nation-state still remain the superior problem solver? What role have cities historically played, what are their current constraints, and

what potential role in global governance and agenda-setting might they play in the future? These are all central issues considered in this book.

Chapter 1, the introduction to this volume, lays out six central analytical ambitions that guide this investigation: (1) explicating the concept of global political city and assessing its heuristic value; (2) explaining how and why global political cities and their international functions are changing; (3) exploring the institutional role of research and agenda-setting institutions (idea industries) as catalysts for civic policy influence on a global scale; (4) understanding twenty-first-century global agenda-setting; (5) comprehending contemporary global governance prospects; and (6) critiquing realist theory, in the light of recent social, political, and economic developments that challenge the centrality of nation states. The pages that follow summarize the findings.

Methods of Exploration

Most previous analysis of global cities, including the work of Saskia Sassen, has concentrated on examining the socioeconomic functions of such urban agglomerations.[1] This volume, by contrast, has focused on the political role of cities, both in articulating and in implementing policy proposals. The book has introduced the concept of global political city, that is, a city that serves as a major node of governance, agenda-setting, or resource allocation (or any combination of the three) in the international political economy. The systematic comparison of global cities, as actors and arenas for influence in international politics, is a fresh topic worldwide, on which remarkably little has yet been written, so the exploratory, case-oriented methodological approach adopted here is appropriate.

The book begins by considering the historical role of cities in the global political economy, followed by an exploration of how technology and finance are radically re-configuring that role. The volume then introduces, through comparative examination, four key functional dimensions of rising global political city influence: (1) the "penumbra of power" that generates governance proposals and translates them into serious options; (2) the political forums that broaden global input into policy agendas; (3) the grassroots activism that challenges elite policy agendas from below; and (4) the civic leadership that transforms options into actual policy. The book presents hypotheses regarding how each of these key functional dimensions enables global political cities to influence international affairs. It tests the hypotheses in fifteen cases drawn from around the world.

Many of the cities examined—such as New York, which has had globally influential mayors, hosted major international forums, and harbored vibrant nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—have multiple roles. One central

analytical concern of the volume, however, is focusing through empirical analysis on individual civic roles, and how the functions of political cities are performed cross-nationally. Individual city cases thus provide explanatory data along multiple dimensions. They are arranged here in contrasting triads, testing various strengths of the functional variable, each of which explores how and why particular cities are becoming more or less influential in international politics.

Particular attention is given to understanding the trajectories of individual global political cities, through chronological analysis. In other words, how have the political roles of such global cities evolved, for what reasons, and what do the observed trajectories imply for future civic roles? In considering the evolving political and policy-analytical roles of global cities, special attention is given to the role of the financial sector, entrepreneurs, lobbyists, activists, and supportive transnational infrastructure in enhancing civic capabilities, on the one hand, and in shaping regulatory constraints, including those imposed by national governments, on the other. The synergistic role of technology and finance in transforming the socioeconomic meaning of physical distance—thereby enhancing the power of proximity innate to urban concentrations—is given particular emphasis.

Key Findings and Their Relation to Analytical Ambitions

This volume is an exploratory effort in a remarkably underdeveloped field. There are thus important limits to what can be achieved in one short volume. The foregoing pages, however, present an attempt to realize the original analytical ambitions in the following concrete ways:

Explicating the Concept of Global Political City

Global cities, together with their powerful economic and social functions, are also assuming major political roles in world affairs. In explicating the concept of global political city, this work builds on observations that Sassen and others have made regarding defining traits of global cities generally but moves on to elaborate four explicitly political functions.[2] The idea industries of global political cities, first of all, generate sophisticated policy proposals across a broad range of policy areas. They also assimilate such proposals into formal national and international policy processes, through penumbras of power outside formal government institutions. Thirdly, global political cities also convene political forums, where policy ideas are refined and popularized on a transnational basis, beyond the control of national authority. Global political cities serve as grassroots battlegrounds where popular sentiment can

be articulated. And finally, global cities, in their political dimension, furnish leaders who are playing more and more significant policy roles, both within nation-states and independently.

This work thus demonstrates that cities are becoming both arenas and actors of first-rate significance in international politics, validating the global political city concept. It also demonstrates the heuristic value of the global political city concept as distinct from the notion of national capitals and shows how noncapitals, such as Geneva, New York City, and at times even small centers, like Bandung, assume important global political functions. We show how the emergence of global political cities is amplified by the development of financial markets and by the recent sea change in global connectivity more generally.

