Identity Image

The front-cover image was designed by Sarah Rudledge from Midnight Sky based on a brief to find a composite set of symbols that carried a dialogue between complexity and simplicity, between modern trajectories and mythological stories, and between existing realities and the possibilities of rethinking cities as places of sustainable living. We asked her to construct an image that abstracted from images found in the cities in which we were working but still carried an identifiable and concrete sense of those places. The source of inspiration for the ambiguous form that the city might take was to be the Tower of Babel.

The image draws upon a number of elements.

- The building profiles used in the image include the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, 333 Collins Street in Melbourne, and the Oriental Pearl Tower in Shanghai.
- The bridge in the image is the Donghai Bridge in Shanghai spanning the Zhejiang Gulf.
- The customary boat represents people living in cities by the water. Historically some of the cities chosen as research locations for the Global Cities Institute were once fishing or trading villages.
- The bicycle-rider and the person on bridge are representations of people inhabiting cities and either moving from the hinterlands to the cities or living in the cities in different ways. It also links to the most appropriate alternative forms of transport to the current emphasis on the car—namely walking and cycling.
- The tuk tuk is the Southeast Asian version of a vehicle known elsewhere as an auto-rickshaw or cabin-cycle.
- From a quite different context, the balloon and the light tower are silhouettes from the Melbourne Cricket Ground, past and present. The MCG opened in 1853. It is built on the site of the first “recognized” Australian Rules game and the first Test cricket match between Australia and England in 1877. Hot-air balloons often grace the skies of Melbourne, and the light towers are a recent addition to the MCG allowing the hyper-commercialization of the two sports while transcending the previous limitations of night and day. This is signified also by the nineteenth-century Victorian street lamp, now a romantic reference to the supposedly elegant past of “Marvellous Melbourne”.
- The graphic symbols include the Ashoka Chakra (white wheel) an ancient Indian depiction of the Dharmacakra, the Wheel of Life and Cosmic Order. The wheel has twenty-four spokes, each of which signifies a spiritual principle. A symbol from the Tamil language swirls at the bottom of the image. Tamil is a language spoken predominantly by Tamils in India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore, and is one of the few living classical languages which has an unbroken literary tradition of over two millennia. The sign near the white wheel is from the Cantonese language one of the five major Chinese languages, and is part of the old name for Ho Chi Minh City—Sài Gòn.
- The propellers of a wind power-generator represent alternative sustainable energy sources in the context of climate change.
- The illustration of the Papua New Guinea crested Bird of Paradise is derived from the Papua New Guinea national flag. This element is sitting in the tree profile, which itself represents the old-growth forest of Kuala Lumpur, the only city in the world to have a million-year-old primary forest within the heart of the city.
Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2010. This woman lives in the slum of Chocolatão. She now works in a garbage recycling depot as part of a project supported by the Global Cities Institute through the UN Global Compact, Cities Programme on slum rehabilitation.
RMIT University’s Global Cities Research Institute addresses the challenge of sustainability, resilience, security and adaptation.

1. Introduction

Manifesto
Cities, for all their vibrancy and liveliness, have long faced the challenge of providing secure and sustainable places to live. Writing some time ago, Lewis Mumford argued that “The blind forces of urbanization, flowing along the lines of least resistance, show no aptitude for creating and urban and industrial pattern that will be stable, self-sustaining, and self-renewing.” This challenge of making cities better has been intensifying, with a global demographic shift across the course of the twentieth century and into the present that has seen the majority of the world’s population living in cities.

In partnership with a number of like-minded institutions and researchers around the world, the Global Cities Institute directly addresses the challenge through engaged research programs intended to have significant on-the-ground impact. The emphasis of our research is on questions of resilience, security, sustainability, and adaptation in the face of the processes of globalization and global climate change. Urbanization is not the key for us—we are not for the most part ‘urban studies’ scholars in the usual sense. Rather we see cities—that is, metropolitan locales in relation to “their” hinterlands—as a crucible for understanding the human condition.

The overall task of the Global Cities Institute is to research the processes of global change in the urban context—both positive and problematic—with the view to projecting sustainable ways of living. This involves understanding the complexity of globalizing urban settings from provincial centres to mega-cities as part of what it means to live on this planet.

Here we confront a shibboleth in scholarly writing—not only has the urbanization of the world been a long-term if massively accelerating process, but it should also be said that cities have long been the locus of globalization processes. Against those writers who, by emphasizing the importance of financial exchange systems, distinguish a few special cities as ‘global cities’—commonly London, Paris, New York and Tokyo—we recognize the uneven global dimensions of all the cities that we study. Los Angeles, the home of Hollywood, is a global city. And so is Dili, the small and ‘insignificant’ capital of Timor Leste. Dili was established as an administrative town by the Portuguese in October 1769, a year before the English explorer Captain Cook ‘discovered’ Australia, seven years before the American Revolution, and two decades before the French Revolution.

When cities are researched in their full complexity, neither does it makes much sense to set up hierarchies of global interconnectedness based on counting the number of transactions with other places. While we take empirical research very seriously—from statistics to global ethnography and narrative history—our emphasis is on analytical understanding and interpretation. As a way of giving further focus to this broad brief, the Institute focuses on a number of carefully-chosen cities in the Asia-Pacific region. The core focus is on Chennai, Denpassar, Dili, Hambantota/Colombo, Honiara, Ho Chi Minh City/Hanoi, Kuala Lumpur, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Port Moresby, Shanghai, and Vancouver. This gives us a remarkable range of cities, all global cities in different ways, cities that cross the North-South, East-West, rich-poor and communist-capitalist divides.

Our brief goes to the heart of RMIT’s positioning of itself as urban-oriented and globally-projected. In summary, the Global Cities Institute conducts both cutting-edge and applied research that is intended to have engaged consequences. We start with the city which we live—Melbourne—and reach out to a range of cities from which we have much to learn.

External Context
Two of the most pressing overarching issues facing the world today are globalization and global climate change. They encompass questions of urban adaptation, cultural change, community sustainability, human security, and global learning. Over the last decade, billions of dollars have been spent on ameliorative and security-oriented projects by both government and non-government agencies. However, many communities continue to live under difficult circumstances. Understanding this set of problems is central to the research agenda of Global Cities, and has important implications for sustainability in general. Developing a thorough on-going research program entails going beyond identifying the immediate threats to exploring pathways to enhance sustainability, security, resilience and adaptation.

To this end, the Institute links with many other programs. For example, we are engaged in local collaboration with the Committee for Melbourne and the Municipality of Melbourne and local NGOs, as well as in primary global collaborations with the UN Global Compact, UN Habitat, Metropolis, and other institutes and centres in the Globalization Studies Network. Through the work of the Global Cities Institute, RMIT was named in 2008 as the first UN Habitat university in the Asia-Pacific region, and from 2007 the Institute has hosted the Global Compact Cities Programme, the only International Secretariat of the United Nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

Other more established and important research programs already exist at other universities and institutions in either globalization or climate change. What makes this institute somewhat different is the way in which it works at the intersection of both these themes. Secondly, the Institute crosses the conventional divide between the technical sciences and the social sciences/humanities. The Institute draws together a diverse range of scholars from social theorists, political scientists, anthropologists and art critics to sustainability specialists, geospatial scientists and water engineers. Thirdly, what makes the Institute stand out is the way in which it brings together on-the-ground deeply-engaged research in communities around the world with analytical theory that takes the social theory and social mapping of globalization and global futures very seriously. Fourthly, and perhaps unusually, the Institute, in partnership with others, takes as part of its central brief the responsibility to make a practical social difference in the world. Here, for example, we provided the research basis for rewriting the Integrated Community Development policy for the country of Papua New Guinea; we were a key partner in contributing to the Future Melbourne planning round for its next ten years; and we are working as part of the United Nations Global Compact to develop a new way of indicating sustainability for cities.

Key Themes and Concepts
RMIT’s Global Cities’ research agenda has two major themes:

- globalization
- global climate change

Themes are understood in terms of four key concepts:

Security

Our key focus here involves both the broad question of human security and, more particularly, examining the local-global context of a range of cities and communities in the Asia-Pacific region, including Australia. These settings range from communities dealing with the aftermath of widespread violence or natural disasters to those polities-communities in countries such as Australia where, despite the absence of the immediate pressures of violence or natural disasters, cities are facing new kinds of insecurity. This is expressed in
cultural, political, economic, ecological terms. Here one of our most pressing concerns is those local groups and communities who are most vulnerable in the face of insecurity and risk.

Resilience

Our aim here is to understand the technical and social capacities of cities and communities to respond actively to and practically address processes of globalization and the emerging impacts of climate change. In the face of social and environmental change, cities are experiencing increasing pressures. Existing and emerging patterns of resilience are important to the ongoing viability of communities and their infrastructures. Such patterns of resilience give communities a basis for considering different ways of ameliorating or adapting to emerging conditions such as climate change before they reach crisis proportions. Here our research ranges from a concern with housing and infrastructure to the nature of community itself.

Adaptation

Adaptation is the process by which responses to questions of sustainability are embedded in the practices of communities, organizations and governments. This involves developing and implementing strategies to ameliorate, moderate and cope with the consequences of global insecurities, including climate change and social pressure. Adaptation is one possible approach to enhancing resilience. In most cases, however, adequate research has not been done to guide such processes of adaptation. Conducting such research is central to the Institute as part of its brief to link research to applied outcomes.

Sustainability

Bringing together these various concerns about the sources of insecurity and risk, resilience and adaptation, our work centres on the question of sustainability. This involves developing the interpretative, practical and technical bases for more adequately understanding how conditions of positive human security and wellbeing might best be continued or revitalized under different circumstances. By bringing the interpretative social sciences and the natural and engineering sciences into a dialogue, the Institute works to develop a deep understanding of how to deal with issues of social and environmental sustainability. In other words, in collaboration with our local-global partners, we want to develop practical, socially-engaged, and ethically-considered responses to the question, “What is to be done?” Critical sustainability is thus our core concept.

Research Aims

Cities are diverse. They are composed of distinctive social relations and particular natural systems. They have varying exposure and changing sensitivity to different internal and external stresses. The people who dwell in them live across multiple time-horizons over which risk and vulnerability may shift. The Global Cities Institute’s research program involves mapping and comparing the insecurities, resilience and sustainability of strategically-chosen cities and hinterlands in the Asia-Pacific region.

Urbanized regions are places of immense change and innovation. Nevertheless, they are vulnerable to major shocks such as economic crises, terrorism, civil conflict, tsunamis, and disease pandemics. They are also susceptible to the gradual breakdown of basic
infra-structural services that provide communications, energy, mobility, and water. In turn, cities are intensifying the resource impacts and environmental damage of their ‘ecological footprints’. They are having an impact upon the social, economic and environmental sustainability of smaller communities through waste disposal, resource demands, the loss of regional services and jobs and associated rural de-population and migration flows. Issues of urban inequality, homelessness and socio-spatial polarization, both between and within urban regions, undermine the social and cultural foundations that underpin democratic institutions and practices. Globalization, at least in its current form, tends to reinforce these trends by accelerating some social changes that degrade the environment, displace families, fragment community identity, and increase inequality and social conflict. Our aim is to determine what might be sustainable and innovative responses to these processes.

Our overall aim is to develop interpretations and strategies for building sustainable cities in the world today, thus contributing to the quality of human life and the viability of ecologies in those places.

Research Objectives

1. To develop an overall understanding of the ways in which patterns of globalization and global climate change impact upon the human condition.

2. To map the basic sources of insecurity and sustainability for different Asian-Pacific cities, with particular reference to the following:
   - risk analyses of urban infrastructure;
   - structural analyses of insecurity and vulnerability;
   - social analyses of cities, including through developing indices of sustainability; and
   - interpretative analyses of the cultural-political conditions of resilience and adaptation.

3. To understand the resilience and adaptive capacities of communities.

4. To examine questions of cultural transformation and develop an understanding of the conditions for alternative pathways to learning, knowledge exchange, reconciliation and cross-community co-operation.

5. To generate policies and strategies aimed at maximizing social learning for cross-cultural dialogue and reconciliation; addressing sources of insecurity; minimizing the impact of natural and human-induced disasters and conflicts; promoting approaches to reconstruction that integrate physical rebuilding with political, cultural, and economic renewal; and applying environmentally and culturally sustainable technologies and techniques in the areas of urban infrastructure.

6. To contribute to the development of local-global governance processes for dealing with complexity of social and environmental change, and to engage with alternative global futures.
Geographical Focus

The Global Cities Institute focuses on the Asia-Pacific region (the region in which Australia is located) with a particular emphasis on specific cities, their hinterlands, and regional contexts. This is not to exclude other places of research, but to focus on these locales as the places where long-term research relations including with universities, governments and NGOs are being developed. It allows for a research data-base to be slowly accumulated. Because RMIT is located in the Asia-Pacific region it makes some sense that, without ignoring other areas, that the University develops a powerful specialization in this region, including Vietnam where RMIT currently has a major campus.

Chennai, India

The Community Sustainability Program is involved in two projects centring on community development strategies and the resilience and adaptation of communities to change and crisis, including in response to the 2004 tsunami and environmental degradation. The work of the Global Cities Institute in Chennai is led by Yaso Nadarajah and is linked closely to the University of Madras, a number of NGOs, and local government organizations such as the Slum Clearance Board, Tamil Nadu.

Denpasar, Indonesia

The work of the Global Cities Institute in Denpasar is lead by Jeff Lewis and centres on questions of the culture of human security.

Dili, Timor Leste

A number of major projects have been conducted in Dili and across Timor Leste by the Timor group linked to the Human Security and Community Sustainability programs, with comparative research undertaken in Fatumean (Covalima district), Luro (Lautem district), Venilale (Baucau district), and Kampung Baru (Dili district). The Global Cities Institute is working with Irish Aid, Oxfam Australia, Concern Worldwide, and the Office for the Promotion of Equality (now known as the Secretariat of State for the Promotion of Equality), Prime Minister’s Office, Timor-Leste. The work of the Global Cities Institute in Dili is lead by Damian Grenfell.

Hambantota and Colombo, Sri Lanka

The work of the Global Cities Institute in Sri Lanka is led by Martin Mulligan. Here the work centres on the resilience and adaptation of communities to crises such as the recent tsunami and the violence of civil war, with comparative research undertaken on Hambantota, Seenigama, Sainthamaruthu and Thirukkovil Districts. Research is conducted in partnership with the University of Colombo, the South Eastern University (Pottuvil), the Foundation for Goodness, and NESDO.

The Global Cities Institute focuses on the Asia-Pacific region
Honolulu, USA

The work of the Global Cities Institute in Honolulu is lead by Manfred Steger. One of the key projects in Hawaii concerns the role of indigenous festivals in relation to the culture of globalization and the conditions of community sustainability.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The work of the Global Cities Institute in Kuala Lumpur is led by Yaso Nadarajah. This research, a longitudinal community-based study follows the relocation of squatter settlement communities to new low-cost, high-rise housing commission complexes. The study has served as a catalyst to broader enquiry into the workings of national development, ethnicity and identity politics. Partners include the University of Malaya, University Kebangsaan Malaya, and University Sains Malaysia.

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Through the Globalism Research Centre, the Global Cities Institute has been working with the Department for Community Development since 2004. The Institute has contributed to policy developments that are rewriting the national approach to community sustainability. Under their Minister Dame Carol Kidu and Secretary Joseph Klapat, the Department has been in the forefront of rethinking community development strategies and partnerships, particularly as embodied in their recent major document Integrated Community Development Policy, 2007, and a series of reports in 2008 and 2009. The work of the Global Cities Institute in Papua New Guinea is lead by Paul James.

Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, Vietnam

Vietnam is a key focus of RMIT University and continues to be an important emphasis of the Institute. The Global Cities Institute has made a major commitment to research in Vietnam. Key partnerships include the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and the Vietnam Green Building Council. The work of the Global Cities Institute in Vietnam is lead by John Fien.

Melbourne, Australia

Given that the home of the Global Cities Institute is in Melbourne, it is natural that this involves engagement with many organizations in the city. One of those centre partnerships is with the Melbourne City Council. The Council is the local government body responsible for the municipality of Melbourne. The Council has developed a new planning strategy for inner-Melbourne called ‘Future Melbourne’ and the Global Cities Institute has treated work in collaboration on this program as central to its engagement at the local level. The City of Melbourne is an active supporter of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme (see above). The work of the Global Cities Institute in Melbourne is convened by Caroline Bayliss.
Shanghai, People’s Republic of China
The Institute’s key collaborator in Shanghai is the Shanghai Academy of Social Science. The Director of the Academy came to Melbourne in 2008 and the Global Cities Institute participated in major research forums in Shanghai in 2009 and 2010. The work of the Global Cities Institute in Shanghai is led by Manfred Steger and Chris Hudson.

Honiara, Solomon Islands
The work of the Global Cities Institute in Honiara is lead by John Handmer. Here the main emphasis has been on the human security questions of an island-state experiencing different waves of movement and intervention into the city, both from its local hinterlands and from the global, whether it be the Chinese diaspora or the Australian police intervention.

Vancouver, Canada
The work of the Global Cities Institute in Vancouver is lead by Andy Scerri. Global Cities is collaborating with the Simon Fraser University in developing a major project linked to the UN Global Compact Cities Programme (see below) on the ‘Circles of Sustainability’ method for developing social indicators. The method is being piloted in the city concurrently with research being conducted in Melbourne.

Partnerships

Global and International Organizations

Globalization Studies Network
The Globalization Studies Network is a worldwide association that links programs of research, education and public policy regarding globalization. The network is formed on an inclusive basis, encompassing diverse regions, disciplines, cultures, perspectives and substantive concerns. The Globalization Studies Network does not advocate any particular intellectual or political approach but rather fosters dialogue and debate—involving South, North, East and West—about the nature, direction and possible redirection of globalization. The Network was a co-sponsor of the ‘Pathways to Reconciliation and Global Human Rights’ conference, Sarajevo, 2005, convened by the Globalism Research Centre, and is sponsoring the ‘Pathways to Reconciliation’ Summit in Amman Jordan in December 2009, organized by the Global Cities Institute.

Global Reconciliation
The Global Reconciliation Forum grew out of the Global Reconciliation Network and collaboration between RMIT and Monash Universities going back to 2002. Global Reconciliation brings together members of community groups, social activists, academics and others around the world, working towards the broad goal of reconciliation. Here reconciliation is understood as the process of establishing
dialogue and collaborative practice across the divides of difference—nationality, religion, race and culture. It focuses upon grounded engagement with local communities. The Forums patrons include The Reverend Desmond Tutu, The Honourable Sir William Deane, Aung San Suu Kyi (not in current communication), President Jose Ramos-Horta, Professor Bernard Lown, Professor Amartya Sen, and Dr Lowitja O'Donaghue. As part of joint initiative with the Global Cities Institute, and in particular the Human Security Program, the Pathways to Reconciliation Summit held in December 2009 followed on from a series of previous events: Melbourne, London, New Delhi, Sarajevo and Amman. The Summit was organized as a response to the paradox that political violence and insecurity have been intensifying across the world despite the expansion of security regimes and other short-term solutions. The objective is to explore alternative pathways to peace, pathways which emphasize informal reconciliation processes operating beneath the radar of conventional regimes.

Global Reporting Initiative

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a network-based organization based in Amsterdam that has pioneered the development of the world’s most widely used sustainability reporting framework and is committed to its continuous improvement and application worldwide. The Global Cities Institute has been invited to convene a panel to renew the GRI’s Public Agency reporting supplement.

Metropolis

Created in 1985, the Metropolis Association is represented by more than one-hundred member cities from across the world and operates as an international forum for exploring issues and concerns common to all big cities. The main goal of the association is to better control the development process of metropolitan areas in order to enhance the wellbeing of their citizens. To do this, Metropolis represents regions and metropolitan areas at the worldwide level. The Global Cities Institute is represented on Metropolis’ Commission 2, Managing Urban Growth, due to report in 2011.

