European Cities in an Urbanising World

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Introduction: European Cities in an Urbanising World

September 27th, 2021 - *Bas Van Heur*

- Theoretical and empirical introduction to the course

- Discussion on globalisation debate: myths on globalisation, waves of globalisation, the problem of periodisation, the relation between globalisation and regionalisation/localisation

- The position of 'Europe' in the world

  - The changing boundaries of what and where Europe is considered to be
  - The imperial/colonial linkages of European countries and cities
  - Cities as nodes in networks of cultural and intellectual exchange
  - Migration movements from/to/within Europe and the position of cities
  - The rescaling of national state space and the relation between Europeanisation and globalisation

Readings

Tsing, 2000, *The Global Situation*

- Discusses "what is globalisation", what is, is there, a globalisation era?

- **Futurism**: the idea that the future will bring progress and prosperity, that globalisation is modern rather than ancient, and attributes stereotypes to the past

- **Conflations**: merging of ideas/opinions/texts. Globalisation cannot be understood under a single ideological system. It is best understood by the overlaps of systems. Networks serve to connect people/ideas/movements world wide, and strengthens them. But, networks can be exclusionary

- **Circulation**

- Cultural anthropology is how people who share a common cultural system organise and shape their social and physical world

- In anthropology, globalism is the intensification of global interconnectedness

- Flow is the cultural exchange between cultures/nations, and Imagined landscapes are created by globalisation. These are too much emphasised in anthropology, rather, we should look at scale making of the global and regional

Osterhammel, 2011, *Globalisations*

- A historian's look on a social science

- **Modernity** is the development of capitalism, industrialisation, the establishment of nation states, countries, regions

- **Globalisation** is the the interrelationships among countries, and how these countries 'merge'

- The problem with globalisation is that there are many definitions, all of them viable. Thus we should not define it but use it as a framework that contains models of change, in large spatial contexts

- Discusses globalisation vs. global history, and concludes that global history encompasses globalisation

Periodising Globalisation

The working definition of globalisation is:

- *"Globalisation is the extension, acceleration and intensification of consequential worldwide interconnections"* (Sparke, 2013, p.13).

- Places across the globe are increasingly interconnected; social relations and economic transactions increasingly occur at the intercontinental scale; the globe itself comes to be a recognisable geographic entity (Cloke et. al, 2005, p.36)

This means there is an increase of interconnection of the global, through processes such as intercontinental economic and financial transactions. ***Increasing*** assumes that there is a 'before', but that is usually implicit. However, globalisation needs to be **situated** in time.

We now visualise the world as one global entity, especially in ecology. Harvey (1989) describes the speeding up of globalisation, that the world always becomes faster. From horse-drawn carriages, to steam locomotive, to propeller aircraft, to jet passenger aircraft, these modes of transport have made the world a smaller place. Transport connections/network maps show that its becoming easier to connect cities to each other, rather than to the periphery.

Presentism and futurism

Two key problems in periodising globalisation are presentism and futurism.

- Globalisation is a term that is marked by its time. It emerged in the 1970s and the era of globalisation tends to be limited to post-1970s. It has a Western perspective limited to the 1990s era of Western sensibilities

- This implies a **newness** and not a **continuity**: there is little sense of dialectic globalisation and de-globalisation. If something globalises, does something else de-globalise?

- There is a tendency to focus on the condition, not the process and projects of globalisation: "globalisation did this". Such statements are impossible because globalisation is a concept. Who are the actual actors?

Presentism and futurism are Western styles of thinking.

Similarly to globalisation, the Enlightenment was not condition that could be achieved, but a process. It was a normative-societal goal. The obstacles to achieving Enlightenment

are immaturity (laziness, cowardice) and the lack of freedom (people must use reason in public) (Immanuel Kant). For globalisation, immaturity means that people are not good entrepreneurs, and lack of freedom means the need to break down institutional barriers.

Modernisation is the global "world-making process" of the post WWII era. It is a normative-societal goal, all is moving towards it, and little attention is paid to contradictions and tensions.

Eurocentrism

Eurocentrism is the idea that Europe's history is the 'sovereign' of all histories, that 'other' histories are based on one master narrative, and that all narratives about cities are related to Europe[1].

The definition of globalisation depend on where you situate yourself in history, and also in what discipline. Definitions don't need to agree, but they **need to be explicit as to where and when they are situated**.

Periodisations

Examples of periodisations:

- 1820s: convergence of commodity prices across continents. The economic explanation is that local economies integrated into global systems, and the prices of goods converged. It overlooks state interventions, and is Western and colonial centric, exposing the inequality of globalisation

- 1571: founding of Manila as Spanish trading post. It linked trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific trade. It was a colonial city, and decentralised Europe in the global narrative

- 13th century: the world system before European hegemony. There were 8 circuits in the world, that traded most commonly with each other. Not European centric, but more Asia-centric that Europe inherited

Where is Europe?