Explaining How and Why Global Political Cities and Their International Functions Are Changing

This is the original analytical concern that has involved the greatest effort, which has yielded arguably the most extensive insights. The volume engages in systematic historical-chronological analysis, preparatory to presenting every case study, on how the global roles of fifteen international cities have evolved, with change being a major analytical concern. In this way, the book has identified distinctive historical-institutional features, such as London's commercial and imperial background, that augment or constrain a city's global political role. We have also undertaken long-term analysis of the general rise and fall of cities within international relations, from the Hanseatic League to the Westphalian era and beyond to the "post-post"–Cold War world, probing reasons for the rise, fall, and revival of cities in world affairs. In doing so, we have directed special attention to the reasons why cities vary over time in their relation to nation states, NGOs, and transnational forces.

Chapter 2 finds that cities have been central in international relations across most of human history, building on their innate power of proximity. City states were the classic unit of political action in both ancient Greece and in ancient China; their configuration and interactions lay at the heart of enduring works by such varied ancient authors as Aristotle, Confucius, Thucydides, and Sun Tzu. Cities have also been central in commercial history across the centuries, from the days of the Silk Road to those of the Hanseatic League and to the present. Nation-states began to supersede cities across Europe only in the sixteenth century, culminating in the Peace of Westphalia, and the final legitimization of the state sovereignty concept in 1648.

We have also found that cities are becoming increasingly central on the global stage once again, following three and a half centuries of nation-state

preeminence. Cities are rising again in two dimensions: as actor and as arena for influence. In the first dimension, civic leaders, recently including Michael Bloomberg, Boris Johnson, Koike Yuriko, Mauricio Macri, and Park Won-soon, have taken steps to set global agendas on such major issues as transportation, environment, and public safety. Grassroots movements are also growing more active in agenda-setting on issues ranging from the environment to human rights. In the second dimension, global cities are the locus for research, brainstorming, and network building that is reshaping policy agendas for the future, owing to the rising influence of think tanks, NGOs, intercity cooperation, and, in some instances, academic research. The rise of cities as both actors and arenas is, in turn, transforming global governance from a top-down process of national fiat into a bottom-up dynamic of subnational initiation, especially in economic and social policy sectors.

In their diverse efforts, global political cities are drawing increasingly on the innate urban power of proximity, including the creativity that naturally flows from the interaction of diverse, capable, and creative people situated close to one another geographically. Those elemental strengths of cities, long inhibited by state regulation, are being progressively released and amplified by multiple forces: particularly deregulation, technological change, and deepening transnational interdependence. The latter increases information flows to previously provincial local actors, while also offering them new avenues for effective policy action, as new global support bodies such as C40, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, and the Compact of Mayors have begun to emerge.[3] All of these developments fuel the rising influence of major cities in global political-economic decisionmaking.

Technology, we have found, is a powerful force multiplier for civic actors in international affairs—both governmental and nongovernmental; it operates by radically transforming the political-economic meaning of distance. New forms of communications—particularly social media and the internet—offer both convenient new sources of information and powerful means for coordinating transnationally. Rapid new forms of transportation and improving infrastructure leverage these new options for horizontal cooperation across national borders still further. They thus generate a reinforcing web of deepening transnational policy networks, for which global political cities serve as the geographical nexus.

Communications technology is an especially dynamic change agent, synergistic with parallel developments in finance and transportation. That technology has, together with related changes in finance and geopolitics, generated a discontinuous transformation since the 1970s in how global cities relate to one another, and to broader processes of global agenda-setting and governance. We view this abrupt, holistic, and multi-faceted sea change as a

primary reason for the rise of global political cities, and for why their institutions have assumed their current profile.

Exploring the Institutional Role of Research and Agenda-setting Institutions ("Idea Industries") as Catalysts for Global Civic-Policy Influence

Cities have always had great potential in areas like idea formation, owing to the inherent power of proximity that they enjoy. Yet those capacities have been greatly magnified in recent years and have been rendered much more relevant to global governance and human-security agenda-setting than before, owing both to the rapid pace of technological change and to institutional innovation. The critical institutional development has been the rise of tech-savvy think tanks, with powerful analytic and communications capabilities, ranging from podcasting to streaming video. Their growing technical sophistication combines, especially in fluid, institutionally flexible political systems such as the United States, with versatile personal networks leading into the policy process, coupled with support from global financial institutions. The case studies presented here show empirically how think tanks shape policy agendas, as the Center for Strategic and International Studies did, for example, with its Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative, in raising public and policy awareness of Chinese island-building efforts in the South China Sea. The book has also shown how idea-industry influence is being magnified and transformed by new communications technology, in both domestic contexts and globally.