Spire International

Spire International is a not-for-profit organization that links donors to local initiatives in developing communities. Spire specializes in identifying smaller locally-based initiatives where there is a need for external assistance so that goals can be achieved. Spire focuses on the areas of education, health, income-generation and environment. The Global Cities Institute is a supporter and sponsor of some Spire International events, and is represented on the executive of Spire Australia.
United Nations Human Settlement Program

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is the United Nations agency for human settlements. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. In 2008 UN Habitat invited RMIT University through the Global Cities Institute to become a Habitat Partner University. This was confirmed in 2009 with the visit of a delegation from UN Habitat to Melbourne, including Executive Director Anna Tibajjuka. The visit was marked by a major public launch of the partnership. The partnership directly engages research staff and students in the activities of the UN Human Settlement Program. It links the Global Cities Institute with a unique group of international universities, including Simon Fraser University in Canada which also hosts a UN-Habitat Urban Observatory. RMIT was the first university in Australia, and the first university in the Asia-Pacific to be so invited.

United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme

The Global Cities Institute became the host of the UNGCCP International Secretariat in 2007 with support from the City of Melbourne and the Committee for Melbourne. This means that RMIT hosts the only United Nations International Secretariat based in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. This relationship provides the Institute with a direct partnership with the United Nations through the Global Compact in New York and the Secretary General's Department. The Cities Programme was initiated in 2003 by former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. It is a discrete component of the Global Compact and provides a unique framework for cities to develop and implement sustainable and concrete solutions to social, economic and environmental urban challenges of a long-term and often intractable nature. The Cities Programme was developed in response to the need for an evolution of corporate social responsibility to enable a meaningful engagement of the private sector at a systemic level. However, it went much further. By utilizing a common methodology, the Melbourne Model, it combines the ideas, knowledge, experience, and resources inherent within business, government, and civil society in a manner that directly benefits all participants.

Public-Political Bodies and Grassroots Organizations

Arena Publications

Established in 1963, Arena Publications publishes Arena Journal, an academic bi-annual, and Arena Magazine, Australia's leading left magazine of cultural and political comment. Both publications frequently publish articles and commentary pieces on areas ranging across the work of the Institute, including globalization, Indigenous politics and culture, and the role of intellectuals and technology in the transformation of the current cultural and political landscape. Arena has a thriving centre in Fitzroy, Melbourne, which combines publication, public discussion and a commercial printery.
Committee for Melbourne

The Committee for Melbourne is an incorporated association and a private, not-for-profit, member network, working together to encourage a competitive business culture and enhance Melbourne’s liveability. In 2002 the Committee was pivotal in initiating the Melbourne-based International Secretariat of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme which is now hosted by RMIT University’s Global Cities Institute (see above under UN Global Compact Cities Programme).

Institute of Postcolonial Studies

The aim of the Institute of Postcolonial Studies is to understand and undo the continuing legacies of colonialism today: dispossession, displacement, racism, and intercultural violence. In particular, this entails understanding social and economic pressures and cultural prejudices faced by indigenous peoples and impoverished communities, supporting those facing the consequences of political upheaval and violence, and generating dialogue across worlds of continuing and often positive cultural difference. RMIT’s Global Cities Institute is represented on the Postcolonial Institute’s Council, the Institute’s peak policy body. The IPS publishes Postcolonial Studies, an international journal, founded in 1997 by a group of scholars associated with the Institute of Postcolonial Studies, including Global Cities’ representation, and a book series with the University of Hawaii Press.

The Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Research Centre

The Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Research Centre (VICCAR) is a newly-established initiative which aims to promote multi-disciplinary research activity in the region, as well as fostering increased collaborative working between universities, other research organizations, and government, in order to better inform strategic planning and other decision-making processes. Four universities have been involved, with Darryn McEvoy from RMIT (through the Global Cities Research Institute) as Deputy Director for the Centre.

Universities

Simon Fraser University, Canada

Simon Fraser University is located in Vancouver, as is the home to a UN Habit Urban Observatory led by Meg Holden. She is part of a SFU-RMIT team doing pilot studies in Vancouver and Melbourne to develop the ‘Circles of Sustainability’ approach as part of the United Nations Cities Programme (see UN Global Compact Cities Programme above).

University of Colombo

In 2006, the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, and the Globalism Research Centre signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the objective of developing collaborative research projects. This has been carried forward by members of the Community Sustainability Program of the Global Cities Institute with exchange research trips by academics both from RMIT to Sri Lanka and Colombo to Australia.
University of Hawai‘i, USA
In September 2003, the Globalism Research Centre and the Globalization Research Centre at the University of Hawai‘i, collaborated with a number of other institutes in establishing the Globalization Studies Network. Since then Manfred Steger has been working with its Director, Mike Douglass, to develop an ongoing research collaboration around the theme of ‘Globalization and Culture’, one of the programs in the Global Cities Institute.

University Kebangsaan Malaysia
UKM is the National University of Malaysia mandated with safeguarding ‘the sovereignty of the Malay language while globalizing knowledge in the context of local culture’. It is located in Bangi, south of Kuala Lumpur. In 2007 discussions began with the objective of developing collaborative research. This has been carried through in joint work with the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKAMS).

University of Salford, United Kingdom
The University of Salford is in the City of Salford, part of the Greater Manchester Region, in central England. High-level visits of staff from Salford and RMIT across 2008 to 2010 have been part of a strong and developing relationship between the two universities.

University of Madras
Since 2006, the University of Madras, Chennai, India, and the Global Cities Institute, RMIT, have seen a movement of research staff between the two institutions collaborating around the Community Sustainability Program.

Corporations

Accenture
Researchers in the Institute have worked closely with a team at Arup in Australia, France and India (led by Simon Vardey) to develop a sustainability simulation tool which was launched in Singapore in November 2010. The web-based software is framed by the United Nations City Programme method and allows city planners to project sustainability programs and to see the potential effects of those programs over time as different parameters are changed.

ARUP
ARUP is a global construction and design company committed to sustainable development. The Global Cities Institute have been working with Arup London and Melbourne with the aim of forming a strategic research partnership on sustainability indicators, climate change adaptation, and on urban infrastructure.
B2B Lawyers

B2B is Melbourne-based law firm operating in the areas of corporate and commercial Law, insolvency, commercial litigation, alternate dispute resolution, domestic and international taxation. David Lurie, one of the B2B partners, does significant pro bono work for the Global Cities Institute on important areas of reconciliation. B2B is the legal organization behind the Global Cities Institute and Centre of Ethics (Monash University) initiative Global Reconciliation (see Global Reconciliation above) and has provided financial support for some of its projects.

Costa Group

The Costa Family Foundation has been a significant and ongoing philanthropic supporter of the work of Global Cities in the area of reconciliation and human security. Through Rob Costa it was a major under-writer of the Reconciliation Summit in Amman, Jordan. Most recently, it has supported the ‘Playing Together’ project involving indigenous footballers in Sri Lanka.

Drapac Group

Drapac is a property investment group committed to creating sustainable environments and investments. Through Michael Drapac, the company has provided significant financial support for reconciliation projects in the Middle East and Sri Lanka.

Microsoft

Microsoft Australia is providing the software tools to develop our ‘Circles of Sustainability’ project in conjunction with the UN Global Compact Cities Programme. Greg Stone of Microsoft is an advisor to our ARC-funded project ‘Accounting for Sustainability’.

Urbis

Urbis is a multi-disciplinary consulting firm offering a range of expertise in planning, urban design, property, social, economics and research. The firm works across all matters relating to the design, planning and management of land, property and construction, and environmental and social issues. Urbis also works throughout the Asia Pacific and the Middle East having established an office in Dubai. The Global Cities Institute is working with Urbis through Michael Barlow who is Chair of our Advisory Board.
The Institute brings researchers across the University into an ongoing collaboration framed by concerns about social and environmental sustainability with a particular focus on the themes of globalization and global environmental sustainability. The strategically chosen cities provide the locus of our research, but we want to understand those cities in context. In other words, the Global Cities Institute is based on the premise that cities can only be adequately understood in local, regional, national and global contexts.

The research across the Institute integrates interpretative analysis and practical engagement, developed in co-operation with local partners in specified cities. It thus involves the following:

1. Collaborative scoping of the research, including by engaging critical reference groups in different cities;
2. Ongoing assessment and reassessment of current relevant patterns of the phenomena or processes under investigation;
3. Comparative case studies of issues in specific Asian-Pacific cities and regions, the development of theory and the identification of lessons learnt and recommendations for addressing cultural, political, economic, and environmental change;
4. Public communication back to the cities and their communities of lessons learnt, with ongoing dialogue over emerging policy recommendations, models and applications;
5. Development of theory and methodology as the basis for recommendations on appropriate and flexible policies, models and tools;
6. Application of these flexible policies, models and tools in a wider range of case study cities and further refinement, both in practice and theory.

Research Programs

1. Climate Change Adaptation
2. Globalization and Culture
3. Community Sustainability
4. Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures
5. Human Security
Foundation of Goodness, Seenigama, Sri Lanka, 2010. The Global Cities Institute, through the Globalism Research Centre, and working with the Foundation, has just completed a five-volume report on the post-tsunami reconstruction in Sri Lanka and India.
2.1 Shanghai, People’s Republic of China

Jennifer Gidley

Shanghai is situated on the east coast of China, at the mouth of the Yangtze River, the longest river in the country. It is one of four Chinese cities that are ranked at the highest-level classification ‘direct-controlled municipalities’. The other three cities are Beijing, Tianjin and Chongqing. Shanghai is the smallest of the four municipalities in land area, covering 6341 square kilometres, yet with its current population of approximately nineteen million\(^1\) it has by far the greatest population density (almost three thousand long-term residents per square kilometre), more than twice the population density of Beijing. Having been an important port city since it was founded over seven hundred years ago, Shanghai evolved into a major trading port in the mid-nineteenth century. This key position led to it becoming a significant crossroads between East and West. With the influx of European, particularly French, influence it became known as the ‘Paris of the East’.

Shanghai has been growing rapidly since it came under the control of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, and in the past fifty to sixty years it has undergone rapid modernization. Since the Chinese government shifted to more open economic policies in 1978, Shanghai has become one of the largest economic centres in China. Its ambition is to transform itself into one of the major economic, financial, trade and shipping centres in the world. While its status as a global city would be largely unchallenged, and its hyper-development in urban architectural and infrastructural expansion have been unparalleled, there still remain many questions in relation to other markers of modernity, such as clean drinking water, education, social policies and freedom of speech.

Historical Development of Shanghai

In Chinese, Shanghai is called ‘Hu’ for short and ‘Shen’ as a nickname. (See Figure 1.) The history of Shanghai can be traced back about six thousand years, when the western part of the present city dried into a landform. The eastern part was still under water until around two thousand years ago. The Chinese character ‘Shen’ goes back to a very early period of Chinese history (770–221 BCE) and relates to the name of a governor. During the Jin Dynasty (fourth-fifth centuries) the character ‘Hu’ was formed by combining the name of a fishing tool and the name of the estuary of big rivers; and so the place at the mouth of the Yangtze River was named Hu-Shen,\(^2\) or Shanghai.

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1 Shanghai Municipal Government website, 2009 <www.shanghai.gov.cn>. Most of the factual data about Shanghai in this article has been gathered from the Shanghai Municipal Government website.
2 Ibid.
Shanghai, People’s Republic of China, 2010
Shanghai’s historical development has covered several major phases: there are a number of possible ways to identify the city’s original founding. As early as 751 CE, an administrative district, Huating County, was formed in the place now called Shanghai. Five hundred years later, in 1267, Shanghai Town was set up on the west bank of the Huangpu River; central government later approved the establishment of Shanghai County in 1292. This last development is generally regarded as the official beginning of the city of Shanghai.3

Shanghai continued to develop over the following centuries and by the sixteenth century (the middle of the Ming Dynasty) it had become the national centre of the textile and handicraft industry. In the mid-nineteenth century the trading wars began between the United Kingdom and China. Following what is known as ‘the First Opium War’, China was opened to foreign trade as a result of the 1842 Treaty of Nanking (Nanjing) between the Qing Dynasty of China and the United Kingdom. Subsequent treaties—the Treaty of the Bogue (1843) and the Sino-American Treaty of Wangsia (1844)—resulted in foreign nations being allowed to trade on Chinese soil. This began the process of the ‘foreign concessions’, which consisted of British, American, Japanese and French settlements. The Japanese built the first factories in Shanghai, contributing to the city becoming the most important financial centre in the ‘Far East’ at that time. The French concession remains today as a popular international attraction. By the mid-nineteenth century Shanghai had become a major trading port and thus an important location for East–West communications.

In the early twentieth century, particularly during the 1930s, as many as 30,000 Russian Jewish refugees fled the Soviet Union to Shanghai, which by 1932 had become the fifth largest city in the world. Shanghai was a key battleground during the Second World War, and the International Settlement was occupied by Japan from 1941 to 1945. In 1949 the People’s Liberation Army of the Communist Party of China took control of the city, beginning the chapter of communist rule. Shanghai became a key site of new more open economic development policies from 1978. In many respects Shanghai is leading China in its vision of positioning itself as a leading economic and financial power.

Urban Environment

Shanghai is situated at 31°14’ N and 121°29’ E. Bordering on Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces on the west, Shanghai is bounded by the East China Sea on the east and Hangzhou Bay on the south. This position as both a sea and river port creates relatively easy access to the vast surrounding hinterland. North of the city is the Yangtze River’s mouth at the East China Sea. Shanghai is also centrally located along China’s coastline.

3 Ibid.
The Shanghai region enjoys four distinct seasons within a subtropical maritime monsoon climate. Its spring and autumn are relatively short compared with the summer and winter. In 2008 the average annual temperature was 17.5 degrees Celsius. The city had a total of 1534.7 sunlight hours in 2008 and received a total rainfall of 1512.8 millimetres. About 70 per cent of precipitation came during the May–September flood season.

Shanghai extends about 120 kilometres from north to south and about 100 kilometres from east to west. Except for a few hills lying in the southwest corner, most parts of the Shanghai area belong to the alluvial plain of the Yangtze River Delta. The average sea-level elevation is about four metres. The land slopes slightly downward east to west. The highest point within Shanghai is Dajin Hill, which has a sea-level elevation of 103.4 metres. With its many rivers and lakes, Shanghai is known for its rich water resources, with the water area totalling 697 square kilometres and accounting for 11 per cent of the city’s total territory.

Demographically, the population in Shanghai keeps growing because of a constant inflow of people from other parts of the country. When Shanghai was turned into a city, it had a population of less than 100,000. By 1949 it had 5.2 million, while by the end of 2008 the city’s permanent residents had grown to 13.9104 million, or 1 per cent of China’s population. In 2008 the population of long-term residents reached 18.8846 million, including 5.1742 million from other parts of the country.

**Urban Infrastructure**

Shanghai is keen to develop, so as to be regarded by the rest of the world as a modern city. Some landmark projects have already been completed, including bridges over the Huangpu River, tunnels, elevated roads, expressways, subways, international airports and Yangshan Deep-water Port.

Investment has been focused on the construction of hub-oriented, functional and networked infrastructures. From 2003 to 2008 the municipality invested 648.799 billion yuan in its urban infrastructure projects, accounting for 29.1 per cent of the total fixed assets investment in the period.

**Transport**

Shanghai has since the 1990s been developing its subways and road network—the latter ranking as the most sophisticated of its kind in the country. By the end of 2008, the city had built eight subway lines and a maglev line, covering a total of 264.3 kilometres, compared to sixty-three kilometres in 2002, and transporting 18 subway lines, with a total length of five hundred kilometres, transporting more than eight million passengers a day.
The city's network of elevated roads consists of the Inner Ring Road, the North–South Road and the Yan'an Elevated Road. The 48-kilometre Inner Ring Road goes along the circular Zhongshan Road and links up the two sides of the Huangpu River through the Nanpu and Yangpu bridges. The North–South Road, with six lanes, goes across the city centre, covering a total length of 8.45 kilometres. The Yan'an Elevated Road starts from the Zhongshan Road in the east and reaches the Hongqiao Airport in the west. With a total length of 14.8 kilometres, it connects with the other two elevated roads to form an elevated road network in the city centre. Shanghai has also created a city expressway network called ‘153060’. With a total length of 637.4 kilometres, the city's expressways now allow people to enter the network within fifteen minutes, switch to any other expressway within thirteen minutes and arrive at any spot on the network within sixty minutes.

Prior to the 1990s there was neither bridge nor tunnel linking the two parts of Shanghai separated by the Huangpu River. Nanpu Bridge, the first bridge to span the Huangpu River, is 8346 metres long with an under-clearance of forty-six metres, allowing 55,000-tonnage ships to pass. Since the government adopted the opening and reform policy for Pudong, six more bridges have been constructed—Nanpu, Yangpu, Xupu, Lupu, Fengpu and Songpu. In addition, seven cross-river tunnels have been completed—Out Ring Rd, Xiangyin Rd, Dalian Rd, Yan’an Rd E., Fuxing Rd E., Dapu Rd and Shangzhong Rd.

Housing

Shanghai's housing has undergone a recent renovation project. Between 2001 and 2005 the city demolished 293 million square metres of old housing and moved out 447,900 households. This included over 13,100 old housing complexes, with a total floor area of 15.5 million square metres. It is difficult to ascertain where these households were moved. In addition they revamped 1541 houses, covering 3.86 million square metres, with the addition of sloped rooftops and replaced and repaired 360 elevators in old buildings.

In addition to renovation and demolition, Shanghai constructed multiple residential buildings with a combined floor space of 18.994 million square metres. By the end of 2008, the percentage of garden-style, high-end residences accounted for 5 per cent of the city's total housing, and common residences accounted for 90 per cent. The per capita living space for urban residents reached 16.9 square metres, up 0.4 square metres over 2007. In the city’s rural areas, the per capita housing space reached 62.3 square metres, an increase of 1.1 square metres. In spite of increased housing dimensions, questions remain over the affordability of the new housing.

As part of its social welfare programme, the city created a Shanghai-style senior care system. By the end of 2008, 582 seniors’ homes were constructed, providing 80,600 beds. An additional 228 community-based elderly day-care centres were also constructed, and the number of families enjoying the low-rent housing reached 44,000. Shanghai has also increased help to disabled people.
Politics

The politics of Shanghai is structured in a dual-party government system—a system common to all governing institutions in the mainland of the People’s Republic of China. Shanghai is comprised of fifteen districts and one county. The Municipality of Shanghai is governed by a mayor, who is the highest-ranking official in the People’s Government of Shanghai. The current mayor is Mr Han Zheng, who is also the deputy secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Shanghai Committee. Because of the dual system, he has less power than the secretary of the CPC.

Citizen Participation

While some movement has been made in the last twenty-five years to introduce election processes elect village leaders in some areas, this is still only at the level of local politics—similar to electing local council members in the United States or Australia. Furthermore, such a move is contentious. According to French sources, the village election processes have 'led to a decline in the representation of women on village committees'.4 In a positive direction, the Carter Center, founded in 1982 by former US President Jimmy Carter, was invited by the Chinese government to ‘foster better governance in local communities’ and to provide ‘civic education about rights, laws, and political participation’. Such intervention may improve processes over time.

Culture

Educational Attainment

According to a sample survey of 1 per cent of Shanghai’s permanent population in 2005, 18.1 per cent aged six and above had received education at or beyond college level, 6.7 percentage points more than when the fifth national census was conducted in 2000. Those with senior high school education accounted for 24.8 per cent of the local population, up 1 percentage point, while residents with primary and junior/middle school education accounted for 51.6 per cent, a drop of 6.3 percentage points. In 2008, 99.99 per cent of school-aged children attended their nine years of obligatory education, 97 per cent of junior middle school graduates entered senior high schools and 83.8 percent of graduates of senior high school enrolled into colleges.5

Since the 1990s Shanghai has focused on the construction of cultural facilities

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5 Shanghai Municipal Government website.
Healthcare and Social Security

In 2008 the average life expectancy of local citizens stood at 81.28 years—79.06 for males and 83.5 for females, about the level in Western countries. By the end of 2008 Shanghai had 2,809 medical and public health organizations, up 6.2 per cent over the previous year. This figure included 300 hospitals (up 4.2 per cent) and 266 community healthcare centres (up 14.7 per cent). The city had 127,700 medical workers (up 4.3 per cent), including 51,200 licensed medical practitioners (up 4.9 per cent). There were altogether 97,800 hospital beds (up 2 per cent). The city finished construction of three hundred standard village clinics within the year.