Positioning Europe is a **metageography**, we feel the need as a society to partition the world into separate areas. The need to position Europe is a product of European expansionism and the growth of long-distance travel and trade. We conceive the world as one, but still divide it into parts. Overtime, new modes of categorising and labelling continents, macro-regions, areas, have emerged, and the **codification** of Europe has increased:

- 19th century nationalism: comparative methods, for eg. Kulturvergleich that compares distinct, territorially fixed civilisations

- 20th century area studies: shaped by the geopolitics of the Cold War and development studies such as modernisation

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[1]See 'Provincialising Europe' by Dipesh Chakrabarty

- There is always a tendency to position Europe as the norm

In naming large areas, there is a fair degree of uncertainty, vagueness, and politically strategic flexibility. The definition of Europe remains fluid.

Today, Europe is represented as an integration. Historically, in the 19th-20th century various versions of 'Europe' emerged. There was limited internal homogeneity regarding the versions, due to different geopolitical interests and different empires. External boundaries of Europe were fluid and/or contested.

Empires and Colonies

Colonies had very different geographies as the colonisers, and we can think about how a city is organised based on this knowledge. This means that two neighbouring countries could have very different geographies and relationships, depending on if and by who they were colonised.

Europe could be located in the empires and their colonies, reaching far beyond the geographical 'boundaries' of the land:

- North Africa and the Middle East were historically part of Europe, and only in the last century did they become separate

- In Russia, actors try to tie or separate it from Europe, in favour of Asia, or vice versa. It's difficult to set Russia's European boundary, because there is not a clear mark, it is a single land mass, and drawing the line is hard. Thus, creating a separate European identity in Russia is not easy.

- The EU is now seen as Europe. This ignores the "tentacles of the EU", because there are European territories overseas that map the history of colonisation.

Different cities, different globalisations

Cities can become strong both because of their strong and weak states. It can be estimated that if a city is big, its economy is strong; and if a city is growing, its economy is moving.

Populations have changed over the last five centuries:

- Up to 1500s: Mediterranean centric, North Africa and Middle East cities have the largest populations

- 1500-1600s: European world-city network, hierarchical, European centric, cross-Atlantic with Potosi (Bolivia)

- 1500-1700s: Dutch hegemonic cycle, migration dynamics, shifting geographies, the population growth is an economic growth → a growing city is propsperous

- 1700-1900s: British hegemonic cycle, appearance of north and south American cities in 19th century

What political, social, economic histories is your city built on?

Port cities

Port cities are key infrastructural hubs of globalisation. The 19th century was the golden age of port cities, due to the strong expansion of world trade. This was complemented by railroad junctions in the late 19th and early 20th century, and airports in the late 20th century.

The consequences of port cities are:

- The growth of ports shapes the urban built environment
- There are **diverse and flexible labour markets**
  - The labour force was almost exclusively male except during war
  - Had seasonal fluctuations, with most working on land during the summer
  - There was a difference of ethnicities within the work force. Liverpool had a strong influx of Irish workers, whereas Odessa, Ukraine, recruited Jews, Swiss, Germans, Greeks
- There is a highly diverse social composition of the population
- There is a **polarised class structure**, with port cities governed by a small regime of shipowners, bankers and merchants

Colonial cities

Colonial cities are outside of Europe, but strongly connected to it through trade, military expeditions, migration networks, and knowledge exchange. They were **ruled from abroad** and the indigenous population was excluded from the governance. They acted as an interface between the imperial core, and the exploitation of its hinterland.

European architecture and planning styles were introduced. Cultural, political, economic characteristics influenced or were imposed on the colonies. Thus, it's possible to consider colonies as a part of Europe.

Imperial cities and the post-colonial

Imperial cities are the core, but also the counterpart, to colonial cities: strong, though unequal interactions shapes both cities. In general terms, wealth and growth of imperial cities depended, to a greater or lesser extent, on the exploitation of its colonial hinterlands.

Colonialism is partially visible in urban landscapes, through colonial monuments like statues, and buildings. For example, the statue of Leopold II in Brussels stands as a tribute, but the fact that he was a coloniser is sidelined.

There is an increasing contestation and criticism of imperialism at the heart of imperial cities. The 'colonized' are present in the imperial core, which is what we call post-colonial urbanism. For example, the Patrice Lumumba Square was inaugurated in Brussels in 2020 to honour the first Congolese president.