Understanding Global Agenda-Setting

The role of a variety of institutions (forums, penumbras, and mayors, as well as grassroots groups) in global agenda-setting has been documented. Geneva forums on human rights, San Francisco grassroots movements on civil rights, and London NGOs promoting sustainable-development responses to climate change are important cases in point. The book has explored the role of finance as a catalyst for global agenda-setting, particularly through its support for forums, penumbra, and local government. The volume has also shown how cities themselves interact to set global agendas, on issues ranging from sustainable growth to financial regulation.

Vigorous, entrepreneurial financial sectors covary closely with dynamic idea industries and are often crucial to their development. They play a pivotal role in shaping global agendas, both through financial support and technical advice. Innovative, market-oriented financial industries, capitalizing on the ICT revolution, are thus central to the rising prosperity and influence of many global political cities.

Chapter 1 suggests, in a background political-economic observation that prepares the ground for the four formal functional hypotheses presented later, that a robust and global financial system contributes crucially to a city's global political influence, using money, information, and markets. Chapter 4 presents the contrasting cases of London, New York, Paris, and Tokyo, which shed light on how finance actually influences political life and policymaking. London and New York present particularly robust insights into the linkage between finance and policymaking, because the financial communities of those global cities are extensive, affluent, internationally conscious, and strongly interactive with the local penumbra of power that supplies policy ideas for global agendas. Such cities are also increasingly dependent for their global influence on sophisticated political-economic information flows. In London the City fosters Chatham House, in the same way that New York's Wall Street fosters the Council on Foreign Relations. These two think tanks are, in turn, central to informal elite consensus building on both sides of the Atlantic.

In contrast to London and New York, underdeveloped financial markets in Paris fail to generate robust private research institutes, putting Paris at a disadvantage in elite transnational agenda-setting. The same could be said of Tokyo, Seoul, and Beijing. Most of these global cities have relatively underdeveloped private policy-research institutes that have only begun to interact intensively with thought leaders in major global cities of the West. Research and analysis are conversely much more dependent on the state in all of these emerging global cities than in the established Anglo-Saxon financial and political centers. In Tokyo, where government controls have similarly inhibited a traditionally overregulated private sector, international pressure and ensuing domestic deregulation may be altering that state-centric equation, with implications for local idea-industry development, for public-private penumbras of power, and for concomitant civic credibility in global agenda-setting. Dynamic, market-oriented financial markets thus seem to erode state intellectual dominance and the paradigmatic state-centric realist paradigm of international affairs.

Comprehending Contemporary Global Governance Prospects

The volume shows clearly that governance is shifting from the nation-state level to subnational units, as the multi-faceted global sea change proceeds. It documents the rising transnational activism of mayors and other local officials, as well as the recent proliferation of intercity cooperative bodies. Together, a variety of subnational and international actors are creating a subtle new web of transnational policy coordination and regulation that is, in turn, generating new global governance paradigms.

The innovative transnational policy networks now emerging across the industrialized world are reinforced and amplified by the birth of a rich supportive infrastructure of transnational organizations, greatly facilitated by technological change and related international connectivity. In addition to the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and C40, organizations such as CityNet, Mayors for Peace, and the World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO) are just a few that have appeared over the past decade. Such bodies support best-practice policy borrowing among global cities and also facilitate subnational cooperative action on issues ranging from environmental cooperation to pandemics and counterterrorism.

Anglo-Saxon–style market capitalism has contributed greatly to both the emergence of dynamic idea industries and a marked resurgence in the global political role of cities in the post–Cold War world. Yet there is a clear alternative to the market-conforming global political city of the Anglo-Saxon world that is nevertheless becoming an important sort of global actor in its own right. Developmentalist cities, involved in plan-rationale efforts to transform local sociopolitical environments, also exist; some are closely supervised by higher national authority, others not. Beijing clearly falls into this developmentalist category, as do Singapore, Seoul, Paris, and Tokyo to a lesser degree. Developmentalist cities seem to efficiently provide many of the physical requisites of urban development, such as high-performance infrastructure, while also strategically staging globally influential political forums.

Critiquing Realist Theory

This volume documents concretely that cities are playing major and growing roles in significant policy areas such as environment and transportation, thus belying realist arguments that international relations operate exclusively in terms of national power maximization. The book also identifies exceptions to this pluralist and market-oriented pattern in the form of developmentalist global political cities and city-states, concentrated especially in East Asia and the Middle East. Such cities vindicate the realist, nation-centric paradigm but are often ineffective in nurturing the creative, informal penumbras of power surrounding government that have flourished in such Anglo-Saxon global cities as London, New York, and Washington, DC.