By 2008, 8.1968 million people were covered by Shanghai’s urban pension insurance programme; 5.1183 million registered for unemployment insurance; 1.4802 million joined the social security network specially designed for small townships; 3.838 million joined the comprehensive insurance for migrant workers; and 7.7398 million workers at 241,000 government departments, civil service institutes and enterprises joined the medical insurance network for urban employees and freelance workers. In 2008 the minimum monthly salary for workers was raised to 960 yuan, the minimum hourly wage to 8 yuan, the minimum monthly living cost subsidy to 400 yuan and the annual living cost subsidy for rural residents to 3200 yuan.

Recent years have seen Shanghai promoting the importance of sport for health and wellbeing. In 2005 the city hosted more than ten major sports events, including the 10th National All-Fitness Festival, and also increased its investment in community fitness facilities. By the end of 2005, 201 fitness parks and 4345 fitness stations had been built; more than 56,500 pieces of equipment have since been installed at these fitness sites and parks. In 2008 Shanghai hosted 110 major sports events and built a further 220 community-level sports venues.

Cultural and Artistic Centres and Activities

Since the 1990s Shanghai has focused on the construction of cultural facilities, including the Shanghai Museum’s new gallery, Shanghai Library, Shanghai Grand Theatre, Shanghai Book City, Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Hall, the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum, the Oriental Art Centre and the Oriental Green Land juvenile education and recreational centre.

In 2005 Shanghai successfully hosted a series of major international events, such as the Week of Marseille, the 7th China International Art Festival, the 8th Shanghai International Film Festival and the 2005 International Fashion Culture Festival. In the same year, the Shanghai Museum received 1.13 million visitors, including 156,000 foreign tourists. The museum held five large exhibitions, including the exhibits featuring Louis XIV-era artists and a chinaware show featuring artworks made in Jingdezhen in the seventeenth century.
By the end of 2008, the city had twenty-nine cultural and artistic centres, 105 art troupes, twenty-nine public libraries, forty-one archive offices and 110 museums. The Shanghai Public Library is a large, modern and multi-functional 3036-seat public library, covering a combined floor space of 83,000 square metres. It boasts a collection of 13.2 million volumes of publications, thirty-eight reading rooms, twenty-four research rooms and eight audio-video rooms. It comprises a lecture hall, an exhibition hall, a multifunctional hall and a seminar room where advanced computer management facilitates international academic exchanges.

In a post-industrial development, Shanghai's old factory buildings and warehouses have been converted to a series of creative industry parks, with seventy-five created by the end of 2008. These parks are now home to more than four thousand creative industry companies from more than thirty countries and regions. The businesses feature industrial design, interior design, construction design, ad design, clothing design, game software, internet media, fashion studios, brand promotion and handicrafts. Suzhou Creek takes the centre stage, lined with famous creative industry parks including Creativity Warehouse, Zhoujiaqiao Centre, E Cang on Yichang Road, M50 Park on Moganshan Road, and Jing’an Creative Art Park on Changhua Road.

Celebration, Events and Rituals
In 2008 there were a number of large-scale cultural and art festivals in Shanghai, including the 10th China Shanghai Art Festival, the 11th Shanghai Film Art Festival, and the Shanghai Fashion Festival. Clearly the massive resources that have been invested in the Shanghai Expo 2010 are an indication of Shanghai's commitment to being a world star when it comes to creative and cultural events.

Economy
Shanghai leads the growth of the Yangtze River Delta region, and thus plays an important role in China's social and economic development. With only 1 per cent of the nation's population and 0.06 per cent of its land, Shanghai contributes one-eighth of China's financial income. The volume of cargo handled at local ports accounts for 10 per cent of the national total, and commodities passing through the city's customs department amount to 25 per cent.

Shanghai managed to maintain relative economic growth in 2008 despite the suffering global economic environment. Its GDP reached 1.369815 trillion yuan, up 9.7 per cent over the previous year in terms of comparable prices. Shanghai's financial income has continued to grow as a result of its economic expansion. Starting from a baseline of approximately 19 billion yuan in the late 1970s, when China commenced its ‘opening and reform policy’, by the year 2000 Shanghai's GDP had surged above 170 billion yuan. The city's financial revenue rose to 753.291 billion yuan in 2008, 3 per cent higher than the previous year; this included 238.234 billion yuan in local fiscal income, a rise of 13.3 per cent since 2007.
Labour Markets and Work

By the end of 2008 Shanghai employed 9.4607 million people. Of the total, 1.4073 million (or 14.9 per cent) were hired by the state enterprises and institutions, 1.8888 million (20 per cent) were employed by collectively-owned work units, 1.3279 million (14 per cent) worked in overseas-funded enterprises and 2.9968 million (31.6 per cent) worked at private businesses. The registered unemployment rate in the city’s urban areas stood at 4.2 per cent in late 2008. The labour market is primarily spread across the service sector, the industrial sector, the agricultural sector and the more recently emerging science and technology and information sectors.

Shanghai has grown rapidly in terms of modern service industries. The wholesale and retail, finance and insurance, transport, logistics and post, real estate, information transmission by computer and software sectors contributed more than 35 per cent of the city’s total output value in 2008, including 10.5 per cent from finance and insurance, 9.3 per cent from the wholesale and retail, and 5.5 per cent from the real estate sector.

In 2008 Shanghai realized an industrial added value of 578.499 billion yuan, an increase of 8.4 per cent from the previous year. The city’s total industrial output increased by 8.1 per cent, reaching 2.563897 trillion yuan.

That same year Shanghai’s agricultural sector recorded an added value of 11.18 billion yuan (up 0.7 per cent since 2007). The city’s total agricultural output value reached 28.07 billion yuan, almost the same as in 2007, including 13.573 billion yuan from the planting sector (up 1.5 per cent).

In 2008 the Zhangjiang High-tech Park applied for 5000 patents and saw 1825 approved. The Park certified 167 high-tech companies, including software giant Hewlett-Packard, world-leading biomedicine R&D centre Abbott Laboratories, and Focus Media Holding Ltd, a leading media enterprise. The total output value of electronic and IT manufacturing reached 25.83 billion yuan, a 14.8 per cent rise since the previous year. Abbott Laboratories’ output value reached 7.806 billion yuan, an increase of 13.2 per cent.

Shanghai’s information industry reported a total added value of 167.052 billion yuan in 2008, up 14.2 per cent from the previous year. The added value of the IT manufacturing sector reached 94.461 billion yuan, representing a year-on-year growth of 11.2 per cent. The added value of IT products sales reached 3.527 billion yuan (up 21 per cent) and the IT service businesses 69.064 billion yuan (18.4 per cent).
Overall, one of the most significant changes in employment is that an increasing number of people have been employed in the service sector. In 2005 the ratio of employees in the primary, secondary and tertiary industries stood at 7.1 : 37.5 : 55.4, compared with 10.8 : 44.3 : 44.9 in 2000. The proportion of the employees in the service sector rose by 10.5 percentage points while those for the primary and secondary industries dropped by 3.7 and 6.8 percentage points respectively.

Ecology

If the image of China (and Shanghai in particular) that was presented at the Shanghai Expo can be believed, then Shanghai is leading a major paradigm shift in ecological awareness. The city’s major themed pavilions were full of ecological messages: time will tell if they are being implemented all the way throughout the system.

In 2008, 42.237 billion yuan, or more than 3.08 per cent of Shanghai’s GDP, was invested into environmental protection projects. The city's environment has since continued to improve, with the proportion of days per year when the air quality is rated as ‘good’ reaching 89.6 per cent. Sewage treatment capacity reached 6.7325 million cubic metres a day, up 1.152 million cubic metres from 2007.

By the end of 2008 the city's parks and greenbelts amounted to 34,300 hectares. Of the total, 14,800 hectares were public green areas. The average per-capita green area reached 12.51 square metres in the city, and the green coverage reached 38 per cent of the city’s total territory, compared to 37.6 per cent in 2007. In recent years, the city had built many large green areas, including the Yanzhong Greenbelt, Huangxing Park, Xujiahui Park, Yanhong Greenbelt, Expo Forest, the first phase of the Riverside Forest Park and Guangzhong Greenbelt.

Towards the Future

In attempting to face both opportunities and challenges in the twenty-first century, Shanghai has already set its mid- and long-term development goals: to build the city into one of the economic, finance, trade and shipping centres in the world and to realize its vision of a socialist modern international metropolis by 2020. However, with its strong focus on economic development at any cost, an outstanding question remains: with urbanization in Shanghai growing from 30 per cent to 50 per cent, and a projected 70 per cent in a matter of decades, how will the city ensure that its strategic goals for development will be sustainable?
Port Moresby is a baneful city with bountiful possibilities. From a more positive perspective, it is a city of small urban communities, a meeting place of cultures, a tropical capital located on the eastern coast of the beautiful Port Moresby Harbour. From another perspective, Port Moresby exists as a grey shadow in the global imagination as a city under internal siege. It is a city with one of the world’s worst street-crime rates, and a city that regularly appears in *The Economist*’s annual list of the world’s ‘worst cities’. Occasionally a Western photographer will venture into Port Moresby to ‘humanize the raskols, to give them a face’. However, with the exception of the occasional mining executive and property developer, Port Moresby is bypassed by the movement of the world’s business people, tourists, and media. Violence and insecurity seem to be inextricably associated with the growth of the city, and sadly this is intensifying as Port Moresby is flooded with property investment linked to the anticipated windfall from the new natural gas refinery. This violence is the focus of serious collective concern from local community-based and international organizations, just as it is headlined by sensationalizing coverage in local newspapers. Overall, the complexity of Port Moresby is attributable to myriad factors including the Australian colonial legacy, vast wealth inequalities, intense movements of people, high rates of formal unemployment and a variably sustaining informal sector, ongoing destabilization of cultural values and ways of life, and rising tensions between ethnic groups.

Demographics and Geography

Port Moresby is the capital city of Papua New Guinea. The city was originally an administrative centre for a colonial government. It was not until the 1970s when PNG achieved its independence that Melanesians became the majority of the city’s population. This majority has steadily increased ever since, with postcolonial expatriates and internationals now only making up a small minority of the city’s population. Port Moresby has an overall population of just over 400,000 with an average population density of around 16 persons per hectare. This is a relatively low density in global terms, but is unevenly made up densely packed urban villages and wide roads and verges with dispersed administrative offices set in sprawling, messy, fenced spaces. It could be a beautiful city based on self-managing urban villages, sustainable urban food production and intense relations between the town and its hinterland, however the sprawl is not positive.

2. From the exhibition ‘Raskols: The Gangs of Port Moresby’ by Stephen Dupont that was first shown at the Australian Centre for Photography in 2005 and appeared in publications as diverse such as *Time* and the *Big Issue* (Australia), *Genis Aci* (Turkey) and *Ojo de Pez* (Spain). Its most recent showing was in 2010 at the Jack Bell Gallery in London.
Karen Haive, Department for Community Development, Papua New Guinea, 2008. Karen is our prime collaborator on a research project in Port Moresby that has been going seven years.
The coastal strip of Moresby, consisting of seven urban villages, has undergone rapid growth since the end of the colonial period:

The city’s suburbs are expanding and extending in every inland direction. The area known as ‘Six-mile’ (referring to its approximate distance by a circuitous road from the downtown area) was regarded as the edge of town in the 1970s, but nowadays ‘Eight-mile’ or more distant areas are more likely reference points. The hills which divide the different suburbs and which were relatively barren a few decades ago are now covered with energetically maintained vegetable gardens. New highways linking the downtown area with suburbs are being built and the latter are becoming ever denser through the addition of formally planned housing and informal dwellings built almost overnight by enterprising settlers.5

Port Moresby’s population is estimated to be increasing by 5 per cent per annum; having grown from 77,000 in 1971 to 196,000 in 1990. This rapid population growth is largely attributable to urban drift from the hinterland and rural villages, with 58 per cent of the city’s adult population estimated to have been born in rural areas. Moreover, because of an accommodation crisis, many locals living along the Hiritano and Magi Highways commute to Port Moresby each day on the PMV buses.

The demands of rapid uncontrolled migration, and the lack of affordable housing and other infrastructure, has seen the growth and overcrowding of the city’s informal settlements. According to the 2000 census, 53,000 of Port Moresby’s residents lived in the settlements, a number which is likely to have drastically increased since then.6 UN-Habitat estimates that 45 per cent of the city’s residents live in settlements. Of the city’s settlements, twenty are planned and seventy-nine are unplanned, forty-two are located on state land and thirty-seven on customary land. The settlements often lack even the most basic amenities and infrastructure such as sanitation, water, and electricity. Inadequate government responsiveness to these problems is in part due to the absence of any ministry devoted to dealing with settlement issues, an arrangement dating back to a policy change in 1986 that deregulated housing development.7

The National Capital District (NCD) currently covers around 25,000 hectares. Of this, 60 per cent of the land is alienated or belongs to the state, 40 per cent is customary land and around 35 to 40 per cent of the total NCD area is unsuitable for major construction due to environmental or physical constraints. There are also complexities surrounding the development of customary land, causing an uneven land-development process. The ever-increasing population and the pressures this places on already built-up state land areas means that there is pressure for future urban development to take place on customary land. This presents a problem, and has been a highly sensitive and controversial issue in Port Moresby. The Motu Koita traditional land-owners are anxious that such development could threaten their cultural heritage and dispossess them of their land titles. It becomes doubly concerning given that the existing governance system that has already struggled to manage the simpler process of developing state land. This is compounded by issues of institutional fragmentation: the lands and planning functions are separated into different institutions and between different

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levels of government. Moresby’s city authority (the NCDC) has administrative planning responsibilities but no land powers. Land powers are held by the national level of government. Thus, decisions about development and land are unco-ordinated and often conflicting. The NCDC has attempted to gain control of lands functions from the national government but these efforts have been unsuccessful so far.8

**Past and Present**

Before the first Europeans arrived, the harbour and surrounding areas now known as Port Moresby were home to the Motu and Koitabu people. Their main livelihood was fishing and yam farming, and this produce was traded with other communities up and down the coast. The Motuan people also embarked on major sailing expeditions (Hiri) for the purposes of carrying out the extended trading of clay pots for sago with people from the Gulf of Papua. Thus, Moresby was already a significant trade centre before Europeans arrived. In 1873 the harbour was explored by Captain John Moresby, who named it after his father. The London Missionary Society established a station at ‘Port Moresby’ soon after, followed by the establishment of a colonial Administration.

Until World War II, Port Moresby grew slowly and was a small town that served as an administrative hub for the Australian controlled territories of Papua and New Guinea. During the war, the city became a strategic objective for the Japanese troops, defended by Australian and US troops in the Battle of Coral Sea and the overland Kokoda Trail campaign, arguably Australia’s most significant involvement in the war. Some physical remains of the war can still be seen around the city including airfields, and aircraft wrecks in the water off the coast of the city.

After the war, migration to Port Moresby from all parts of the country increased, partly due to the easing of restrictions on movement of rural Melanesians to urban areas.9 In the 1970s, the main factors influencing migration from rural areas to the city were expressed crudely by Western commentators:

> These included pressure on the rural population-to-land ratio, a desire to escape traditional authority and the dullness of village life, the need for cash, aspirations of parents for children to obtain the benefits of urban employment, ‘personal’ factors including disputes and threats at the home place, attempts to avoid the obligations of rural community life, a desire to visit relatives in town, access to education and health services, aspirations to a European lifestyle, the attraction of urban life… adventure and the chance of learning particular skills.10

Not all migration to the city was permanent, however, and some commentators began to note that temporary migrations to the city enhanced the educational and economic development in the villages. In the 1980s more systematic research unveiled subtler explanations for migration, which was often motivated by the desire to maintain family ties, or as part of some longer-term life strategy. For some migrants this was a strategy oriented towards the village, the search for a job before returning to family and gardens. And for an increasing number the move was stabilized, and thus a new population emerged of so-called ‘migrants’, persons ‘who could no longer be realistically classified as such’.11 For example in Vanagi, an informal settlement in which the Global Cities Institute has been working since 2006, different ethnic groups have come together to manage their urban village. The

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9 Goddard, *The Unseen City*, p. 22.
four main founding groups within the settlement are the Aroma, Hula, Keapara and Mailu ethnic groups, and belonging to one of these recognized founding groups carries with it a certain status within the community. In addition to these four groups, there are families and individuals who have entered into the community through migration or inter-marriage. These include Kerema people from the Gulf, Mekeo people from Kairuku, Gorokas from the Eastern Highlands, Samarais from Milne Bay Province, people from the Sepik area; other Motuans from the Central Province; and New Guinea Islanders. Overwhelmingly and unusually, they live together with a shared sense of community and belonging.

When Papua New Guinea gained Independence in 1975, Port Moresby became the nation’s capital. Some well-educated Melanesians in Moresby lived in formal housing, but most lived in dormitories, compounds, sheds or other rudimentary accommodation provided by their European employers. Steady migration saw growing numbers moving into the informal habitations. Prejudices against the settlers began to emerge during this period among European residents. The arriving migrants were portrayed as people ill-prepared for city life, uneducated, unruly and dangerous. And these prejudices have been reproduced ever since. In contemporary Moresby, there is still a common perception that settlements are breeding grounds for the violence and lawlessness that plague the city.

Michael Goddard describes a phenomenon wherein the media, Europeans who have lived in Moresby even many Papua New Guineans perceive the capital city, with its chaos and danger, as being ‘an aberration’; something separate from or alien to ‘the real PNG’.

The real PNG was considerably beyond the city’s boundaries, both in geography and in imagination. It was that favoured place of natural scientists and anthropologists where exotic plants flourished, exotic birds preened and sang, and real Papua New Guinean’s lived in villages whose houses bore no locks … The dichotomy between a real Melanesia and Moresby is even implied in the attitudes of some anthropologists. I have encountered several for whom the city is little more than an alien and threatening transit point on their way to and from ‘the field’.

But contemporary Moresby is more than the difficult convergence of diverse cultural elements of rural PNG that is often portrayed. Many of the city’s so-called ‘migrants’ are people who were born and raised in the city. Moreover, Moresby has also now come to exist in the imaginings, and often the experiences, of those living in rural PNG.

12 Goddard, The Unseen City, pp 20-22.
Politics

Organization and Governance

Papua New Guinea is a messy but stable democracy, formally organized as a constitutional monarchy. HM Queen Elizabeth II is Head of State, but the last time she visited was 1982, two decades ago. She is represented in PNG by a Governor General who plays mainly a ceremonial role. The Governor General is elected by the 109 member National Parliament, and appoints the Prime Minister on the proposal of the Parliament and appoints the Cabinet on the proposal of the Prime Minister. The National Parliament is elected in five-year terms by a universal election. PNG's system of government has three levels: national, provincial and local. Members of the National Parliament are elected from the country's nineteen provinces and the national capital district of Port Moresby. The elected member from each province (provinces coincide with regional electorates) also serve as Governor for their province.15

The urban management of Port Moresby is the responsibility of the National Capital District Commission (NCDC), as established in an Act of Parliament (the NCDC Act, amended 2001). The NCDC reports to and has its budget approved by the Ministry of Inter-Government Relations. The elected body of government in Port Moresby is the Motu Koitabu Assembly. The Assembly's powers are delegated by the NCDC and include the management, control and administration of the Motu Koitabu areas of the city. There are also numerous NGOs operating in Port Moresby with varying degrees of involvement in urban affairs.