Tracing connections

- Historical connections: location matters. Different European cities are part of different histories of globlisation

- Spatial connections: partially a result of these histories, different cities show different geographies of globalisation

- Europe is in the world, the world is in Europe. Trace 'global' spatial-historical connections within and beyond Europe as a territorially fixed entity. For example, migrants have a history external to the city, but that history is an internal part to the city

- Approach globalisation not as unidirectional, but as a contested process of globalisation and de-globalisation (expansion and contraction, Osterhammel, 2011)

- Focus the attention on the (often contradictory and multilayered) project of 'making' European cities, not on cities as simple outcomes of global social change (Tsing 2000)

Keywords

Globalisation Presentism and futurism Normative-societal goal Eurocentrism Periodisation

From the 'European city' to comparative urbanism

November th, 2021

Reading the diversity of economic structures in European cities and their dynamics (part 1)

October 18th, 2021 - *Gilles Van Hamme*

Readings

Benko and Lipietz, *From the regulation of space to the space of regulation*

- The essential thing in regulation is the relationship between a structure and its elements, and specifically here between global spaces and constituent sub-spacesp

Martin, *Rethinking Regional Path Dependence: Beyond Lock-in to Evolution*

Keywords: path dependence, economic geopgrahy

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Martin, *National growth versus spatial equality?*

- Traditional arguments for regional policies:
  - **Economic efficiency** argument: 'persisting regional disparities in economic activity are nationally inefficient'. Not using workers and production capacity to its full potential in lagging regions means that national wealth is lower than it could be. Policies to raise utilisation and productivity of human and capital resources, will raise the national wealth
  - **Social equity** argument: people should be disadvantaged in job opportunities, housing, access to public services, etc, just on the basis that they live in a certain region over another. Policies can help prevent concentration of socio-economic disadvantage, and help create social cohesion
  - Economic efficiency and social equity go together:
    * Increasing employment and productivity in economically lagging regions brings **national efficiency**, and increases living and social welfare, thus greater **spatial equity**
    * Vice versa, raising living standards through social welfare policy can reduce national welfare benefits, create greater spending power, and attract business and employment
- **New economic geography** argues that regional balance, spatial agglomeration, concentration of economic activity actually benefits national growth. Policies to reduce spatial inequity may actually be nationally inefficient. It is a trade-off between the two
  - Key features of NEG: general equilibrium model of the economy; increasing returns at firm level which leads to market structure characterised by imperfect competition; transport costs that make location matter; factory mobility;
    * **Transport costs**: if they are high, firms will disperse spatially to be close to immobile markets (those who cannot travel to consume the products). If they are low, firms will concentrate spatially in order to make use of the benefits of scale economies and agglomeration, while still having consumers because immobile markets can be provisioned effectively (cheaply)
    * **Imperfect competition**: a condition within a market where monopoly elements allow individual producers or consumers to have some control over market prices
    * **Factor mobility**: the ability to move production factors (labour, capital, land) from one type of production to another
  - There is a point at which spatial agglomeration (ie. regional imbalance) no longer benefits the national growth: when congestion costs and negative externalities (such as market crowding effects) are too strong, the national growth starts to decrease

Keywords: economic efficiency, social equity

Fujita and Krugman, *The new economic geography*

Keywords: new economic geography, spatial economy, location theory, urban economics, spatial agglomeration, scale economies

- New economic geography: a new way of thinking about economy

- **Scale economies**: the advantages that come with increasing business size. For example, buying in bulk is an economy of scale because the price per unit is typically lower in larger orders, putting the firm at an advantage. Scale economies encourages the concentration of firms and goods in one area.

- **Horizontally differentiated products**: the differentiation between products that is not based on the quality or price, the products offer the same thing at the same price. Differentiation is usually done by personal preference. For example, Pepsi/Coke, types of detergent, brand of bananas

- **Constant return**: an increase in production power results in a linear increase of returns. A difference in production scale will not affect the price of the good.

- **Circular causation**: forward linkages, backward linkages

- **Core-periphery pattern**: shows how cultural, political, and economic authority is dispersed across dominant core regions, and surrounding (semi-) peripheral regions.

- **Agglomeration** does not need to happen, necessarily. But regions are subject to catastrophic bifurcations, where a parameter change can tip the scale such that a region becomes a strong (industrialised) core, and the other a weaker (de-industrialised) periphery.

- **Agglomeration** is a self-reinforcing system. At a given point in a region's size, its original advantages (eg. port city

- **Centrifugal force**: the factor that drives concentration of activity in one region. For example, the immobility of agriculture land could drive the concentration of agriculture there.

Lecture...

Reading the diversity of economic structures in European cities and their dynamics (part 2)

October 25th, 2021

Comparing European spatial planning systems and cultures

November 8th, 2021

The European Union and the Europeanisation of spatial planning and territorial development policies

November 9th, 2021

Worlds in motion: Migration and (im)mobility in a globalising Europe

November 22nd, 2021

Contextualising contemporary (post-)migration: Geographies and populations of European cities

November 29th, 2021

Seminar: the course assignment

October 11th, 2021

Seminar: Data and Research strategies

October 26th, 2021

Seminar: feedback on draft paper

December 13th, 2021

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