Returning to Exploratory Hypotheses

Based on the analytical ambitions outlined above, chapter 1 presents four exploratory hypotheses, to be tested against evidence from a range of global

cities. In response, the chapters that follow probe how mayors, forums, penumbras, and grassroots groups enhance the political influence of cities in their respective spheres. These hypotheses yielded the following preliminary conclusions, which, of course, require validation through future research.

- An extra-governmental private advisory network (penumbra of power), such as prevails in Washington, DC, or to a lesser degree in Brussels, does indeed enhance a city's global influence, as distinct from that of the local nation-state. It does so by generating networks and amassing information that is of broad international utility. The freer the access to these resources, the more influential a given city becomes, relative to the local nation state.

- A continuous, cosmopolitan forum presence does indeed enhance a city's global political influence. This is especially true, as the case of Singapore demonstrates, when a city develops the infrastructure, as well as the political and intellectual networks that give it expertise across broad yet interrelated areas of major global interest, such as military and energy security. Conversely, failure to develop appropriate infrastructure, or to maintain political stability, as in the case of Bandung since the mid-1960s, may undermine what would otherwise be great international forum potential.

- An unconstrained and internationally connected grassroots community does indeed enhance global civic influence. The San Francisco Bay Area shows this pattern clearly. Conversely, political constraints can severely dilute a city's ability to shape global agendas or disrupt those efforts, as the cases of Hong Kong and Seoul in various ways demonstrate.

- Autonomous and activist local leaders can be important in enhancing a city's global political influence. This is especially true where the leaders in question have extensive personal networks and financial resources to support their civic activities, as in the case of New York's Michael Bloomberg. It can also be true when major global events like the Olympic Games create special opportunities for local leaders, as in the case of Tokyo and Governor Koike Yuriko in 2021. Conversely, political instability or lack of resources can cripple the ability of local civic leaders to exert global influence, as has been true in Hong Kong and many other large cities of the developing world.

Throughout this book, beginning in chapter 1, we have suggested the important background role of finance in supporting the rise of contemporary global political cities. It is difficult to be precise about the role that finance

plays in urban political life, as that role is multifaceted and often subterranean, so we have not presented a finance-specific hypothesis. We have, however, in the course of research found a striking correlation between the rise of financial industries in global cities—particularly the equity and derivative sectors that require the most timely and accurate political-economic information—and the expansion of the forums and policy-advisory complexes that so significantly enhance the global influence of cities. Due to its intrinsically cosmopolitan character and the resources at its command, the financial industry also provides important backing for globally oriented local leaders, and is a significant interlocutor (and sometimes target) for civil-society activists as well.

Future Prospects

Recent estimates suggest that there will be close to 3 billion more city dwellers by the year 2050 than at present. The bulk of that increase will be in the developing nations of Asia and Africa, where urban populations will grow by 2.5 billion, as opposed to a prospective increase of only 170 million in the G7. Massive new challenges of sanitation, housing, transportation, energy use, and public safety will thus emerge, particularly in cities of the developing world.

Many of the new challenges will relate to construction. Buildings currently consume 30 percent of energy worldwide and generate fully half of global greenhouse gases. By the year 2050, global building footage will double.

The tragedies of the recent past remind us forcefully that public health could also pose a daunting challenge for the world's cities, even the most affluent of them. Pandemics could, as the case of COVID-19 has devastatingly shown us, be particularly dangerous, due to their explosive and unpredictable character—often emerging suddenly, from unknown causes, and replete with consequences for which society is unprepared. The way that pandemics like COVID-19 feed on proximity makes them especially dangerous for large global cities; contingency planning for the next wave of such pandemics is an urgent policy priority.

Other challenges will relate to the dual processes of rapid urban social transformation that are now reshaping our world. A rich variety of new NGOs and urban-support organizations, many of them transnational, is emerging, just as the advent of social media magnifies the potential for horizontal communication. This proliferation of NGOs is remarkably recent—three-quarters of all those NGOs active in 2014 had been founded during the previous three decades.[4] And support for these dynamic groups is continuing to rise: analysts believe that the 1.2 billion donors to NGOs will double to

2.5 billion by 2030.[5] International NGOs are proliferating even more rapidly than NGOs as a whole.[6] And the dynamic, multifaceted sea change transformation is accelerating this worldwide deepening of civil society.

As chapter 7 shows, the rise of NGOs, enabled by new forms of social communication, is empowering grassroots groups and encouraging their transnational interaction in many global political cities. San Francisco was an early pacesetter in that regard, but cities such as Seoul and recently Hong Kong have come to the fore. The vitality of grassroots organizations in global political cities increases the probability of global issue management migrating from the national to the civic level still further.