Port Moresby's system of government has been burdened with political volatility and uncertainty in recent years and faces many challenges. One of these is to overcome the democratic limitations of the current system for appointing members to the NCDC, which does not allow representation for all city residents. Some positive efforts are underway to address this problem. A further challenge is that the NCDC and the Motu Koitabu Assembly have limited administrative capacities, preventing effective planning and service delivery. In the NCDC, this is partly due to insufficient processes for staff training or performance evaluation, along with problems of political interference. There is also considerable corruption and nepotism in some parts of the organization, leading to appointments of underqualified or ineffective staff.16

The current plans for urban development of Port Moresby are set out in the National Capital District Urban Development Plan (which sets out tangible development goals) and the Port Moresby Town Local Development Plan (which focuses on vision and plans for the main commercial area of the city). The implementation of these plans has been hampered, though, by multiple governance problems, including the challenges already mentioned. One of the main obstacles to effective urban development policy implementation is a general lack of accountability and performance measurement. Accountability to the public is weak. This is partly because, aside from the three elected members of the NCDC, commissioners are appointed rather than elected, and they therefore lack responsiveness to the population's needs. Although there has been some consultation with communities in the process of writing development plans, this is neither ongoing nor systematic. Nor does the NCDC have a formal strategy for communicating with city residents, a formal complaints system or a Citizen's Charter. Customary residents of the city feel particularly excluded from decision-making processes, and anxious that urban development is eroding their cultures and tribal lifestyles.17

16 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 16–17.
17 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 17–18.
UN-HABITAT has outlined what are seen as the main governance areas requiring prioritized attention in Port Moresby. These include the improvement of corporate planning and management practices to improve the NCDC’s accountability and transparency, capacity building and staff training and development within the NCDC, improved communication, accountability and participatory systems for engaging the public in urban decision-making, improved efficiency and effectiveness of revenue collection and budget expenditure, and greater facilitation and co-ordination of NGOs working in the area.18

At a local level, to again use the example of Vanagi, the priorities of community governance are quite different. Vanagi works well, despite being what outsiders would call a slum. A strong sense of community has emerged out of extreme adversity, but that cannot be the only reason given that its politically self-conscious sense that life can be different is not shared by all the urban villages in the immediate vicinity. Part of the answer lies in its location in the Moresby South electorate of Dame Carol Kidu and the strong engagement of the community with the Department for Community Development and vice versa. A second reason is a strong cohort of leaders with no single person standing out. A single church denomination and its given authority structure, for example, has not come to stand in for plural local governance. A third reason is access to resources on a consistent basis, with this access dependent upon the active community governance process. Being located within the boundaries of the National Capital District, people living in Vanagi Settlement have better access to some services than those living in hinterland or more remote communities. The community is able to utilize basic educational, health and postal services provided in Port Moresby. Approximately thirty-two households have electricity supplied to their residence, which they pay for. Similarly, thirty-four households pay for their use of a direct water supply. Community members express frustration at the lack of response by the National Capital District Commission (NCDC) to their requests for increased and improved services, but they have learned to make submissions as a community through its local governance processes.

**Law, Justice and Security**

Insecurity and lack of order commonly manifest as threats to personal security and property and cause constant and acute concerns for personal safety. The elaborate measures adopted to secure virtually all homes and business premises, often including razor wire, barred windows, and security guards.19 There are restrictions on movement around the city after dark and certain parts of the city are declared ‘no go’ zones. The perpetrators of crimes are usually believed to be criminal gangs (raskolos), and people from the informal settlements are usually projected as the culprits, even though criminals come from both formal and informal housing areas. Armed robbery, aggravated assault, and carjacking are all common crimes. Homicides and rape, including gang rape, also occur frequently and are increasing in numbers.20

Law and order matters are the jurisdiction of the Internal Security Ministry. The Ministry administers its policies via police stations throughout the city—although five of the stations are in various states of disrepair and require upgrading in order to operate effectively. Prison rehabilitation programs are delivered by the CIS, but with little success. As part of the Safer Cities Initiative, the NCDC is coordinating the Yumi

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19 Dinnen, *Law and Order in a Weak State*, p. 3.
Kukautim Mosbi project, which has included a community-awareness program, attempts to improve urban agency service-delivery, and a funding mechanism for community activities oriented around urban safety and using Australian aid funds. Various NGOs are involved in capacity building for low-income groups, but only on an ad-hoc basis. Village courts, based on customary understandings of social relations, operate in the city, but there is a need for the NCDC to increase its support for them. Overall, the main problems facing Moresby in this area are a lack of co-ordination between justice and law-enforcement systems, a lack of professionalism in the police force when dealing with cases, and a need for greater education in communities about dealing with law-and-order issues in the local sphere.

Australian assistance aimed at increasing and improving policing structures in PNG has been increased in the post-2001 period, including the Enhanced Cooperation Program (renamed the Strongam Gavman Program) introduced in 2008, which aims to strengthen of governance, security, law and justice. Dinnen and McLeod argue, however, that Australian and international efforts to reform state police in PNG have “not been matched by local demands for such reform”. Moreover, they argue that these efforts have not been entirely appropriate for the PNG context, with its plurality of policing, security and justice providers. The “Weberian ideal of the state monopolising security was never a smart idea in the Melanesian context and… police reform needs to engage creatively with the larger spectrum of policing and justice providers if it is to achieve real and lasting improvements to security.”

Culture

Papua New Guinea is a country of great cultural diversity with 700 languages and complex tribal and cultural differences. A unifying language, Tok Pisin (formerly known as Pidgin English), has evolved as a way of enabling diverse groups to communicate with one another, but even this language has regional variations. The other official national languages are English and Motu. The gravitation of migrants towards the capital has meant that this diversity converges and condenses in Port Moresby. Port Moresby was established on the traditional lands of two inter-related peoples now known collectively as the Motu-Koita. The growth of housing settlements, infrastructure and industry in the city has led the Motu-Koita to feel acute social marginalization and deep anxiety about losing their cultural identity and land. Much of the Motu-Koita’s precolonial culture was destroyed during the colonial years. Missionaries viewed tribal dancing as immodest and banned it, replacing it with Polynesian-derived dances and later European dances. Some feasts connected with customary dances also disappeared.

22 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 39.
23 Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Strongim Gavman Program (SGP), 2010, www.dfat.gov.au
Port Moresby’s foremost cultural event is the Hiri Moale festival, which takes place every September and lasts for three days. The festival originated as a celebration of the sailing journeys the Motuan people of the Central Province made to trade clay pots for sago with the Gulf people. The sailing expeditions, or hiri, after which the festival was named, slowly disappeared during the colonial years with the influx of European goods and institutionalisation of a cash economy and wage labour. In its contemporary incarnation, the festival includes an art exhibition, musical performances, dancing, and a ‘Hiri Queen’ pageant competition. The festival’s three days are a time of vibrant celebration with singing and dancing in the streets.

Health and Education

Primary and high schools are spread throughout the major populated areas of Port Moresby, and the city has a university and other tertiary institutions. It is common for students to have to travel across town to get to school. Classrooms tend to be overcrowded, and many schools have limited or no library or sporting facilities. Some private schools exist and offer better facilities and standards of education, but these are so expensive that only a wealthy minority can afford them. Although public school fees are partly subsidized by the government, they are still too expensive for poorer members of the community to afford, hence why many children of school age from settlements do not attend school.

Port Moresby has public and private health-service providers, as well as customary medicine practitioners. The quality of health services available depends on capacity to pay. Middle and high-income earners access private hospitals and clinics, whereas poorer citizens rely on public services. There is a shortage of public clinics, the existing services are often rundown or lacking in supplies and equipment, and at times some clinics are forced to close down due to vandalism or theft. Among the most common diseases in Moresby are malaria, tuberculosis and sexually-transmitted infections. However, the city’s most serious health problem is the HIV/AIDS epidemic. According to recent statistics, 9,312 people living in the NCD are infected, with number divided fairly closely between genders (male 4,547, female 4,471 and 294 undisclosed). Commercial sex, cultural bias, and gender inequality all contribute to the spread of HIV through the city and elsewhere in PNG.

Economics

PNG has a fairly small dual economy consisting of a formal and an informal sector. While the country has a wealth of mineral resources, most of the population (around 85 per cent) derive their livelihood from agriculture. Mining or otherwise exploiting natural resources has been hampered by the high associated costs and the country’s rugged terrain, but nevertheless it accounts for a large part of the formal economy and government revenue. PNG also has a wealth of other natural resources including agricultural, fishing and forestry assets. Its main agricultural products are coffee, cocoa, palm kernels, coconuts, tea, rubber, sweet potatoes, poultry, pork, fruit and

28 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 19.
vegetables. Its main industries are copra crushing, palm oil processing, plywood and wood production, crude oil production, construction, tourism, and mining of gold, silver and copper. Australia is PNG's main trading partner, accounting in 2008 figures for 28 per cent of merchandise exports (followed by Japan and China) and 43.1 per cent of imports (followed by Singapore and China) in 2008. PNG's external debt was around 2.32 billion as of 31 December 2009. PNG's public debt was 33.7 per cent of GDP.

Despite PNG's resource wealth this has not delivered the economic performance expected and the extractive industries have been very damaging at a local level. While macro-economic performance was stable in the first decade after independence, it suffered a series of crises throughout the 1990s. After a number of years of decline, the economy recovered around 2003 and has remained in growth since. Partly because of its large informal economic sector, PNG was not significantly affected by the global financial crisis. On the other hand, in conventional terms, degraded infrastructure and a weakly performing public-service sector are said to be significant obstacles to future development. National planners have also been anxious about the impact of the country's law-and-order problems on investor confidence and on its embryonic tourist industry. PNG has managed to avoid some of the major dramatic events such as mass riots and military coups that have had crippling impacts on other small economies. Some significant industrial developments are also occurring. A major new investment project (the largest in the PNG's history) has recently been approved. The venture, led by the oil and gas company ExxonMobil, is constructing a liquefied natural gas (LNG) production facility and commercializing the country's estimated 227 billion cubic meters of natural gas reserves. The gas project is expected to deliver $30 billion to the PNG economy.

In Port Moresby, an oil refinery was recently established, which might indirectly improve the city's low formal unemployment levels, however the concomitant social impact is likely to be devastatingly negative as customary land-owners battle over the possible financial windfall and locals respond to the international workers who are brought in to manage and build the pipeline.

As Papua New Guinea's main administrative and manufacturing centre, Port Moresby's formal economy is dominated by the tertiary sector. The main service activities include wholesale, retail, restaurants and hotels. Beyond services, the city's industries include building and construction, brewery, clothing and printing. There is little large-scale manufacturing. Unemployment levels are higher in Moresby than in most of PNG's other urban centres but these figures do not capture the work of people engaged in the informal economy. Many of the city's unemployed people have studied only to primary school, or have no formal education at all. Over 50 per cent of the city's unemployed live in the settlements, and it is likely that most of these people are involved in the informal sector to varying extents, often in various different types of economic activity at once.

33 DFAT, Papua New Guinea Country Brief.
35 AUSAID, About Papua New Guinea.
36 Sinclair, 'Law, Order and the State in Papua New Guinea'.
38 Masahiro Umezaki, 'Adaptive Strategies of Huli Migrant Settlers', p. 77.
Indeed, most of Moresby’s population is involved in the informal economy (economic activity that takes place outside the regulatory framework of the state), and without it many would have no livelihood. Typical informal activities include services such as repairs and shoe shining, and selling and distributing goods such as handicrafts, betel nuts, cigarettes, fruits and vegetables. An attempt to regulate and encourage the informal sector was launched in the form of the Control and Development Act, but its implementation has had limited success. The NCDC is interested in improving its relationship with the private sector, which is considered an important contributor to the city’s economic development. The PNG National Government is also endeavouring to improve conditions for the private sector to prosper by trimming down bureaucratic and other obstacles to private enterprise.

Urban poverty is difficult to estimate, not least because PNG has no official basis for measuring poverty but relies on levels of consumption, income or both. Although the capital city is better off in terms of poverty than other urban centres, many of its residents struggle, particularly those living in settlements. PNG has no welfare state. In rural areas family and clan networks were traditionally relied upon to support the sick or unemployed. This informal kin-based welfare (wantok) system has also been the conventional explanation for people’s survival in urban areas despite high unemployment. However, these systems, which rely on reciprocity, have been strained in Moresby due to factors such as high unemployment and landlessness. Modernization of the economy has created a need for access to services and for cash, which is especially difficult for those in rural areas to obtain especially because government and other services rarely reach far beyond urban areas. Thus, many of those who customarily lived in villages and relied on subsistence farming have been compelled to migrate to the city, with many recent migrants moving into the settlements. This places stress on settlements, increasing overcrowding and worsening living conditions. The inhabitants of settlements are a ‘new emerging landless class’ in PNG. They have no traditional land tenure, little or no land on which to grow food, and they live under constant threat of eviction. Most settlements have limited or no access to urban infrastructure and basic services, or residents must travel long distances to reach them, with poor roads and limited access to transportation. Health and education services are poor if available at all. Not only do settlers have little opportunity for formal education, but many who have grown up in the city no longer have the skills or knowledge required to subsist in rural areas either.

39 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban ProWe, p. 13; Umezaki. 2010. p. 77.
40 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban ProWe, p. 13.
44 Asian Development Bank, Priorities of the Poor in Papua New Guinea, p. 2.
45 Asian Development Bank, Priorities of the Poor in Papua New Guinea, p. 2; UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 15.
Ecology

Port Moresby has a hot and humid monsoonal climate. It has defined wet season from about December-March, and dry season from May-October, although the intensity of the seasons has become more variable due to climate change. Coastal temperatures range between 23 and 30 degrees. About 70 per cent of the country is covered by expansive rainforests, sustained by high rainfall that averages around 2000 mm per year (and much higher in some areas). Rainfall is relatively low in the capital of Moresby by comparison with the rest of the country.46

PNG is one of the world’s most biodiverse countries with more than 5 per cent of the world’s biodiversity on less than 1 per cent of the world’s total land area.47 It is home to 1,600 known species of fauna, with new species regularly being discovered. In a single expedition in 2009, for example, it took Conservation International researchers just two months to discover 200 new animal species.48 Sixty five per cent of PNG’s land is forest, with primary forests covering 55.7 per cent (25,211,000 hectares) of the country. Mining, logging and agricultural expansion pose the greatest threats to these forests and the biodiversity they support. In 2005 at the United Nations summit on climate change in Montreal, PNG led a coalition of tropical developing countries that proposed a rainforest preservation plan whereby wealthy countries would pay poor countries to ensure the protection of forests.49

Port Moresby’s rapidly growing population presents major environmental challenges for the city and surrounding areas. These have coincided with weak systems for environmental management, planning, regulation and implementation. As the pressure to accommodate the population builds, potential recreational areas and open spaces are being sacrificed for building. A lack of adequate housing to accommodate the influx of migrants has given rise to settlements on hills and ridges, where unregulated, makeshift constructions cut into the hillsides causing dangerous unstable conditions. The hillsides have also become sites for subsistence gardening, which, while serving to provide food on the one hand, also destroys the natural vegetation and gives rise to further soil erosion and sedimentation. The latter, also worsened by quarrying in the city, causes the storm water drains to clog, resulting in flooding during periods of heavy rainfall.50

While most of Papua New Guinea receives high rainfall and has a constant supply of water, Port Moresby is much drier on average. Most of the city’s water is supplied by the corporatized Eda Ranu Water and Sewerage Company or is obtained from underground bore holes. The settlements suffer the greatest problems with water supply. Very few residents in settlements have individual water supplies but some settlements have access to water via communal standpipes. Many of these standpipes have been disconnected, though, as a result of being poorly maintained or vandalized. This has led people in a number the settlements to build illegal water connections.51

46 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 13.
47 AUSAID, About Papua New Guinea.
50 UN-ESCAP and UN-HABITAT, ‘Port Moresby Urban Sector Profile’
51 UN-HABITAT, Port Moresby Urban Profile, p. 13.
Sewerage disposal is a major cause of environmental pollution in Moresby. While formal areas of the city are all connected with the Eda Ranu network, informal settlements are not. As a result, residents of these areas are forced to use pit latrines, or dispose of sewerage directly into the sea, waterways, drains or bushes. Settlements face similar problems with rubbish disposal because no formal disposal services exist. Rubbish is sometimes burned at dump sites, but this causes further safety and environmental hazards. Not only in the settlements but throughout the city generally, there is a clearly observable waste disposal problem: beaches and waterways are polluted and littered with rubbish. Aside from the damage caused by discharge of rubbish and raw sewerage, beaches, marine life and offshore reefs have suffered further from dredging and expansions of Port facilities.

Electricity in Moresby is administered by PNG Power and supplied mainly through a hydro complex, supplemented by thermal and diesel sub-stations. It is aiming to increase hydro resources and phase out fossil fuels, which are at present mainly used in the form of diesel and petrol in the transport sector. PNG Power supplies electricity throughout the city indiscriminately based on a user-pays system. However, there have been some cases in settlements where those with an electricity connection have charged a fee to sub-contract out informally their supply to other residents. Aside from some electricity, settlements also use liquified petroleum gas, candles, kerosene and firewood for lighting and cooking. The cutting down of trees for firewood has depleted some wooded parts of the city. Street-lighting in the city varies greatly. Arterial roads and some residential streets are well lit. Other streets are poorly lit and rely on security lights from private properties. Settlements have no street lighting at all.

Environmental policy and the administration of environmental legislation is the role of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) at the national level. The department is responsible for environmental impact assessments, the supply of environmental permits, and the monitoring of standards and compliance. The NCDC provides some assistance by way of advice via its Health and Waste Management Sections, but does not have its own environmental planning unit. The main legal framework for environmental planning is the Environmental Planning Act 2000. The act specifies processes for environmental protection, regulation and sustainability. It also provides for public consultation regarding large projects with significant environmental impact, but public responses tend to be poor. Indeed, the city’s residents have little awareness of environmental issues and there is no strategy in place to raise such awareness. The DEC tends to allocate most of its budget to projects in rural areas, and urban areas are often neglected. Moreover, the NCDC allocates funding to environment only indirectly via its various departments but provides no specific environment budget.
Conclusion

Port Moresby is a small postcolonial city in the Global South that is experiencing all the problems and challenges associated with being the capital of a country torn between extractive capitalism and continuing, stressed but still vibrant customary cultures. The Global Cities Institute has been working closely in Port Moresby with the Department for Community Development to engage with local communities and rethink the country’s approach to community sustainability. Unfortunately the country is going through a slow crisis. The concept of ‘slow crisis’ is used here drawing upon the classical and more ambiguous sense of a turning point (a krisis) that requires a response. It does not imply that a single decision will be sufficient to enhance the resilience of communities and political institutions in the face of massive change. Rather it is to say that the cultural, political and economic fabric of communities around the country, still strong in many places, is being slowly weakened by uneven processes that are affecting local life-ways across the globe—the intensification of rapacious forms of globalizing capitalism, the overriding of production cultures by consumerism, the steady pull of unsustainable kinds of urbanization, the proselytizing reach of globalizing religions, together with effect of population increases and the continued degrading of the base environment.

In many cases these processes are invited in, and in some cases they are sustainably managed. However, in Port Moresby, local manifestations of the slow crisis continue to press into people’s lives: sporadic but chronic violence, creeping civil decay, uncontrolled rural-urban migration, insidious political corruption, misplaced interventions from the outside, and a continuing over-emphasis on large-scale corporate-led development.

The slow crisis always teeters on the edge of turning into a general disaster. The latest mega-project, the Liquid Natural Gas project, has, in the tradition of Ok Tedi and Bougainville, seen much hyperbole about potential social returns, but on the other hand, it may also be the basis for cultural disaster as communities fight over the spoils. An infrastructure and building boom has ensued in Port Moresby, but the construction will be concluded by 2014 and the project has uncertain long-term benefits. Such pressures present increasingly difficult challenges to the wellbeing of the nation-state even if a superficial sense of nationhood continues to be reproduced in the language and practice of ‘our country’—from the rhetoric of politics and sport to the advertising slogans of global soft-drink manufactures. Some of the more obvious expressions of problems coming home to affect the fundamental conditions of life include low life-expectancy rates, high infant-and-maternal mortality, chronic sexual violence, debilitating urban crime, police violence, and an increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS. In the face of this horror, some remarkable individuals, communities and organizations in Port Moresby and across Papua New Guinea are working together to respond to such issues—these are our source of hope.