Clearly, cities will be increasingly important as global actors if international problems move more decisively toward their areas of special competence, as seems likely. In an era of growing connectivity, cities are also likely to become more important as arenas of global deliberation. With improved infrastructure and increased government support, more influential political forums show prospect of emerging in the developing world. In the increasingly mature global political cities of Asia, Latin America, and Africa, creative penumbras of power may begin emerging also, if local political stability and political pluralism prevail.

Implications for the International Political Economy

This research suggests that a new era of international governance is dawning, particularly in human-security related sectors outside the conventional political-military field. Global challenges in these areas clearly exceed the capacity or inclination of national governments to cope, in an era of bureaucratic rigidity, rising populist demands, and resource constraints. However, local authorities, the penumbras of power surrounding them, the idea industries to which global cities have given birth, and even grassroots groups can together provide a powerful and much-needed supplement to nation-state efforts in the emerging era of the global political city.

Cities individually have specialized comparative advantages that national governments may not share. And cities collectively are gaining new capacities and inclination to act together. Meanwhile, the ability of nations for collective action declines, as their policy failures, ranging from the environment to alliance management to international trade, suggest.

Environment, transportation, public health, and public security are all areas where the future role of cities as policy actors seems especially promising. These issue areas affect citizens in their everyday life yet are all too often neglected by security-oriented national leaders. Civic leaders can and often do fill the vacuum.

Even outside the socioeconomic policy spheres, there is great potential for global cities to play a rising role, both as venues for policy research and as sites for policy generation. Even in the conventional national-security sector, penumbras of power (including think tanks) and political forums such as the Munich Security Forum and Singapore's Shangri La Dialogue have increasing importance in global agenda-setting, overshadowing the staid, often conventional pronouncements of national bureaucracies. Soft transnational infrastructure, in the form of support organizations such as C40, CityNet, and WeGO, without a doubt encourages the gradual emergence of more city-based global governance as well. Cities such as Tokyo and Seoul, with strong ambitions to enhance their own global role, are especially active in initiatives to establish more diverse and creative patterns of global governance, as the recent history of U20, CityNet, WeGO, the Asian Network of Major Cities 21, and ICLEI, to cite just a few examples, has shown.

Cities, of course, cannot do everything, especially in the hard-security sphere. And powerful nation-based forces will most likely have strong incentives to circumscribe the roles of cities in many other areas too. As the focus of national security in many parts of the post–Cold War world moves increasingly to localized issues such as terrorism and drug trafficking, however, the role of cities even there is poised to expand. London and Geneva have already taken major initiatives on security-related questions, such as humanitarian assistance to victims of wars and disasters, as well as the abolition of land mines. Hiroshima and Nagasaki have borne graphic witness to the human urgency of nuclear disarmament as well.

One promising, if mundane, area for civic initiative in international affairs relates to coordinated building codes. Buildings, as noted above, consume nearly one third of global energy, and produce around half of greenhouse gases. Mandating low-carbon buildings, through coordinated construction standards, could both save energy and reduce pollution in coming years, especially since global building footage is scheduled to double over the coming three decades. Major economic centers, such as New York, London, and Tokyo, can show leadership in such areas, just as Singapore has taken the lead on global water policy.

A further area for civic initiative could relate to electric power. Choices among nuclear power, liquefied natural gas, and alternative energy sources such as solar power have major global implications. Local regulatory policies—and exchange of information on best practice—can have major global impact, leveraged through the transnational cooperation made possible by subnational organizations. Initiatives in Europe, Seoul, and Singapore are promising in such areas, and they can promote their high-quality local practices worldwide through emulation by other global cities.

This research suggests the striking comparative advantages of the different types of global political cities, in terms of their potential for generating policy options, securing their international adoption, and implementing them in globally important ways. Provided that the various types cooperate, civic actions add up to far more than the sum of the parts. Entrepreneurial cities such as San Francisco, which experience limited constraints from other levels of government owing to their financial power and transnational ties, come closest to the Glaeser ideal in exercising a creative power of proximity. On a broad range of social issues, ranging from medical marijuana and sanctuary cities to bans on single-use plastic bottles, Bay-area cities have been highly innovative and have established paradigms that later are broadly adopted elsewhere in the world.

Established economic centers such as New York, in contrast to entrepreneurial cities like San Francisco, are often more heavily dependent on national government, and more constrained by it in pursuing policy innovations. They are typically home, however, to powerful financiers and leaders of multinational corporations with global influence. Such leaders, through their personal networks and resources, often play key roles in deepening supportive global infrastructure for city influence, especially when they play pivotal roles at the civic level, as Mayor Michael Bloomberg did in New York City.