57 Ruth Randell, Gender Equality and Democratic Governance in the City of Port Moresby, UNIFEM Pacific, 2008.

58 Care needs to be taken with interpreting all of these issues: Maxine Pitts, Crime, Corruption and Capacity in Papua New Guinea, Asia Pacific Press, Canberra, 2002; Gina Koczberski, George N. Curry, and John Connell, ‘Full Circle or Spiralling out of Control? State Violence and the Control of Urbanisation in Papua New Guinea’, Urban Studies, vol. 38, no. 11, pp. 2017–36; and Gina Koczberski and George N. Curry, Divided Communities and Contested Landscapes: Mobility, Development and Shifting Identities in Migrant Destination Sites in Papua New Guinea’, Asia Pacific Viewpoint, vol. 45, no. 3, 2005, pp. 57–71. For an example of a superficial developmentalist take on the slow crisis see Diana Cammack, Chronic Poverty in Papua New Guinea, Chronic Poverty Research Centre, Manchester, 2006. For all of its authoritative stance and apparent detailed research in-country, the report is thin and often misleading, but this does not mean that concerns about the slow crisis should not be taken seriously.
Dili, Timor-Leste

Dili is the small coastal capital of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. More of a large town than a city, Dili is based around a port and open bay. It faces north directly out to Ataúro Island, which in turn sits between two Indonesian islands of Wetar and Alor. The eastern end of the bay is dominated by Cristo Rei, a massive cliff-top mounted statue of Christ sitting on a globe of the world. Built by the Indonesians in 1995 as part of the state ideology of Pancasila, it is said to be twenty-seven metres high, one metre for each of the then provinces of Indonesia. In 2010 Cristo Rei was newly renovated, though the figure still looks westwards to Jakarta rather than to the Vatican or back to Timor-Leste. At the western end of the city is Comoro, a site of intense commercial and housing expansion, which stops at the edges of Tasi Tolu (meaning three lakes). The dilapidated structure from which Pope John Paul II gave his historic mass in 1989 remains at the site, and overlooking the three lakes from a hilltop is a new brass statue embodying the figure of the Pope. Beyond that, the western end of the bay gives way to small coves and rocky beaches while the city’s backdrop is dominated by rearing mountains that lead to the nation’s central highlands.

Past and Present

Dili became the capital of Portuguese Timor in 1769, making the port area the centre of power for Portuguese colonial activities. Portuguese power in Timor ebbed and flowed; at times just a small garrison of colonials in effect held the fort in Dili alone, while at other periods the reach of the Portuguese was far more extensive. The capital did not shift over this entire period, even as various parts of Timor were fought over and in turn negotiated; the 1912 treaty between the Portuguese and the Dutch consolidated the territories so that the Portuguese controlled the eastern end of Timor, and the Dutch the west with the exception of the Oecusse Exclave. Following Japanese occupation during World War II, the Portuguese resumed their control of the territory and continued their rule up until the early 1970s. As a consequence of the Carnation Revolution in Lisbon in April 1974, the Portuguese finally began to withdraw from Timor, leaving behind the colonial infrastructure in Dili and in turn creating more space for a growing nationalist movement to mobilize for national independence.
Dili, October 2010. A painted image of President Ramos Horta, erected in protest by the residents of Altarik Laran, Dili, who are facing eviction to make way for a library and a cultural centre. The community, which is refusing to move, is located directly opposite the Presidential Palace, and this sign is positioned to face it. The words “Hau mak President ba ema kiak sirā” — “I am President for the poor people” — repeat back to Horta the promise he made when he took office.
Following a short civil war between contending political groupings within Timor-Leste in August 1975, the Indonesian military commenced attacks along the border over the following months and then launched a full-scale invasion in December of that year. Dili bore the brunt of that initial attack, bombarded by sea, by troops coming ashore by landing craft, and by paratroopers dropped by aircraft. Known independence supporters who had not fled were taken to the wharf area and summarily executed. The Indonesian military quickly consolidated military control over Dili, and from that political base the Indonesian military and state attempted to exert control over the then-named Timor Timur (commonly known as ‘Tim Tim’).

As the occupation continued into the 1990s, the urban character of Dili was to give rise to a new important aspect in the struggle for independence, an educated but politically alienated local youth who became part of the clandestine front. By undertaking demonstrations, intelligence gathering and political mobilization, this urbanized resistance was concentrated in Dili, where educational facilities and administrative structures allowed the independence movement forms of political integration and mobilization that were not possible in other parts of the territory. These clandestine activities brought with them renewed levels of violence to the capital, most graphically captured on film during the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991.

By 1999 the attempt to integrate the territory into the nation of Indonesia as its twenty-seventh province had completely failed, a factor clearly demonstrated by the overwhelming vote for independence on 30 August of that year. The violent withdrawal of the Indonesian armed forces and militia in 1999 left much of the material infrastructure of Dili destroyed and emptied almost entirely of its population. More than ten years on, the destruction of that time remains clearly evident in various parts of the capital; ruined buildings remain dotted across the city and basic infrastructure, such as water and electricity, remains limited.

From 1999 to 2002 Timor-Leste was governed by the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor, and Dili—with the most developed port and a still operational airport—again became the site of power, albeit this time as a stage in the shift to independence. With the UN mission headquartered in ‘Obrigadu Barracks’ (this name being a play on words that indicates the militarized nature of the site but also meaning ‘thanks very much’ in Tetun, one of the main local languages), the capital took a newly militarized veneer with UN peacekeepers from various countries based there, accompanied by a massive number of foreigners, known as malae.
Urban Environment

One of the most immediately striking differences between Dili and the remainder of the country is found in the architecture. While a typical house in rural areas would be made of a combination of bamboo or wood with a roof made of grass or corrugated iron, in Dili the tendency is for cement bricks and floors, though houses still tend to remain as basic structures. However, in rural areas, other than small local schools, a police post and perhaps a health clinic, there would rarely be another building that stood out as of importance. With the rapid urban development in Dili, over the last ten years we have seen significant architectural changes, with three different examples demonstrating a link between historical phases and the contemporary reality of independence.

In the first instance, attempts to rehabilitate buildings in the city have led to various restoration attempts of colonial-era Portuguese buildings. This includes buildings such as the Mercado Lama and the Uma Fukun, both fully re-furbished post-1999 only to fall into complete disrepair, and then post-2007 to be refurbished once again. Other colonial-era buildings, with their arches and Mediterranean whitewash, such as the Palácio de Governo and the Presidential Palace high above Dili, are designed to dominate their surrounds. A second point of architectural significance is found with the Indonesian government buildings that were destroyed in 1999, burnt to a shell along with their imitation Uma Lulik entrance ways (another symbolic attempt by Jakarta at integration). However, these buildings have almost all been now refurbished and painted with new roofs; they house the new ministries and apparatus of state of an independent Timor-Leste. The third and newest wave of architectural development has occurred in the political context since the violence of 2006 and 2007, where large-scale developments have occurred driven by global capital. New five-star hotels are being built, and a massive four-storey shopping complex, complete with the nation’s first escalators, is nearing completion of its first stage.

Politics

The impacts on Dili of Timor-Leste becoming an independent nation-state have been dramatic. While long the centre for economic and political power in the eastern end of the island, the differences between the capital and the rural areas have become increasingly differentiated. Rural areas remain highly isolated and continue to be dominated by subsistence agriculture. While public infrastructure—running water and electricity, communication networks, adequate roads and transport, schooling and health—is often limited in Dili, rural areas are marked by their almost complete absence of such services. The distinction between the centre and the periphery is found in everyday discourse in Timor-Leste, where it is the norm for people to speak in oppositional terms about Dili and the foho (literally meaning mountain but used to refer to non-urban communities). The city often has the sense of being a metropolitan bubble which is separated in significant ways, both culturally and materially, from the remainder of the nation.
Independence has also seen significant effects on the capital’s population. Based on the 2004 census, the actual population of the District of Dili is 175,000, though this figure includes the populations for the sub-districts of Metinaro, Atauro and Cristo Rei as well as Dom Aleixo, Nain Feto and Vera Cruz. Given that together these sub-districts include areas well outside of Dili itself, even with the census figures it is hard to determine an accurate number. Gaining a clear sense of the population of Dili is also made difficult by centripetal and centrifugal factors. In the case of the former, Dili has followed other urban centres by attracting so many people to move to the capital from rural areas, where in particular people between the ages of twelve and thirty have moved in hope of finding work or to seek an education. Centrifugal factors, on the other hand, have tended to be framed by forms of social conflict, namely the violence that led to widespread internal displacement within Timor-Leste triggered by the socio-political crisis over 2006–2007, a period of turmoil that had a dramatic effect on the capital.

The period of time known broadly as the ‘crisis’ or the ‘situasi’ (the situation) began in early 2006 when tensions within the East Timorese armed forces resulted in nearly six hundred soldiers—around one-third of the military—abandoning their barracks over accusations of discrimination. They claimed that the military was dominated by the Lorosa’ê, a term describing those from the three eastern-most districts of Timor-Leste, who were said to be discriminating against Loromonu, namely those from the ten western districts. The government responded by dismissing the protesting soldiers, an act which triggered protests against the government. When violence erupted, at the end of April 2006, the state’s security apparatus largely disintegrated into competing factions. Over the following weeks and months violence occurred between the two factions of the military; soldiers massacred police, military police ambushed soldiers, civilian groups armed by members of parliament attacked both the military headquarters and the homes of military leaders, and the houses of parliamentarians were burnt and members of their families killed.

In the vacuum created by the collapse of the security apparatus, the intra-state conflict was accompanied by widespread gang violence across Dili. To a significant degree this violence at first mirrored the ethno-territorial dimensions of the Lorosa’ê and Loromonu division in the military, but it was also shaped by the interests of political parties and the control of local urban territories by the gangs themselves. Feeding into this mayhem was Alfredo Reinado, who quit as the head of the military police during the April violence. With heavy arms and a group of supporters, he moved out of the capital and
demanded that the Fretilin government resign. Following a fire-fight with Timor-Leste soldiers the following May which lead to various deaths, Reinado was imprisoned but after a short period managed to escape, re-arm, and seemingly roam freely across Timor-Leste and even into Indonesia (appearing live on TV from a Jakarta studio). After ‘stealing’ guns from a border police post, the International Stabilization Force managed to cordon Reinado in the central town of Same in March 2007. Five of his group were killed, but extraordinarily he managed to flee yet again.

These events impacted on Dili in particular. By mid-year the state was largely paralyzed; many thousands of people fled the city to their villages of origin, while many others remained in one of the many refugee camps that dotted the capital. Over 100,000 people became refugees over that period. Formerly public sites, such as the hospital grounds and the national airport, as well as churchyards and educational facilities, became refugee camps literally overnight. The presence of an international military intervention saw some elements of the violence in Dili curtailed, though it did not actually decrease significantly until the ‘state of siege’ was declared in February 2008 with the attempted assassinations in Dili of the president and prime minister by Reinado and his followers. Reinado himself was killed outside Ramos Horta’s house in the exchange of gunfire.

Dili was also changed by the crisis in other ways. It no longer carries the sense of being a liberatory space, a site of concentrated power aimed at fulfilling the project of national sovereignty. Rather, it has become a site of risk, loss and violence. Destroyed buildings and houses burnt to the ground added another layer of violence to the destruction of 1999, making it hard for outsiders to know as to know the vintage of different pieces of destruction. The inter-communal fighting resulted in a re-drawing of Dili’s geographic layout, with key markets destroyed and new ones, such as the ‘Halilaran’ market south behind the city, developing at an incredible rate as traders sought somewhere to continue selling their goods. Key bus stations were closed in part because of attacks on the drivers coming from the eastern end of the island, and in turn ad hoc bus terminals and back roads into the capital were suddenly used as a way of continuing access to and from Dili. In an attempt to restore order, the capital was re-militarized in 2006 by intervening forces from Australia, New Zealand, Portugal and Malaysia, as well as a range of other countries. Heavily armed patrols of foreign forces attempted to bring order back to the city; helicopters were ever-present above various hot spots; and armoured personnel carriers moved in convoys through the capital.
In many respects Dili today faces many of the problems of other cities caught in the trap between modernization and urbanization: urban drift, unemployment, crime, poor planning, social alienation and sense of cultural loss. However, and as work undertaken by the Global Cities Institute at RMIT helps to understand, socio-political disjunctures between the capital and rural Timor-Leste can lead to complex forms of community that provide one avenue for thinking on possible avenues for future sustainability. In order to demonstrate this, it is important to narrow down and to look at just one community within the capital of Dili—in this instance the aldeia of Golgota—and by examining the form of community integration at that level, make some more general observations of the city as a whole.

The Aldeia of Golgota

Golgota, located on the western outskirts of Dili, is separated from the airport by Comoro Road, and has a population of approximately 2000 people. Golgota is part of Suco Comoro and in turn the sub-district Dom Alexio. One part of the region has a relatively dense urban sense to it, with houses very close together in streets set at right angles to one another. Towards the mountains, however, the urban layout gives way to a dirt road and much more arbitrarily situated houses. Most of Golgota is on a flat area, with the southern and western sides of the community closed in by a mountain range that runs behind Dili. Starting at the base of the mountains is a Stations of the Cross pathway which finishes with three crosses high on the mountain. This place is commonly referred to as Cruz Tolu (the Three Crosses). The area, including a grotto with a statue of Mary, was developed as a site of prayer and worship during the Indonesian occupation and is visited by many people during religious festivals such as Easter. It is from these hills that we assume the aldeia took its name Golgota, a reference to the hill on which Christ was crucified in Jerusalem.

As part of the Global Cities’ ‘Understanding Community’ project, surveys undertaken in Golgota across 2007 and 2008 found that the community was formed around a very substantial growth in the population based on migration. Question 1 asked ‘How long have you lived in this community (or local place)?’ Answers showed that 13.6 per cent of respondents have lived in Golgota for ‘less than one year’ and a further 31.2 per cent ‘between one and five years’. This shows that about one in every seven people surveyed were new to the community in the last twelve months; if the figures are combined then a very significant 44.8 per cent of the local residents have moved there since 2002. If we take the next set of figures for those who have lived in Golgota for between six and ten years, which then includes the population shifts caused by the violence, destruction and forced migration of 1999, then we see that another 27 per cent of residents have only lived in the area since at least 1997. This means that 71.8 per cent of those surveyed have lived in Golgota for less than ten years.
Communities here are formed not based on territory, but on genealogy
However, a community such as Golgota—very typical in Dili—is built around far more ethnolinguistic diversity. In this sense, communities in Dili take on more of the modern form of community found in places such as Melbourne, Australia, where the cities are largely made up of contiguous strangers who draw a sense of community from the point of territorial delineation, namely borders between their communities and others, rather than for instance basing it on a common sense of genealogy and history instead of, or even in spite of, community.

The question can then be asked why this level of difference wouldn’t be a point of contention between people in circumstances where society is under broader strain. For all the conflict across Dili, it often appears to be cutting across them rather than from within, and Golgota appears no different in this regard. In fact, and still working from the survey data, in Question 3—‘What or whom do you identify as your main community?’—53.3 per cent of people answered that it was their neighbourhood or place where they live. This sense was reflected in broader conversations where borders were readily pointed out both on the street and via maps; the limits of the aldeia were clearly recognized by many as being geographically defined. Hence, and unlike many other communities in Timor-Leste, people are from Aldeia Golgota if they live within its territorial boundaries rather than if they are linked through familial connection, an identity that changes accordingly if they move their place of residence to another aldeia.

So in order to begin a question regarding how Golgota can maintain a stability and a sense of common integration when there is the absence of those features that we tend to find elsewhere in Timor (common genealogy), we need to move into a discussion of communities rather than community. In speaking with members of Golgota, it was a common point in discourse to point to the ways in which people’s connections to both family and adat remained extremely strong, not in Golgota but to their villages of origin. Residents frequently spoke of returning to the villages where they were born so as to fulfill ceremonial obligations of various kinds and to attend events centred upon their uma lulik, with the following exchange being very typical.

Researcher: So even though you’ve lived in Dili for a long time, far away from your uma lulik, you still follow adat?

Participant: Yes, we still follow it. Like if the family halo ila [hold a traditional ceremony, for instance when a family member has died, to resolve a problem, or to make arrangements about a marriage] then we must go, or if someone in the mountains dies then we must go. If we don’t go then we must send something.

Researcher: So there is still some influence on your life?

Participant: Yes, there is because if we don’t go then they will speak badly of us and say our name in the uma lulik. We think of these things so we have to go.
For many people these visits occur a couple of times a year or only as necessary, though others visit their families and villages of origin on a far more regular basis. Either way, the connection almost always seems to be felt deeply. The argument here then, put very simply, is that the ability to maintain these connections with rural communities, integrated through a very tight conflation between the objective reality and the subjective sensibility of ‘blood ties’ and subsequent patterns of integration into customary practice, takes an intense pressure off the community of Golgota. This occurs because the membership of the community makes no real claims over the need for an origin of its members; people can come to live there more in the sense of citizens rather than as blood relations bound to the ancestral domain. Ancestral relations remain important but are fulfilled by maintaining a community at a distance, which stabilizes the face-to-face community.

In thinking on Dili more broadly, which in many respects is a community of migrants in the way Golgota is (not wholly of course, and unevenly so in terms of concentrations of population), the capital is a very different kind of social-space to the rural agricultural communities. While not entirely bereft of the practice of customary belief sets, Dili is absolutely dominated by the more abstracted layers of integration, typified firstly in religion and then secularism, manifested most evidently in turn by the Catholic Church and the state. These two come into conflict with one another in the capital—such as with the mass demonstrations by the Catholic Church against the Fretilin government in 2005—but the customary remains almost absent in terms of daily practice. However, this does not mean that the customary is not relevant; the ability to maintain a level of integration with it outside of Dili, as so many of its residents do, may provide a way for thinking of a sustainable future for the city, one based on difference and plurality rather than the typical modernist pathways of homogeneity and force.
2.4 Vancouver, Canada

Andy Scerri

Vancouver is a coastal city located at 49°15'N 123°6'W on the lower mainland of the province of British Columbia, Canada. With a population of 2.1 million, Vancouver is the largest metropolitan area in western Canada; it is also the country’s third largest metropolis, while Vancouver City (579,000) is the eighth largest.

Past and Present

In many ways, the region surrounding Canada’s westernmost major city has always existed on the edges of human society. The different peoples who occupied what is now Vancouver City traditionally relied on links to the wider world. The region was a key location in the North–South trading routes of indigenous societies for at least ten thousand years; throughout the nineteenth century Vancouver denoted one geographical extreme of the British Empire; and in the twentieth century the city was marked by its close proximity to the Pacific Ocean and Canada’s southern border with the United States. In the twenty-first century Vancouver’s geographical location within the Pacific Northwest region (which also encompasses the neighbouring city-regions of Seattle and Portland) and its proximity to North Asia both exert an important influence on city life.

The land over which the present-day city of Vancouver lies has supported human societies for over six thousand years. Prior to European settlement, it was traversed by indigenous trading networks stretching from present-day Mexico City in the south to Nunavut, the Yukon Territories and Alaska in the north. The region’s material resources long supported an economic surplus through which indigenous societies developed a vast complex of social and cultural institutions.

Fecund soil and inland waterways, a relatively mild climate and tracts of dense forest provided a home to the Cowichan, Gitksan, Haida, Kwakwaka’wakw, Nisga’a, Nuu-chah-nulth, Nuxalk, Salish, Sechelt and Tsimshian societies. These nations made use of durable and workable cedar wood for boat building and shelter, as well as large-scale sculpture and small-scale carving; and they hunted elk, beaver and wolves for fur. The natural resources of the area attracted traders from other nations on the long ocean coastline from present-day Alaska to Mexico, and from inland regions beyond the continental divide and into the Great Plains.

The abundance of resources came to the attention of European explorers in the mid-eighteenth century, relatively late in the colonial era. Initial visits in the 1740s by Russian traders, who sought to extend east business contacts held with Inuit groups in present-day Alaska, were followed soon after by Spanish colonizadores venturing north from Mexico. The Spanish set up towns on the Gulf Islands off the mainland; however, it was the British, acting on advice from Captain James Cook, who eventually established permanent settlements. The British annexed Vancouver Island in 1792, aiming to extend the fur trade deep into western Canada. In 1794, with the establishment of Fort St John on the Peace River, they took possession of the adjacent mainland.

By the 1830s and 1840s an initially disparate system of fur trading posts was brought into the orbit of the monopolistic Hudson’s Bay Company. Indigenous societies were not only drawn in the fur trade, they were also forcibly introduced to market economies, urban areas and Western cultural systems. In the late 1850s, at a time when the Californian gold rush was winding down, gold was found on the Fraser River, leading to the firm establishment of a European settlement in the area.
Vancouver, Canada, 2008. An incredible development of glass towers in the city has not been complemented by street-level enhancement in all areas.
By the late nineteenth century, gold and silver mining was carried out with abandon. Prospectors ignored land use claims by First Nations (who were not themselves involved in the rush), which further decimated indigenous populations and laid waste to vast areas of the natural environment. The indigenous societies that had peopled the area for thousands of years had by this time already suffered from communicable diseases which had been transmitted along coastal and inland fur trading routes for several decades prior.