Multilateral centers have a more catalytic function. Rather than generating ideas or nurturing social infrastructure, they typically play a synthetic role as a meeting ground for activists and policy entrepreneurs, where new ideas can be publicized and concrete projects formulated. Geneva clearly plays such a role with respect to human security issues ranging from refugee relief to nuclear disarmament. New York City, headquarters of the United Nations and also home to some of the world's most powerful media organizations, sometimes fills a similar function, leveraged further at times by the enormous financial power of its most affluent citizens.

National capitals, which logically might be thought to rank most highly among global political cities, due to their proximity to national power, in reality vary greatly in their civic influence. And that persuasive power fails, to a surprising degree, to correlate closely with the influence of their corresponding nation state. The influence of Berlin and Paris in world affairs, for example, appears much less substantial than that of Germany or France and surprisingly unresponsive to their prominent national standing, whereas the global profile of London is considerably more substantial than that of Britain. In the case of Germany, the recency of Berlin's reestablishment as the national capital contributes to its lack of global standing, whereas in the case of Paris, traditionally strong national constraints have inhibited an independent role for the national capital as a global political city in its own right.

Washington, owing to its local sociopolitical structure and the unique global role of the United States in world affairs, is arguably a special case. Because of severe national controls and a lack of supportive local entrepreneurs, Washington's mayors have not sustained a significant global role. Yet due to the U.S. capital's uniquely pluralistic and fragmented sociopolitical structure, affording broad points of access to influence seekers from throughout the world, Washington has a massive and growing idea industry and penumbra of power. That penumbra powerfully shapes both American foreign policy and the policies of nations associated with the United States, in counterintuitive directions.

Washington's penumbra, for example, has historically kept the United States more open to foreign trade, and accepting of large current account deficits, than realist theory might predict. The nongovernmental segment of Washington also plays roles in the foreign policy of other nations, especially those of East Asia, that is substantial, but not necessarily at the service of formal U.S. governmental interests. The think tanks and lobbies of the American capital are thus a powerful, surprisingly autonomous force in international relations.

In only one type of global political city do national and civic interests closely coincide. That, of course, is in the city-state, where the city and the nation-state are institutionally one and the same. Access to nation-state legitimacy, networks, and resources gives city-states such as Singapore an unparalleled ability to set global agendas on urban issues. The flexibility of having both national and local personas also allows city-states useful tactical flexibility to maneuver between chessboards. Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong can, for example, deal with Chinese President Xi Jinping, while special envoys like veteran Ambassador Chan Heng Chee, a specialist on cities, can simultaneously deal with Chongqing, Tianjin, or even Taipei on concrete local-level projects.[7] City-states thus present the purest opportunity for cities, as in the days of Venetian power or the Hanseatic League, to exploit the power of proximity in the support of global urban agendas.

Cities that are not sovereign face a more complex panoply of constraints from above. Unitary states such as France, for example, have remarkably little administrative or budgetary autonomy: Paris did not even have an elected mayor until 1977.[8] In federal nations like the United States, global cities such as New York and San Francisco can face capricious political constraints from multiple levels of government.

Civic actors—be they mayors or grassroots NGOs—increasingly use these arenas of influence to overcome the constraints that other levels of government present. In New York City, London, or Tokyo, local leaders can tap the penumbra of power, including the financial world, to gain leverage. Additionally,

like Mayor Anne Hidalgo of Paris, who helped host COP 21, and Governor Koike Yuriko of Tokyo, host of U20 in 2019 and future Olympic-related events, civic leaders can also tap international forums as a source of support when their leverage with national bureaucracies is limited.

Omissions and Rationale for Exclusion

The list of global political cities provided in chapter 1 offers a useful overview of the major global political cities. There are, however, the following few important omissions that merit explanation:

Germany. As a nation, Germany has the fourth-largest GDP on earth. And especially since reunification in 1990, it has played a major role in world politics. Four major German cities—Berlin, Frankfurt, Munich, and Bonn— are home to vigorous research institutions and periodically host important international forums.[9] For a variety of reasons, however, German cities have played only limited roles in international agenda-setting. These include the aloof, scholarly character of its research institutions, the traditional post– World War II reticence of Germany in direct global leadership, and disruptions related to reunification, including the extended, nearly decade-long (1990–1999) movement of the national capital from Bonn to Berlin, just as Brussels was establishing itself as the EU's policy center.[10]

Russia. This is the largest nation in the world geographically and an erstwhile Cold War superpower. Moscow itself was a vigorous global political city in the mid-1920s, during the Lenin-Bukharin era—headquarters of the Comintern and a major international agenda-setter on social, economic, and cultural questions. After the Stalinist era, and especially during the first post– Cold War decade of the 1990s, intellectual activity revived briefly, but political uncertainties, including ambiguous local autonomy, the disappearance of powerful transnational bodies like the Comintern, and complex Moscow–St. Petersburg rivalry, prevent Russia's major cities from playing a major role today on the international scene.