Amid slowly declining fur trapping industries and trading networks, the gold mining industry prompted colonial officials to establish a permanent presence on the mainland in the 1860s, which was named British Columbia. Further impetus was delivered by the British settlements’ proximity to the civil war-ravaged United States. A northwesterly oriented peninsula of the Burrard Inlet, bounded by Coal Harbour to the north and False Creek to the south, was chosen as the site for a town.

Like other settlements established in this period, such as Hong Kong, San Francisco and Sydney, the present-day city of Vancouver was founded on the advice of colonial surveyors attracted by the area’s strategic position on a convoluted deep-water bay with numerous jutting headlands, backed by a hinterland of sheer hilly terrain. Originally called New Westminster, Vancouver City grew quite rapidly in the 1860s, largely due to an influx of disillusioned gold-seekers, who became more or less stranded in the area and took up residence around the sawmills and docks associated with the timber trade.

Concerned by the newly unified United States’s enthusiastically pursued credo of Manifest Destiny, the British Crown signed the British North American Act in 1867, federating the eastern Canadian colonies into the Dominion of Canada. However, British Columbia held over joining the Dominion until 1871, when a deal was struck that made the transcontinental railway’s extension to the Pacific coast a precondition for the province’s inclusion in the new federation. The railway opened the city to trade with the Great Lakes region, and so too the eastern United States, Britain and continental Europe.

Partially motivated by geopolitical concerns that the United States’ ‘robber barons’ would connect to Canadian towns close to the border and siphon off trade, Ottawa agreed to the deal and the Canadian Pacific Railway was able to open Pacific Central Station in the Downtown Eastside area of the newly incorporated, and re-named, Vancouver City in 1885. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Vancouver City had become refuge to members of First Nations displaced by these developments; Europeans who had failed to achieve a fortune on the goldfields; and a large, mostly male Chinese population who, after being employed on exploitative wages to construct the railways, were unable to afford passage back to the Middle Kingdom.

By the 1900s a large Chinatown and nearby Japantown had grown up around the Pacific Central railhead, southeast of the city centre. Social divisions between the city’s relatively affluent and WASP-ish western districts and the generally low-income and immigrant eastside remain to some extent in place today.
Amid a booming early-twentieth-century economy, labour unions became increasingly powerful in Vancouver, and were centred on the timber, fishing, railways, and shipping industries. As in other major Western cities, labour unrest was met with employer and state sponsored violence. The opiate manufacturing trade flourished quasi-legal, until criminalized in 1908. The criminalization of opiates was one consequence of federal government attention that had been directed at Vancouver following large anti-Asian riots in 1907.

A key feature of First Nations’ economic activity in the area had long been what anthropologists call ‘potlatch’. A potlatch ceremony centres on gifts of material goods made by men in high-status positions within a group, with the aim of maintaining or increasing reputation and regard and, through doing so, redistributing wealth and casting an influence on trade, economic relations and politics. Alongside the effects of disease and rampant gold-driven economic expansion, the province’s decision to outlaw potlatch ceremonies in the early twentieth century further damaged First Nations’ ability to sustain viable societies in the face of expanding European settlement. For these reasons, among others, British Columbia is today the province with the least number of formal treaties with First Nations.

At the end of the First World War, Vancouver experienced an extended economic downturn, which brought several decades of dire hardship for citizens on both east and west sides. Vancouver was largely left out of the manufacturing effort during the war years, and its economy did not recover until the 1950s. The surge in global demand for primary resources, and the federal government’s embrace of broadly redistributive policies contributed to widespread urban renewal from the 1950s. A commitment to automobilization and freeway building policies also led to the removal of much of the city’s mass public transport system.

However, these endeavors were stopped short by the combined effects of a slow-to-move federal government, which had held back on promised budget allocations, and a populace committed to civil opposition to such policies across the city in the 1960s and 1970s. In part, this civil opposition was rooted in Vancouver’s position as a countercultural mecca and, along with nearby Vancouver Island, a haven for US citizens evading the Vietnam War draft. Community organizational efforts, uniting East Vancouver’s low-income groups and left-liberal counterculturalists, successfully campaigned to halt extensive freeway plans which would have razed the Downtown Eastside area. In their place emerged redevelopments that combined some social housing with a plethora of cultural industry, arts and entertainment, and tourist amenities.

Politics

Vancouver City is an incorporated charter city within British Columbia, and for this reason is unique among the municipalities in the province. The city government was traditionally led by a coalition of conservative and liberal groups; however, the twenty-first century has seen the ascendancy of a coalition of left and green groups. The Vancouver City Council is organized around a ten-member political council, a nine-member School Board and a seven-member Parks Board, with members elected for three-year terms on a first-past-the-post basis. Historically and currently, at all levels of government, relatively affluent west Vancouverites have voted for conservative and/or liberal parties, while east Vancouverites have voted for leftist parties.
Partisan and ideological issues aside, protection of urban parks, development of an integrated public transport system, opposition to US-style freeway building projects, a harm reduction approach to illegal drug use, and concerns for community-based localism have broad support in the city. Vancouver is represented by eleven members of the Legislative Assembly in the BC House, and by five members of parliament in the Canadian Lower House, the House of Commons.

Culture

Vancouver has a large and vibrant artistic culture, bolstered by the frequent presence of Hollywood film crews. Multiculturalism is celebrated in numerous community festivals in the spring and summer. In winter, activity shifts to the ski slopes that surround the city. Relatively strict licensing laws have until recently rendered Vancouver’s nightlife something of a cultural desert. Even though liberalization in this area has been implemented, the city continues to maintain its long held image as a mellow and ‘liveable’ town—a good place for raising a family—rather than a party town. Efforts to implement an eco-density approach to urban planning mean the Downtown and Yaletown areas are very busy with pedestrian traffic during long spring and summer days.

Vancouver is a multicultural city, with 51 per cent of the population described as ‘visible minorities’. Aside from First Nations communities and the descendants of nineteenth-century British, German, Chinese, Italian and Scandinavian immigrants, the city is home to large Hong Kong Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Punjabi, Taiwanese and Vietnamese communities.

Economics

Vancouver is situated at the western terminus of Canada’s transcontinental highway and rail routes, and is thus one of Canada’s largest industrial centres. The Port of Vancouver is Canada’s largest port, handling more than CDN$75 billion worth of trade annually. Port activities are said to generate an annual $10.5 billion contribution to GDP. The key industries for the city and hinterland are the forest products and primary resource extraction industries. Vancouver is also an increasingly important centre for software biotechnology development and has a vibrant film industry, which makes it part of the greater West Coast–Pacific Northwest region that spans San Francisco, Portland and Seattle.

International and domestic tourism are major contributors to the metro-regional economy. Over a million people are estimated to pass through Vancouver on cruise ships each summer. However, the cruise ship industry faces competition from similar ports in Seattle and, further north, in Prince Rupert, BC.

Although famously one of the world’s most liveable cities, Vancouver is also one of the world’s least affordable. Economic growth in Vancouver, like the rest of the country, remained relatively stable throughout the global financial crisis. British Columbia has implemented a relatively progressive combined carbon tax-cap and trade regime, with the aim of leading the shift to a green economy in North America.
Ecology

The area now covered by Vancouver was once temperate rainforest. Tree cover was for the most part coniferous, and comprised Douglas (or Oregon) fir, western red (cedar) and western hemlock. The terrain was swampy and often not traversable. It was in part the presence of large trees in what is now the Gastown and Downtown Eastside that led to the establishment of a settlement on that particular site. Spring and summer in Vancouver are typically dry and sunny, while winter and autumn are cold, windy and wet.

Efforts to incorporate eco-density town planning have meant that Downtown Vancouver is a relatively green urban centre. Stanley Park to the northwest, the mountains above North Vancouver, and the campuses of UBC to the west and SFU to the east provide large open spaces on the metro-regions’ fringes.

This said, Vancouver’s reputation as one of the world’s most liveable cities is also partly built upon City Hall’s efforts to measure, assess and set targets for monitoring progress towards sustainable development objectives. The 2009/10 Greenest City Action Plan establishes ten such goals in relation to issues such as air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and climate change effects, water quality and supply, land use, transportation, housing, jobs, health care and waste treatment.

Vancouver in the Twenty-First Century

The World Expo 1986 was a watershed moment in the emergence of what is now known in urban planning as ‘Vancouverism’. Vancouverism has become a byword for commerce-driven gentrification emphasizing high-density living and proximity to work, shopping and leisure amenities. While widely touted as a success, Expo ’86 left the city with a large debt. This combined with deinstitutionalization of psychiatric patients, divested responsibility for social housing by federal and provincial tiers of government, and an influx of relatively cheap street drugs has resulted in a severe housing and homelessness problem that continues to this day. While homelessness and drugs remain visible problems in Vancouver, Vancouverites continue to hold the opinion that the criminalization and zero-tolerance approaches used by their US neighbours simply do not work.

By contrast, coinciding with citywide development aspirations in the 1990s, an influx of Hong Kong and to a lesser extent Taiwanese Chinese populations have led to heavy investment in urban residential tower developments, notably in the Yaletown precinct. This area in particular has more or less followed the standard path to globalism-era gentrification: from underclass squalor in the 1970s to student and welfare-tourist bohemia in the 1980s, intello-artistic loft development in the 1990s, followed by condominium-Manhattanization into the 2000s.

Many of the problems faced by Vancouver can be seen as problems of modernization and globalization. However, the specifics of space and place, sociality and cultural forms, mean that the society that is Vancouver deals with these in particular ways. The Winter Olympics, hosted by Vancouver in 2010, were held up by some as a chance for the city to more firmly fix its place in globalizing urban society as a city that is both liveable and sustainable for all residents. The products of that event are yet to be fully assessed.
Colombo and Hambantota, Sri Lanka

Colombo is the capital city of Sri Lanka and the nation’s largest urban centre, with a population of about 750,000. However, it is largely the product of colonial rule, since it only became the pre-eminent city after Britain became the first colonial power to take control of the whole island in 1815. Before then, the political capital for the majority Sinhalese population had shifted from one location to another—from Anuradhapura in the north to Kurunegala (near Kandy) and Kotte (near Colombo)—while Jaffna became the pre-eminent centre for the Tamil population clustered primarily in the north and east. Cities such as Kandy, Jaffna and Galle were important regional centres of greater significance than Colombo. Before the British came, neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch were able to overturn the rule of the Kandy kings in the central highlands, but the British managed to reach an accommodation with them, partly because they established their administrative centre at Colombo.

Hambantota, on the southwest corner of Sri Lanka, is interesting for three main reasons. It was located on the ‘Silk Road of the Sea’, receiving regular visits by Chinese, Malayan and Arab trading vessels. Partly as a result of this history of trade, urban Hambantota—as distinct from the Hambantota District—is unusual in Sri Lanka in that it has a population that is fairly evenly divided between Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil-speaking Muslims. Thirdly, it was severely affected by the 2004 tsunami disaster, and the current president of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapakse—who was prime minister at the time of the tsunami—reacted to the disaster by fast-forwarding plans to make Hambantota a ‘second city’ in Sri Lanka. In the wake of the tsunami a whole ‘new town’ was established in an area adjacent to the old town, and in 2008 the Chinese government initiated the construction of a major new container shipping harbour that will rival Colombo harbour in capacity. There are also plans to build Sri Lanka’s second international airport at a location near Hambantota.

Like Colombo before it, Hambantota is being constructed artificially as a second—alongside Kandy, Galle and Jaffna—and this raises new challenges for a town that has prided itself on the peaceful coexistence of roughly equal Sinhalese and Muslim communities. Researchers in the Global Cities Institute at RMIT have already completed a study of tsunami recovery efforts in Hambantota, which has led to a strong research collaboration with the Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce and several community-based organizations.
A Kandian wedding, Galle Face Hotel, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2010. In modern Sri Lanka there has been a significant neo-traditional revival, which ranges from wedding attire to the way politicians legitimize themselves.
Colombo

Past and present

The growth of Colombo began with the areas surrounding the Portuguese fort, in an area that is now popularly known as Pettah. The original fort was surrounded by high walls, but these were removed when the Dutch displaced the Portuguese. When the British subsequently took over from the Dutch they set up administrative offices, official residences and large business houses in the area that is simply called Fort, while small businesses and low-income residential quarters for Sri Lankan workers spread southeast into the Pettah district. Increasing population and social differentiation led to the outward expansion of the city following a particular spatial pattern that has not changed very much, even in more recent decades.

Colombo has a natural harbour that was used by Arab and Indian traders long before the Europeans first reached the island. The Portuguese built a fort adjacent to the harbour, which was eventually taken over by the Dutch and then the British. The Fort area subsequently emerged as the centre of colonial political and economic rule. However, by the time the British were in control, the population of Colombo was still only about 20,000. There were better natural harbours at Galle, Hambantota and Trincomalee, with both Galle and Hambantota located on the Silk Road of the Sea. However, Colombo was better placed to become an administrative centre for the island as a whole; when the British built a much bigger artificial harbour at Colombo in 1885, the region quickly overtook Galle as the centre for international trade.

For a long time the harbour was the centre of economic activity in Colombo. A steady growth in international trade—built, in turn, on Sri Lanka’s plantation economy—led to the emergence of many business activities in areas related to shipping, packaging, transport and trade, which created many employment opportunities for a range of professions and trades. Most of the activities in and around the harbour were labour intensive and therefore involved the employment of thousands of workers who congregated in low-income settlements in the vicinity of the harbour. By the end of the eighteenth century the population had grown to more than 150,000.

With increasing population density in the vicinity of the harbour and to its north, south and southeast, more affluent people drifted further south of the city centre to build spacious residences along and near the road heading south towards Galle. The grand colonial Galle Face Hotel, near the beginning of Galle Road, eventually became almost a gateway into the city’s more affluent area.
After Sri Lanka won its independence from Britain in 1947, plans were put in place to move the parliament out of the old colonial city. Eventually the new Parliament House was built in an emerging southeastern suburb called Sri Jayewardenepura, near the old site of the Kotte kingdom that was operating when the Portuguese first arrived. Indeed folklore suggests that when the Portuguese first arrived with their gunboats at the harbour where Colombo is located they asked locals to take them to their king and the wily locals took them on a long, circuitous journey to disguise the fact that Kotte was actually quite nearby. From this legend comes a common saying—translated as ‘like taking the Portuguese to Kotte’—which is used to suggest that someone is deliberately misleading others. Unfortunately for Kotte, the Portuguese had a habit of firing one of their ship canons at a particular time of each day and so the plot to confuse the distance to Kotte was foiled. The relocation of parliament to a more suburban setting has led to the relocation of associated administrative services to that area as well. Yet many government offices and official residences—including the ‘Temple Trees’ residence used by the Sri Lankan president—are located in or near the old centre, and the old CBD remains the commercial and business centre for the country as a whole. All the major businesses and banks have their headquarters in old heart of Colombo.

Demography and Place

Although Colombo has emerged as the largest urban centre in Sri Lanka—both before and after independence—its growth has not paralleled most of the large metropolises in the developing world. Urbanization in the country has not been rapid, in large part because of social and economic policies adopted by post-independence governments, which favoured rural development. The post-independence establishment of new peasant settlements in the north-central and eastern regions of the country reduced population pressure in the more densely populated south, southwestern and central regions. Most of the import–export institutions and industries established after the 1950s were located in rural areas, away from Colombo. Moreover, investments in rural infrastructure—such as roads, schools and health centres—led to an improvement in quality of life in rural areas, which no doubt deterred many people from moving into Colombo.
Despite its relatively slow growth—that is, until the last few decades—Colombo’s pattern of development is in other ways similar to many cities in the developing world. Large private firms and state institutions accommodated only a small proportion of the city’s labour force, with many people compelled to engage in informal sector activities, such as retail trade, personal services and small industries. While the owners of large business enterprises and the higher paid employees resided in well-developed areas of the city, informal-sector activists and lower-paid employees of formal-sector establishments lived in disadvantaged areas characterized by poor housing and less developed urban infrastructure.

The city landscape did not change greatly in the period from the 1950s until the late 1970s. The implementation of a package of neo-liberal economic reforms from 1977 onwards resulted in much more rapid changes; Colombo gained enormous significance not only as a centre of economic activity but also as the most important focal point in the changing social and cultural landscape of the country.

Urbanization over the past few decades has led to the rapid expansion of population in the Colombo metropolitan region, largely resulting from migration from rural areas into the city. On the other hand, there is a growing number of people who reside outside the city and commute from their residences to Colombo on a daily basis. This includes pavement hawkers, bankers, office workers and construction workers. Many children attending Colombo schools and other educational institutions do the same. Furthermore, a large number travel to Colombo to make use of health and other services available in the city. It has been estimated that the daytime population in Colombo is more than twice the number of permanent residents. This becomes clear on public holidays, when the streets and pavements are relatively empty.

Economics

Following the 1977 economic reforms, liberalization of the economy led to an expansion of the private sector at the expense of the state sector. Increasing import–export trade resulted in a rapid growth in Colombo-based private enterprises in such diverse areas as shipping, banking, insurance, retail and wholesale trade, construction and telecommunication. The liberalized economic environment encouraged foreign investment in labour-intensive industries in close proximity to Colombo. An expanding new middle class created a demand for private health and education services; the result was the emergence of well-equipped private hospitals and international schools in the city of Colombo. Increasing demand for modern accommodation encouraged private real estate investments in residential areas within the city.
New income opportunities attracted people of all walks of life to Colombo. Affluent people from all parts of the country moved into the city to take advantage of new income earning opportunities as well as better education and health services; poorer people also migrated in search of new and better livelihood opportunities. The latter usually moved into already congested low-income settlements.

The gap between the affluent part of the city and the more congested low-income settlements has widened over the last three decades. This becomes quite obvious if one travels from the western end of the city across to the north and the northeast: large commercial buildings, luxury housing complexes, shopping malls and so forth are all located in the western suburbs. The settlements in the eastern half of the city display a more mixed character with a multitude of small businesses, low-income housing, and poorer social infrastructure. Roads and settlements here are more crowded, with many more informal roadside business enterprises.

Culture

Colombo continues to be home to the most important cultural and educational institutions and best-equipped schools and training institutions in the country. Almost all the media institutions, both print and electronic, are located in the city, as are most of the leading artists in the country. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Colombo is the cultural capital of Sri Lanka. It is significant too that much of the popular culture, which is increasingly global in character today, radiates from Colombo. Modern consumer culture, which drives many economies around the world today, spreads from Colombo to peripheral areas in the rest of Sri Lanka.

A remarkable feature of Colombo is its multicultural character. This is evident not only from the ethno-cultural diversity of the population, but also from many cultural symbols that are spread across the Colombo landscape. The most prominent among these are religious monuments representing diverse faiths; Buddhist temples, Hindu Kovils, Muslim mosques and churches of various Christian denominations are located in all areas of the city. These places of worship become highly visible on days when major religious festivals are celebrated in the country.

The multicultural character of the city is by no means a recent development, given Colombo’s long-standing significance in terms of politics, public administration, business, education and popular culture. It has attracted people of diverse cultural backgrounds as well as social classes, so the city is characterized by great social inequality as well as cultural diversity. In spite of ethnic violence that raged in the country over the last three decades, Colombo’s multi-ethnic character has become even more pronounced today. This is perhaps due to the sense of security that minorities feel in a large metropolis. In fact, minority ethnic groups constitute a large majority of the population living within the administrative boundaries of the city.
Sinhalese, who comprise about 75 per cent of the population in Sri Lanka as a whole, accounted for about 41 per cent of the population in Colombo at the time of the 2001 national census. Tamils and Moors were 28.9 per cent and 23.8 per cent of the city population respectively. The rest belonged to other minority ethnic groups such as Malays and ‘Burghers’ (who have mixed Sri Lankan and European heritage).