India. This country will soon have the world's largest population and already has the fifth-largest economy in the world. It has a vigorous intellectual community and vigorous democratic politics. Yet India has been surprisingly isolated from broad global debates, despite its intellectual vitality and that of its diaspora.[11] Indian nationalism, parochial absorption with regional disputes, a disjunct between global agendas and Indian values, a failure to allocate state resources to international dialogue, and an absence of the dynamic capital

markets that have bred information industries elsewhere could be among the varied reasons for this paradoxical detachment, although there are some exceptions, such as the Institute for Defense Studies and the Observer and Gateway Foundations, to this general pattern.

Latin America. The region has a few distinguished think tanks, such as the Vargas Institute of São Paulo. Latin American cities, however, have not emerged as major global agenda-setters. Latin American states' tendency to view interaction with the broader world through the prism of "*dependencia*," or exploitative dependence on foreign industrial powers, no doubt inhibits their willingness to engage dynamically with the rest of the world. Political and financial volatility, together with the consequent challenges in developing stable institutions and centralization of political functions to the national level, have also complicated the emergence of dynamic global political cities.

Africa. As in Latin America, local political turbulence, assertive national states bent on centralization, and lack of resources have all inhibited efforts by African cities to play global agenda-setting roles. The South African cities Johannesburg and Durban, as well as Nairobi in Kenya, do have embedded international networks that could potentially support broadened global roles in the future, but those roles have not emerged coherently as yet.[12]

Issues for Future Research

The research presented in this volume has explored the financial and technological forces supporting the rising prominence of cities in international political affairs, as well as the special ways in which cities influence global political agendas. This effort has relied on evidence of the activities of fifteen cities central to our analysis. Clearly the hypotheses tested in an exploratory way in this volume need to be confirmed in relation to a much broader body of data.

This very preliminary research—necessarily exploratory in character—has omitted cities in certain major parts of the world, for the reasons cited. One high-priority issue for future research is whether these omissions will continue to be appropriate. When and how, for example, will Berlin emerge as a major global political city, given the political-economic strength of a resurgent, reunified Germany, on the one hand, and supranational competition from Brussels, on the other? What other major global cities will become important global political cities as well? And what will drive their emergence?

At the micro level, the question of how individual civic leaders provide leadership on global issues no doubt deserves further attention. What sort

of civic leadership contributes to the rise of global cities? When and why, as in cases like Lee Myung-bak and Boris Johnson, do civic leaders become national? Do their career trajectories enhance the role of global cities on the world political stage, or do they further leverage the nation-state? Is this an either-or question? Or both-and?

One emerging sociopolitical reality that is encountered again and again in exploring the globalizing world of the past three decades is the rising importance of transnational policy networks. What do international issue networks actually look like at the city level? Which cities are most active on environmental issues, transportation, or water, and why? Who do city leaders and penumbras deal with, and who is neglected? What difference does the internet concretely make in how networks function? Why do think tanks remain on Washington's Massachusetts Avenue, if everything around the world is fully connected online?

Another emerging sociopolitical reality that bears further examination is the megalopolis phenomenon, representing a related complex of cities. Relevant examples touched on in this book include the San Francisco Bay Area on the U.S. West Coast and the Yangtze Delta complex around Hangzhou. Michael Porter has shown that competitive clusters, from Silicon Valley to Madison Avenue, exhibit unusual economic creativity. Silicon Valley, for example, pioneers in semiconductor development, while Madison Avenue is continually reconfiguring advertising paradigms. The Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Research Triangle in North Carolina, as well as the Greater Boston biotechnology complex, comprising nearly one thousand biotech firms, are other cases in point. It would be useful to consider the implications of such clustering for politics, policymaking, and policy innovation as well. The exploratory San Francisco Bay study presented here suggests that this spatially linked political-economic clustering phenomenon could significantly influence both global political-economic agendas and global politics itself.

Future research also needs to explore more extensively the relationship between the broader political-economic environment that cities confront around them and the way global political cities themselves operate. How is technology, for example, changing the national-to-subnational influence relationship? And in parts of the world like Europe, where supranational actors matter, how is technology affecting city-supranational relations?

At the beginning of 2020, few people thought to ask how the healthcare environment of a city might affect its internal functioning, economic standing, or global role. The ensuing COVID-19 pandemic brutally provoked a new subject for future inquiry: What happens to the power of proximity, and the intimate, dynamic web of urban interpersonal relationships, when contact

becomes dangerous to one's health? What are the downsides to the power of proximity, and to what extent might they countervail the upsides in future years? These are all sobering and important questions for future research.

Returning to the changing realm of world affairs, it is important to remember that while cities do have important—and unrecognized—global roles, those are also shaped indirectly by the nation-state of which they are part. Nations impose a variety of constraints on cities, which are strong in unitary states such as France, Japan, and South Korea, that allow cities only limited budgetary or administrative discretion. Even in the case of federal systems such as the United States, higher levels of government, especially states, can severely constrain cities, as in the case of New York City.[13] Political volatility can also constrain local leaders, as in Bandung, Cairo, and even New York City.

Global political cities received a big boost, in their endemic rivalry with the nation-state, from the geopolitical changes connected to the waning of the Cold War—especially the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is considerable evidence that global geopolitical tensions are increasing again. What impact might the rise of China then have on the role of global political cities in international affairs?

The most globally fateful case study in the relationship between national governments and global cities may thus be China itself. The empowering impact that technology and deepening socioeconomic interdependence are having on global cities generally is evident, but the Chinese national government has been making a determined effort to countervail that tendency—seen most clearly and dramatically in Hong Kong. How will Chinese global cities more generally respond to global and national pressures when those are in tension with one another? How will those cities represent their interests, and those of their countries, on the global stage? Can Chinese cities set political agendas for their region and beyond? Will the developmentalist paradigm be sufficient? Can nationally guided global political influence eventually develop a local life of its own? These are no doubt globally consequential issues for future research.

Future research could delve comparatively into an issue beginning to dawn in some country studies: how rapidly evolving social-monitoring technology is beginning to influence global city politics. Such technology, born of the ICT revolution, may be able to combat crime, but what implications does it have for civil liberties and pluralistic politics? And what new capabilities are arising for transnational manipulation of politics, including local elections?

This research reveals, in an exploratory sense, that the ability of both nations and cities to actually influence the course of the international political economy appears to be changing. But how do we measure those changes?

How much less effective are nations becoming? And how much more effective are cities coming to be? Future research needs to relate the exploratory propositions to more concrete indicators. Could environmental outcomes in response to national and civic initiatives, for example, be evaluated on the basis of common criteria, such as airborne particulate content?

One promising final area for future research is the relationship between nation-state political-economic structure and local initiative. Washington, DC, is a major case in point. This book notes the dynamism and substantial influence of Washington's penumbra of power, in the form of NGOs and think tanks. That penumbra is very much a product of the decentralized nature of the U.S. political system and of frequent movement between public and private employment. Both the structure of this system and its implications for international affairs clearly need more detailed analysis.

Seoul is another interesting case. This research indicates that Seoul mayors have been unusually proactive in taking global initiatives, relative to those in nearby capitals such as Tokyo, especially over the past two decades. What relation does such activism have to the constitutional one-term limit that Korean presidents face and the consequent prospect that Seoul mayors are inevitably prominent candidates for president of Korea?

Indian and many Southeast Asian cities present a similar paradox for future research. Such cities, apart from Singapore, do not appear to be prominent on the global political stage, despite their substantial size and in many cases a vigorous democratic heritage. Why this is so, and how it relates to nation-state structure, is another compelling topic for future research.

In Conclusion

History shows the city to be one of human society's most venerable and classic forms of organization, as well as one of its most enduring. The origin of cities goes back to the beginning of social life among the major world civilizations. Across the bulk of recorded civilization until less than four hundred years ago, the city was, together with the empire, the dominant form of political organization in world affairs.

Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the nation-state has conversely been the recognized form of basic political organization worldwide. Cities were for centuries less prominent than nations in the political firmament, and less adapted to deal with the enormous challenges of a turbulent world. Rising social complexity and internal polarization, driven by globalization and post–Cold War geopolitical change, have sharply undermined the capacity of nation-states to handle pressing transnational challenges, ranging from the environment to counterterrorism.

Meanwhile, deepening transnational networks concentrated in global cities, leveraged by the related power of technology and finance in the internet age, have greatly enlarged the capacity of such cities to understand and cope with global problems, even those of pandemic intensity. Such institutional growth has occurred steadily and synergistically over the past four decades, with increasing momentum. Today cities are uniquely positioned, due to flexibility, connectivity, and information-processing power, to face the new political-economic challenges presented by our volatile, unpredictable, but interdependent and inevitably contentious world. A historic new era of the global political city in international affairs has clearly begun.