Above all, Colombo is a city characterized by great social and economic inequality, as it has been for over one hundred years. Even with the expansion of the city’s population over the last fifty years or so, social disparities have not decreased. In fact, over 50 per cent of the city population is still living in disadvantaged settlements, popularly known as slums and shanties. This is in spite of major efforts in the 1980s by President Ranasinghe Premadasa’s government to upgrade housing and urban services in the disadvantaged areas in the city. Although improvements have been made to some individual households, the wider environment remains largely neglected and polluted due to poor drainage, inadequate waste disposal and general congestion.

Colombo will continue to be the pre-eminent urban centre in Sri Lanka for the foreseeable future, for two main reasons. Firstly, more than 50 per cent of the country’s GDP is concentrated in the western region in which the capital is situated. Secondly, there is not even a suggestion in policy circles that any other city in the country should take away Colombo’s key functions in any significant way. Managing the city’s multitude of issues—namely poverty, inequality, health and environmental factors—will therefore remain a major challenge for political leaders as well as city planners. This presents a good challenge for social scientists with a flair for social and urban planning.

Hambantota

It is difficult to predict how plans for the rapid urbanization of Hambantota will work out over the long term. In the past, the community has relied heavily on fishing and the salt industry, which reaps a rich harvest in a large shallow coastal lagoon; most locals welcome the fact that new investments in the district are likely to create other forms of employment. A new container ship harbour is due for completion in 2012, and efforts are being made to boost tourism to the area, which hosts a range of attractive national parks and one of the most significant temples in the country, at Kataragama. Yet the rapid pace of development has already caused heartache and hardship for some sections of the community. For example, when work began rather suddenly on...
the construction of the new harbour, a large ‘harbour zone’ was declared and many houses were knocked down in what the locals began to call the ‘harbour tsunami’. Furthermore, dodol traders, who were renowned nationally for selling the Malay sweet dodol at roadside stalls near the entrance to Hambantota, were suddenly put out of business when the old access road was cut by the harbour project. Fishermen who once lived in close proximity to the fishing harbour have now been relocated into the more distant ‘new town’, making it harder for them to find work on the fishing boats. The area adjacent to the harbour is being cleared to create a new ‘beach park’ that is hoped will make the town more attractive to domestic and international tourists.

As an ancient trading port, Hambantota has a fascinating history. Most people in the town can speak at least two languages and some sections of the Muslim community can speak four—Tamil, Sinhalese, Malay and English. In the national census of 2001 there were 5137 Malays and 2830 Moors living in urban Hambantota and almost 45% of the population listed their religion as Islamic. Just over 50% per cent listed their religion as Buddhist. The town has long prided itself on peaceful coexistence between the ethnic/religious communities and when authorities ruled that a popular mosque that had been destroyed in the tsunami could not be rebuilt in the same location, the whole community—Muslim and Sinhalese alike—rallied to rebuild it on the existing site, which had been given to the Muslim community by the British in 1904. In the period from 1908 to 1911, the leading British official in Hambantota was Leonard Wolf, who later married the renowned English writer Virginia Wolf; he wrote an incisive novel about life in the region, A Village in the Jungle, that is still popular with Sri Lankan readers. Wolf once lived in the British enclave, built on a high ridge overlooking the beautiful harbour and bay, which might well become a popular destination for international tourists.

Hambantota is certainly well located to become a major regional centre, a connected to major international shipping routes. How the community handles the transition from town to city, in a process largely directed from Colombo, remains to be seen.1

Los Angeles looms large in the global imagination. A conglomeration of urban sprawl on the west coast of the United States and the southern coast of the state of California, the city represents an exemplary case of Fordist industrial development and, more recently, post-Fordist urban social transformation. It is one of the world’s most substantial economic metropolises and ranks highly on various corporate and scholarly registers of ‘global city’ status. Home to the Hollywood motion picture industry, the city has become a globalized ‘idea’ as much as a living place, transferred through images and stereotypes both utopian and dystopian in character. From its founding as a Spanish mission in the late eighteenth century, the greater Los Angeles area is now home to nearly eighteen million people. The city has been the site of tremendous industrial innovation in aerospace, technology, petroleum and tourism; and extraordinary demographic transition, as different waves of immigrants have provided the labour to drive industrial expansion. Rapid transformation has made the city famous for its urban extremes. A world centre of business, trade, entertainment, media and education, the city is also characterized by stark inequalities which are geographically and racially concentrated.

Past and Present

First European contact with the area of present-day Los Angeles was made in 1542. The area of southern California was claimed for the Spanish Empire by Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, though a settlement was not established at this time. In the 1770s Spanish missions were established to Christianize the Tongva and Chumash people who lived in the area of southern California prior to colonization. Their populations were drastically reduced in the following decades through conflict and disease. In 1777 the new Governor of California, Felipe de Neve, recommended to the Viceroy of New Spain that the site of Los Angeles be developed into a ‘pueblo’. The town was founded on 1781 and settled by a small group of Indian, Spanish and African ancestry who shared a Hispanic culture. In 1821, with a population of around 650, Los Angeles became a part of Mexico, which had won independence from Spain, and the city became California’s regional capital, attracting mainly white settlers. In 1848, at the end of Mexican–American war, Los Angeles and present-day southwest California was purchased as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and became part of US territory. The treaty guaranteed the rights of Mexicans within the ceded territory but most lost their property and became a segregated and marginalized working class. Anglos dominated the area numerically, economically and politically.
Los Angeles experienced dramatic industrial and population growth over the long twentieth century, aided by the arrival of the railroad in 1876 and the discovery of oil in 1892. By 1923 Los Angeles produced one-quarter of the world’s petroleum. By 1900 the population had grown to 102,000; in 1913 completion of the Los Angeles aqueduct provided a secure water supply for continuing urban growth. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Los Angeles area was constituted by a network of separate cities linked by rail. In the 1920s the motion picture and aviation industries developed, somewhat softening the impact of the Great Depression. Before and after the Second World War, booming industries attracted workers to the area from elsewhere in the United States, including many African Americans, and the suburbs expanded northward into the San Fernando Valley. The rise of a car culture, well in advance of other US cities, and an extensive freeway system filled in the gaps between commuter towns in the post-war decades, generating the suburban expanse that is now the greater Los Angeles area. The regional area tripled in size between 1940 and 1970, reaching ten million residents.

In the late twentieth century the Los Angeles economy was increasingly internationalized. By the 1990s the economy had shifted to a two-tier post-Fordist model with a thriving business and financial sector at one extreme, and growth in low-skilled, low-wage service and hospitality sectors at the other. Secure manufacturing jobs were rapidly shifted offshore and the end of the Cold War saw drastic reductions in defence industry spending in the region that had also provided middle-class employment in the post-war years. The result was a declining middle class and an increasingly polarized labour market with large numbers of working poor.

Economic transition has intersected with dramatic demographic changes. From the 1960s Los Angeles experienced heavy immigration. The foreign-born proportion of the population grew from 8 per cent in 1960 to 38 per cent in 1992. The majority of migrants came from Mexico and Latin America. However, Asian migration was also strong from the 1970s, growing from a base of around 250,000 to 1.3 million in 1990 and including Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Koreans and Asian Indians. The demographic changes were compounded by ‘white flight’ not only from the central and eastern Los Angeles areas into surrounding suburbs, but also from the entire metro area into neighbouring states, leaving a dilapidated downtown urban core with associated social problems and vast suburban areas, especially in the south and the east, of majority-minority populations.

Urban Environment

Los Angeles is located in the southwest of the United States and North American land mass, at 34°3'N, 118°14'W. It has a dry-summer subtropical climate with an average of 320 days of sunshine per year. An average 381 mm of rain falls per year, mainly between November and April. It is located on an earthquake belt (the Pacific Ring of Fire) which produces about 10,000 earthquakes each year, and on the major San Andreas Fault. Major quakes rocked the Los Angeles area in 1993, 1987 and 1994, but most quakes are low intensity.
As the region is characterized by extensive and dense urban sprawl and divided by numerous metropolitan and county borders, it is hard to define precisely where Los Angeles starts and stops. The City of LA is a municipality with a population of 3.8 million and an area of 1215 square kilometres. It lies primarily in a coastal basin, connected to the port area in the San Pedro Bay some 32 kilometres south of the downtown area and extending into the San Fernando Valley in the northwest. In population terms, it is the largest municipality in the state of California and the second largest in the United States. The City lies within LA County, a collection of several municipalities and unincorporated zones, with a total population of 9.8 million and an area of 10,518 square kilometres. The County is the most heavily populated in the United States (2344 persons per square mile). The southern part of the County is the most heavily urbanized and the vast majority of the population lives along the Southern California coastline and the inland basins and valleys. The northern half is a large expanse of less populated desert including the Santa Clarita Valley and the Antelope Valley. In between the north and south lie the San Gabriel Mountains and the Angeles National Forest. The Los Angeles River flows southeast from the San Fernando Valley, through LA County, to its mouth in Long Beach.

The Los Angeles Metropolitan area is defined by the US Census Bureau as the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana metropolitan area and consists of LA and Orange Counties, spread over coastal Southern California. With a population of 12.9 million, it is the world’s fourteenth largest metropolitan area. Finally, the greater Los Angeles Area (Los Angeles-Long Beach-Riverside Combined Statistical Area) includes LA, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties. The area includes a population of 17.8 million and a total area of 87,945 square kilometres. More than half of this area, however, is the sparsely populated eastern areas of Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Much of the open space in the Los Angeles region is mandated to never be developed such that density continues to increase and urban sprawl on the periphery of the area continues to grow. In reality, the area of Los Angeles stretches from Santa Clarita in the north to San Diego in the south in one continuous urban belt.

Transport

Traffic passing through the port area of LA-Long Beach Harbour and LAX (the fifth busiest port and sixth busiest airport in the world) makes Los Angeles a central axis of Pacific Rim trade and transit. Los Angeles is famous for a vast freeway and suburban street network that suffers from severe traffic congestion, despite ongoing investment in mass transit systems. The congestion problem arises on account of Los Angeles’ specific urban geography. Major cultural, commercial, residential, political, industrial and institutional resources are not concentrated in the downtown area but dispersed geographically, along with employment. High regional population density and dispersed commercial centres makes it more challenging to build a high speed transit system with enough traffic on any particular line. Cheap and available parking compounds congestion, along with significant levels of freight traffic. Major public transport includes a rapid bus system and a recently built subway and light rail—though the latter cover only a relatively small portion of the urban area. The LA County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) operates the bus service, light rail and subway, and numerous cities operate their own bus companies and shuttle lines.

Housing

Los Angeles experienced a housing induced boom some years ago, but also a long-term affordable housing crisis. Private family home ownership remains the cultural ideal and stand-alone dwellings the overwhelmingly dominant type of housing. Yet over half of LA County residents and nearly two-thirds of LA City residents live in rental accommodation and in 2005 City renters paid more of their income for rent than at any time in the past twenty-five years, as incomes declined and rents increased. In 2006, one in five of LA County’s owner households spent at least half of their incomes on housing and nearly three out of ten renters spent at least half of their incomes on rent. The housing crisis has been exacerbated by redevelopment and gentrification over the last two decades in central parts of Los Angeles. More recently, housing stress has intensified due to the global financial crisis, with the greater Los Angeles region seeing declining home prices and skyrocketing foreclosures. The geography of foreclosures reflects socio-economic patterns, with higher numbers in poorer areas such as South LA. While this should make housing more affordable, frozen credit markets, falling salaries and wages and job losses mean housing loans are far more difficult to obtain. Vacancy rates are growing but rents remain high.

Los Angeles also faces a significant problem with homelessness. Some 43,000 persons in LA County were homeless in 2009 and two-thirds of these were unsheltered. Nearly half the homeless (47 per cent) are African American and 29 per cent are Latino. The majority (60 per cent) are adult males and 8 per cent are children. Chronic homelessness is concentrated in central and South LA. In 2008, LA City Council released a housing plan with the intention to spend some five billion dollars and double the amount of affordable housing built in the City and to mandate mixed housing developments. However, funding shortfalls in the wake of financial crisis have stalled many of these plans.

Culture

Migration

Los Angeles has undergone dramatic demographic change in recent decades, with major increases in Latino and Asian migration. Some 36 per cent of the population and half the workforce are foreign born. 54 per cent of LA County residents speak a language other than English at home and one-third of adults are English language learners. In 2008 47.7 per cent of residents in LA County were of Latino origin, 28.9 percent were white non-Hispanic, 13.2 per cent were Asian, 9.4 per cent were African American, 1 per cent were American Indian and Alaska Native persons, and 0.3 per cent were native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. While the largest proportion of migrants are from Mexico, their proportional presence is decreasing (36.3 per cent of those who migrated within the last ten years in 2005/6). Distinct cultural

5 US Census Bureau, <www.census.gov>; M. Pastor and R. Ortiz, Immigrant Integration in Los Angeles: Strategic Directions for Funders, Program for Environmental and Regional Equity and Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California, January 2009.
neighbourhoods have grown up in recent decades including Chinatown, Koreatown, Little Tokyo, Filipinotown, Little Armenia, Little Ethiopia, Tehrangeles, and Thai Town and vast sections of the city, especially East LA, have a distinctly Latino-dominated cultural presence.

New arrivals have traditionally been drawn to the downtown, central and East LA districts, dramatically transforming the urban environment from its 80 per cent non-Hispanic white population in 1960. In the last three decades the immigrant population has spread in all directions often in line with upward economic mobility. Racial demographics in LA County are now virtually identical to those of LA City, flattening out what were white majorities in the 1980s. There are also major demographic changes underway in other parts of the greater Los Angeles region. Some smaller cities within the region have been unprepared for these demographic shifts and have struggled to provide adequate services and to engage new residents in civic processes.6

LA County is also home to an estimated one million undocumented migrants, predominantly Mexican and Central American, 700,000 of whom are estimated to be working on any particular day. Some 50 per cent have been resident for ten years or more, contributing to a pattern of undocumented settlement that differs from other metropolitan centres in the United States. An estimated 15 per cent of children in LA County have a parent with unresolved status issues. Los Angeles has been the metropolitan focus of large-scale mobilizations across the United States calling for legalization of the undocumented population, which peaked in mass demonstrations in 2006. While the issue remains controversial in the greater Los Angeles region, significant migrant and business lobbies within LA City, along with the Council itself, support the legalization agenda, oppose immigration workplace raids and view undocumented residents within the scope of the area’s economic development.7

Educational Attainment

In LA County 69.9 per cent of persons over twenty-five are high school graduates (well below the national figure of 80.4 per cent) and 24.9 per cent have a bachelor degree or higher. Schooling is governed within the scope of special purpose districts which differ from municipalities and counties and are governed by boards of directors. There are eighty public school districts within LA County; however, the Los Angeles Unified School District covers most of the City of LA and several surrounding communities. It is known for its under-funded, overcrowded, poorly maintained and poor performing school campuses. Close to 40 per cent of LA school students are English language learners. Yet schools have been slow to adapt teaching and learning strategies to account for the city’s demographic transformation. Reform within the school system is a major priority of the LA City Mayor’s current second term agenda.

Los Angeles is home to three public universities: California State University, LA; California State University, Northridge; and University of California, LA; and to numerous private colleges offering specialized training such as the Colburn School of Music, Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandizing, the Otis College of Art and Design, and the Southern California Institute of Architecture.

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7 Pastor and Ortiz, Immigrant Integration in Los Angeles.
Healthcare

Los Angeles is home to some of the best healthcare facilities and professionals and medical schools in the United States, but also to spiralling demand and decreasing resources to meet healthcare needs of struggling communities within the city. Growing demands on healthcare are caused by an ageing population, increasing rates of obesity, substance abuse, violence and environmental factors. There is a chronic shortage of primary care physicians and nurses and uneven geographic distribution, with lower income communities facing lower overall ratios of healthcare professionals to residents and long wait times for essential treatments. In the last twelve years, thirty-three hospitals have closed with a significant loss of acute care hospital beds.

Health and access to healthcare differ according to racial group and geography. Chronic health problems such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes are increasing in general, but disease and mortality rates are higher among African Americans and Latinos and, in turn, within centrally located (LA City) neighbourhoods. More than 38 per cent of all adults in South LA and other parts of the city have difficulty obtaining needed healthcare. In 2009, over 1.6 million adults in LA County (22 per cent of the working adult population) were uninsured; so too were nearly 190,000 children (7 per cent). Part of the reason for lack of insurance is unemployment and a decline in the number of workplaces offering health insurance due to higher premium costs. For many people, health insurance is too expensive to afford on their own, and increasing numbers have difficulty accessing insurance due to pre-existing conditions.8

Public health insurance programs provide subsidized insurance for low and moderate income residents. The largest such scheme (Medi-Cal) covers 800,000 people in the City of LA. The County healthcare system also services primarily uninsured people. Community health centers provide low cost care to low-income communities, especially uninsured, migrant and homeless populations. Public emergency rooms are accessible to all residents and often pick up the slack from non-availability of earlier medical interventions. This trend means health problems often become critical due to a lack of early intervention, and leads to overcrowded emergency rooms and delayed access for patients in life threatening conditions. State budget deficits are putting increasing pressure on all of these services. In general Los Angeles faces significant challenges to its healthcare in future years due to the effects of financial crises, unemployment rates and squeezed resources. However, recent federal healthcare reforms will provide relief for some people previously unable to access insurance.

Celebration, Events, Sports

Los Angeles is famous for Hollywood and the annual Academy Awards. The city hosts an additional fifty-four film festivals each year. It has more museums per capita than any other city in the world (841 museums and art galleries in LA County), with major cultural assets including the Getty Museums, the County Museum of Art and the Museum of Contemporary Art. Major regular events include the annual Rose Parade in Pasadena, the LA County Fair in Pomona and the Day of the Dead Parade. The city has a prominent sports culture. It is home to the LA Dodgers (Major League Baseball), LA Kings (National Hockey League), LA Clippers and LA Lakers (National Basketball Association), LA D-Fenders (NBA development team owned by the LA Lakers), LA Sparks (Women’s National Basketball Association), and LA Galaxy and Club Deportivo Chivas (USA Major League Soccer). Los Angeles has several major sports venues including the Staples Center (sports and entertainment complex), which also hosts the Grammy Awards and is the home ground for a number of the city’s leading sports teams. Los Angeles hosted the Summer Olympic Games in 1932 and 1984. It has hosted two Superbowls and the Soccer International World Cup in 1994.

Politics

Los Angeles is governed within a multi-layered democratic system of federal, state, county and city jurisdictions. The greater Los Angeles region encompasses five counties and over 160 municipalities, chartered by the state of California and responsible for areas such as urban planning, economic development, police, public works, parks and recreation, transport and housing. Utilities, telecommunications and water (essential services) are privately owned and operated but regulated at state (Californian) level. The City of LA is by far the biggest and most influential municipality in the LA region. It is governed by an elected mayor-council system with fifteen city council districts and members representing around 270,000 citizens each. It is generally recognized as a strong council/weak mayor structure. Over recent years the City has developed a strong labour movement and an increasingly liberal political establishment with a high profile Latino and labour-background mayor, Antonio Villaraigosa, elected in 2005 and recently installed for a second term.

Citizen Participation

Voting in the United States for federal, state and local elections is voluntary. In contrast to high turnouts at the federal level in the 2009 election, recent Californian and LA City elections have seen record low turnouts (around 30 per cent of registered voters). Declining participation can partially be explained by the relative frequency of elections at different scales, and also by voter disenchantment in the wake of home foreclosures and job losses affecting large numbers of Angelinos and Californians. Politicians and elected officials in California and Los Angeles have some of the lowest approval ratings on record.9

Immigration trends raise serious questions about resident participation in politics. In the City of LA and several other cities within the Los Angeles region, non-citizens make up more than 30 per cent of the voting-age population. At the same time, however, the relative stability of the migrant community presents new opportunities for migrant civic integration: the non-citizen population is falling through increased rates of naturalization; the number of new immigrants (migrating within the last ten years) is declining and the size of the undocumented population is stable or falling, after growing for much of the 2000s.10

10 California Immigrant Policy Center, Looking Forward: Immigrant Contributions to the Golden State, Sacramento, 2010; Pastor and Ortiz, Immigrant Integration in Los Angeles.
Recent innovations in community participation have had limited success. In 2002, LA City Council established a neighbourhood council system, designed as deliberative bodies linking neighbourhoods directly with council. Anyone who lives, works or owns property in a neighbourhood can vote for members of the council’s governing body—opening the door to non-citizen and undocumented participation. However, funding for the council system has been limited at best, token at worst, and will continue to suffer under the effects of budget deficits.

Los Angeles is home to vast civil society groups and networks. In 2008 nearly 40,000 registered nonprofit and community organizations operated in LA County. However, growth in this sector has slowed since 2003 with a gradual erosion of resources and expenditure available to it. The distribution of non-profit services is also geographically and demographically uneven. More affluent areas of the County receive more non-profit resources per capita while the poorest regions receive the lowest level of resources in key areas.¹¹

The major daily newspaper is the Los Angeles Times. La Opinión is the major Spanish language paper. A number of smaller regional newspapers, alternative weeklies and magazines operate. Many local periodicals serve immigrant communities in their own languages including Armenian, Korean, Persian, Russian, Chinese and Japanese. Some cities within the LA area have their own daily newspapers. Major network affiliated TV stations are ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, The CW, MyNetwork TV and i. There are also three public service broadcasting stations and several Spanish language TV stations. Several independent TV stations also operate.

Tensions and Conflicts

Los Angeles is home to ongoing tensions surrounding demographic and economic transformation. In recent decades, such changes have resulting in geographically and racially uneven concentrations of poverty, crime and disadvantage. These trends are related to the decline of manufacturing from the 1970s, an industry which had sustained an African-American middle class; the rise of the low wage service sector and the working poor; and the reduction of gainful employment in the central City area, linked to limited access to transportation. In particular, South LA has been characterized for several decades by patterns of racial segregation leading to an African-American urban underclass, trapped in cycles of unemployment and welfare dependency, with major skills deficits and high rates of crime. In the 1980s and 1990s LA City suffered from increasing gang warfare, drug trade and police corruption.

Tensions reached a climax in 1992 following the acquittal of four Los Angeles Police Department officers for the beating of African-American Rodney King, captured on film. The acquittal sparked riots predominantly focused in south and central Los Angeles as anger about institutionalized racism was transferred into tensions between the African-American and Korean communities living and working in the area. Some sixty people were killed in relation to the riots, 850 families were made homeless and three hundred stores in Koreatown alone were set on fire or looted. Inquiries into the incident exposed the failure of police command to rein in a culture of racism and excessive use of force. In 1996, two sheriff’s deputies from the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department were caught on videotape beating a male and female suspected of being undocumented immigrants. The incident followed rising numbers of complaints about police treatment of Latino and other immigrant groups. Such incidents drew attention to the lack of racial diversity within the police force and the failure of public institutions in general to reflect and adapt to the changing demographics of the Los Angeles region.

Since 1992, City leadership has undergone a dramatic shift more representative of City demographics. However, racial and geographical inequalities continue to blight the city. While demographics have changed in South LA (now 62 per cent Latino and only 29 per cent African American) low socio-economic status of residents continues to be related to poor educational attainment and high unemployment. In 2004, 33 per cent of private sector workers in South LA earned less than $14,400 a year, compared with 27 per cent in LA County. Half as many residents in South LA as in LA County earned more than $40,800 annually. Property crime in South LA is similar to that across the County but violent crime is twice as high, with young black and Latino males far more likely to be affected. Longitudinal survey data reveals a growing number of Los Angeles citizens felt as pessimistic about race relations in 2007 as they did five years after the riots.

LA City has experienced a significant decline in crime since the mid 1990s, reaching a fifty-year low in 2009. Despite these trends, gang violence remains a problem. While there has been limited success in gang reduction, there is increasing recognition in public debate that law and order approaches are not sufficient and longer term community development approaches are required.

Economy

In LA and Orange counties one in six jobs, or one million people, are employed directly or indirectly in the creative economy, producing cultural, artistic or design goods and services. The entertainment industry (including motion picture and video production) is by far the biggest component of the creative industries and has experienced considerable growth in recent years. Fashion, furniture and home furnishings have experienced considerable declines over the last five years, due to production shifting offshore, but much of the design process continues to thrive in Los Angeles. Other leading industries include aerospace, technology, petroleum and tourism, with nearly 25.9 million overnight visitors to Southern California each year. Other significant industries are media production, finance, telecommunications, law, healthcare and transportation.

The Los Angeles metropolitan area had a total GDP in 2008 of $US 717.884 million, rising steadily from 2001 with an average annual growth of 5.1 per cent. In 2008 it was the second highest GDP metropolitan area in the United States and the third largest metropolitan centre in the world after the greater Tokyo area and the New York-Newark Bridgeport area. Per capita GDP climbed steadily from 2001 to 2007 and then began to fall. In 2008 it reached $US 472.14. Average annual growth in per capita GDP between 2001 to 2008 was 2.25 per cent.15

Despite aggregate figures, Los Angeles and California are in the midst of a historic economic recession, large deficit budgets, major public service cutbacks, high unemployment and layoffs in public and private sectors. In 2010 unemployment in LA County hovers around 12 per cent and underemployment around 23 per cent, rising steadily since the onset of economic recession in 2007. The composition of employment has also changed. Growth industries are in low-wage service sectors (especially retail and food service) while growth has stalled in industries with average salaries in the USD45,000–60,000 range. Durable manufacturing used to fill this zone, balancing high wage jobs in finance, entertainment and information, but this sector is in long term decline. Incomes are deeply polarized with rising numbers of working poor and unemployment and low wage, low skill jobs concentrated amongst non-white populations.

Ecology

While federal action on climate change has been slow, California has been at the forefront of schemes to combat air pollution and reduce carbon emissions. The Californian legislature passed the Global Warming Act [AB 32] in 2006, coordinating programs across the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and to attract capital investment in to clean technology sectors such as renewable energy sources, energy efficient products, sustainable agriculture and water systems. The policy direction links greening the state to job creation (the Californian Green Jobs Act, 2008, encourages disadvantaged populations into green apprenticeships) and is aided by federal funding for green initiatives as part of the 2009 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act.

LA City is increasingly viewed as a leading green city. It met Kyoto targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions four years ahead of schedule. In 2009 the mayor launched a major ‘GREEN LA’ initiative for his second term in office, taking on areas usually left to state and federal levels of government. Plans include:

- A reduction in port-related emissions (from ships, trains, trucks, terminal equipment and harbour craft) by 45 per cent over five years. The LA-Long Beach ports account for over 20 per cent of toxic air emissions in the South Coast air basin. A clean trucks program, for example, has taken over 2000 diesel trucks off the road and replaced them with 4500 new or retrofitted trucks emitting less pollution. All 16,000 trucks servicing the ports must meet standards by 2012 that will cut diesel emissions by 80 per cent;

- 20 per cent of City power and water to be coal free by 2020; 40 per cent to be derived from renewables by 2030 with the balance from gas, nuclear and hydroelectric sources; reduction of green house gas emissions by 35 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030;

- Major water conservation, storm-water capture and recycling initiatives to plan for water supply for a growing population under ongoing drought conditions;

- Development of the area east of downtown as a ‘Clean Tech Corridor’ or green industry zone, incorporating infrastructure for green research and development, small business incubation, affordable housing and access to mass transit.

Due to its geography (susceptible to atmospheric inversion), low rainfall and heavy reliance on cars and freight traffic from the LA/Long Beach port complex, Los Angeles suffers from considerable smog, especially in the summer. Pollution levels have fallen in recent decades, but the city still ranks as one of the most polluted in the United States in terms of ozone and particle pollution. Cement refineries, power plants and oil refineries are amongst the top green house gas emitters in California and the Los Angeles region. Communities of colour and low-income groups are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change including vulnerability to heat incidents, exposure to air pollution and economic dislocations that may result from climate change. Hence the issue of environmental justice is growing in prominence and, notably, an Environmental Justice Advisory Committee was written into the AB 32 legislation. The likelihood of proximity to emissions producing facilities is highest for African Americans, followed by Asians and Latinos. The Los Angeles region contains nine of the top ten facilities producing such pollution disparity, mainly concentrated around port area oil refineries. Given California is committed to a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gas emissions, there are real concerns that these facilities could become ‘hot spots’ for emissions, through offsets elsewhere. Critics have recently pointed to the potential of cap and trade systems to exacerbate the ‘climate gap’, that is, existing inequalities in relation to environmental risk, with potential costs on the healthcare system as yet uncalculated.

Denpasar, Indonesia

Jeff Lewis

Denpasar is the capital city of the Indonesian Province of Bali (Propinsi Badung di Bali). It is the island's largest urban centre and the capital of its major tourist area, the Badung Regency (Kabupaten Badung). Denpasar, originally called Badung, was the home and administrative centre of one of Bali's major kingdoms. Located at the confluence of several major waterways, the city is a gateway dividing the maritime environment of the south and the volcanic highlands that rise across the northern central areas of the island.

For many Australians, Denpasar is a significant cultural and regional gateway. Denpasar and Bali, in fact, provide for many Australians their only direct experience of Asia and the region. With nearly 800,000 Australian visitors a year, Bali is one of Australia's major tourism destinations, and a principal conduit for cultural cosmopolitanism. As the site of two major terrorist attacks (2002 and 2005) in which nearly one hundred Australians died, Denpasar-Kuta also represents a critical context for globalization experiences and Australia's participation in the global war on terror.

Urban Environment

Denpasar's urban core of has a population of around 492,000 people and covers an area of 77.9 square kilometres. The city has eclipsed all the other urban centres on the island, as it has become a primary economic node that integrates government, commercial and tourism activities. Denpasar also has a very vibrant cultural and arts precinct, and a range of new health, retail and service industries that are meeting the increasing demands of tourists, expatriates and the island's growing middle classes. As the city has grown it has spread south toward the tourist developments of Seminyak, Legian, Kuta Beach, Sanur and the Bukit Peninsula. The rice fields that once separated Denpasar from the tourist zones have now been subsumed by tourism, urban and industrial developments. This urban expansion also includes the suburb of Krobokan and the island's major penitentiary, in which several high-profile Australian drug traffickers are incarcerated.

Denpasar is a frenetic, poorly planned and rapidly growing Indonesian city. It has many of the urban living and sustainability problems that are common to many Indonesian cities, including poor administration, crime, homelessness, inadequate sanitation, poor water supplies, polluted waterways, atmospheric pollution and ethnic tension. However, the city and its surrounding urban districts are also a significant cosmopolis: along with the vast numbers of international tourists, there are significant Australian, Japanese and American expatriate communities living in the area. The Denpasar workforce is comprised of native Balinese as well as large numbers of Indonesians from other part of the archipelago—Java, Lombok, Suluwesi, Flores and Nusa Tenggara.
Past and Present

Denpasar and Bali have a long history of human habitation. There is archaeological evidence of human habitation at about two thousand years Before Present (BP) at two sites in Bali—one in Gilimanuk on the northwest coast and the other in Sembiran in the north-centre. The major ethnic group in Bali is related to the Malay people, who are a dominant group across much of South East Asia. During the early part of the first millennium CE, Indian and Chinese traders travelled through the Indonesian archipelago, including Bali. The influence of these two groups is evident, particularly as Chinese monks settled and converted many Indonesians to Buddhism. The Indian traders also exerted their cultural influence over various parts of the archipelago, with a Hindu kingdom established in Indonesia by the end of the fifth century CE.

The earliest evidence of regency in Bali is found in seven bronze edicts in Old Balinese script (882–914 CE). These edicts are dated according to the Indian Saka calendar, indicating Indian influence. The historical and archaeological evidence suggests that local Balinese warlords adopted Indian strategies of administration and regency. The introduction of Vedic rituals and mythology into the Balinese religious culture cannot be dated precisely, but it would appear that the adoption of Indian modes of governance was probably accompanied by ritual practice and belief systems.

It is plausible that the local rulers were impressed by stories of the Indian rajas and, wanting to strengthen their own control, asked for advice from the Brahman priests, whose rituals would enhance a ruler’s own power through divine and imperial sanction. The Balinese princes tried to associate themselves with Indian culture as much as possible and created family trees with roots in Indian culture. They also claimed to be temporary incarnations of the Hindu gods.1

In either case, Balinese religion developed a particularly strong affinity with Indian Hinduism from around 1000 CE up to the present. The other major external influence on Balinese cultural and political development was East Java, and there were many periods in which the island was administered by East Javanese kings, at least until the fifteenth century. In fact, around this time much of Java began to experience various forms of civil strife, and Islam exercised increasing influence over the fractured Javanese regencies. From this period, while the Balinese kings were often engaged in their own internal squabbles, the island resisted the influence of Islam, maintaining its historical links with Indian Hinduism. There are, however, significant remnants of the East Javanese influence in West Bali, particularly around the area of Medewi, in which Islam is the major religion.

The Balinese resisted the colonizing power of the Dutch until the early part of the twentieth century. While much of Indonesia by this time was under Dutch rule, the Balinese had managed to restrict colonization to the northern sections of the island. Denpasar finally fell to the Dutch military forces in 1906, a date which marks the first of infamous puputan or finishing rituals. In a sustained invasion assault, the Dutch landed at the port of Sanur and marched northwest to Denpasar. When the Dutch entered the royal palace, the Raj of Badung appeared in full ritual attire bearing the

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ceremonial sword, the *kris*. The raja was surrounded by priests, retainers, his wives and his children. When he was about a hundred paces from the Dutch troops, the raja signalled to the high priest, who plunged the *kris* into the ruler’s heart. With his death, the ceremonial attendants, including women and children, began to commit mass suicide. Panicked and confused, the Dutch forces opened fire as wave after wave of royal family members and attendants appeared in the courtyard. Around 1000 Balinese died in the *puputan*, an event that is now commemorated in Taman Puputan (Puputan Garden) Square in Denpasar.

In 1936, Badung changed its name to Denpasar. Shortly after, the Balinese were also subjected to colonization by Japan during the Second World War, and fought alongside the Indonesian nationalist forces in the Police Wars of 1945–9, which eventually led to Indonesia’s independence and nationhood. The Balinese suffered severe casualties in the New Order Revolution of 1964–5. Around 100,000 Balinese were killed during the massacres, and the community remains traumatized by the events.2

**Politics**

*Epistemic Trauma*

According to scholars like Geoffrey Robinson and Adrian Vickers, the recent history of Bali has left the Balinese with deep psychological and political-cultural wounds.3 This trauma is especially evident in the resonance of the 1964–5 massacres that accompanied the removal of President Sukarno, and rise of Suharto’s New Order regime.4 While Denpasar and other cities have commemorated the tragedies of the colonial *puputan* and the terrorist attacks of 2002, there has been no clear reconciliation or recognition of the horrors of these massacres. The survivors of these killings are now the leaders of the community in Bali. The fragility of the tourist economy and the propagated image of the smiling and welcoming Balinese seem anathema to the true horrors and belligerent past of the Balinese.

**Governance and Social Management**

The Suharto regime was deposed in 1998, leading to a new period of political and social reformation in Indonesia (*reformasi*). As part of the reform process, greater autonomy was granted to provinces like Bali. While these have been very positive moves, the repressive nature of the Suharto regime precluded the development of effective civil institutions and civil management skills. While Bali has had a long history of effective civil self-management within the village and regency systems (*adat*), broader governmental skills and institutions were effectively suppressed by Suharto’s authoritarian approach to social, political and civil management. These problems are further exacerbated by ongoing problems of police, judicial and political corruption, a resonance of the Suharto period. While the current governor, Mungka Pastika, a former chief of police in Bali, is well aware of these issues, his capacity for reform is limited.

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4 Lewis and Lewis, *Bali’s Silent Crisis*. 
Security and Civil Tensions

The Badung district is now a polyglot of indigenous Balinese; tourists; expatriates; and internal Indonesian migrants who have travelled to Bali in search of work, business opportunities and illicit activities. While the Balinese have always had the habit of blaming other Indonesians, especially Javanese, for crime and other forms of social rupture, the pressures of overdevelopment, rapid social change and Islamic terrorism have intensified many underlying ethnic tensions.5 The Islamist attacks in Badung in 2002 and 2005 were especially problematic, leading to sporadic acts of violence and anti-Muslim attacks. The Balinese district governors and traditional pecalang instigated various forms of crime control strategies that particularly targeted non-Balinese Indonesians living and working in Badung. While these strategies were designed ostensibly to protect international tourists, there was an undercurrent of anti-Muslim sentiment attached to many of the actions. Since the bombings, there has also been a resurgence of Balinese territorialism on the island, led by the local media mogul, Satria Narada. The Ajiq Bali movement supports the restoration of Balinese ritual life, but also the political and cultural privileges of the indigenous Hundu Balinese. These ethnic tensions remain a sleeping giant in the area, invoking the sort of political chauvinism and secessionism that has always been a part of Balinese political thinking.

Economics

Denpasar and the surrounding Badung Regency are extremely important economic nodes for Indonesia. Tourism is the country’s second highest income earner after oil.6 Moreover, the city provides essential commercial, legal and educational services which ultimately support the island’s tourism industry and an ever-growing tourism workforce. In 2009, international tourism visits reached two million, the highest figure ever recorded. During the same period there were around one million domestic tourists.7

Development and Autonomy

The New Order regime used Bali as a development node, investing enormous sums of public money for the private gains of the New Order military and related plutocracy. The massive development program undertaken by the Suharto family, in particular, excluded the Balinese from all decision making, leaving the local people to be the ‘sweepers’ and ‘bed-makers’ of the new tourist boom economy.8 The rapid development of the Denpasar-Badung district has created very significant problems for Balinese people themselves, leading to the overwhelming cultural and environmental degradation of the island.

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5 Ibid.
7 Bali Tourism Authority, 2010.
8 Lewis and Lewis, Bali’s Silent Crisis.
Culture

The integration of the island into the global economy of pleasure, the tourist industry, has created considerable cultural fracturing in the Balinese community. Modernization has imposed very substantial changes on ritual life, social relationships and the cultural fabric. While maintaining some of the ritual practices, Balinese in the Badung district have had to adapt to significant changes in lifestyle and the exposure to many varying cultural practices. Caught within this modernizing vortex, many younger Balinese in particular are turning away from ritual life and practices. This alienation from traditional Balinese culture is causing considerable worries for senior Balinese leaders, like Governor I Made Mungka Pastika and the owner-editor of Bali TV, Pak Satria Narada.

Removed from the security and familiarity of village life, a number of younger Balinese are moving to the Badung district in search of work and prosperity. While many do find work, others drift into crime, prostitution and the drugs culture. According to Governor Pastika, the Balinese prison system is now swelling with these younger Balinese. While twenty years ago there were virtually no Balinese in the prison system, Krobokan Prison is now populated by Balinese who have fallen into drug-related crime.

Ecology

The large and powerful vested interests in the Balinese tourism and property development industries continue to assert a disproportionate influence over the state and its processes of urban and environmental planning. While there are pockets of resistance, environmentalists and cultural conservationists are generally cast aside in the continued pressure for further development. The Badung district has very little public space and even less clear public infrastructure goals. Drainage and water management is poor, and most of the maritime environment and waterways in Badung are heavily polluted. Environmental regulations, where they exist at all, are largely ignored by developers and resort and commercial interests. The flush-out areas around Nusa Serangan (Turtle Island) have been destroyed by an unsuccessful property development project, and the area is now a wasteland—a relic of the Suharto dynasty.

9 Governor Pastika, cited in Lewis and Lewis, Bali's Silent Crisis.
2.8 Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

Ifte Ahmed and John Fien

Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) is located in the south of Vietnam. It is part of the large Mekong River Delta, with the Saigon River running through the city. Following reunification in 1976, Ho Chi Minh City was renamed and established as a city to include the former Saigon and surrounding districts.

Ho Chi Minh City is the economic and financial hub of Vietnam and continues to attract migrants from the provinces, resulting in rapid population growth: from 1999 onwards, the population of the city has increased consistently at the rate of 200,000 people per year. With the recent expansion of a free-market system, many multinational and local businesses and facilities have located in Ho Chi Minh City, rapidly changing the skyline.

Vietnam is swiftly becoming more urbanized, with the city-dwelling proportion of the population rising from 11.6 per cent in 1950, to 19.7 per cent in 2000, and 25 per cent in 2004. The rate of urbanization will remain between 2.5 and 3 per cent per annum until at least 2030. Indeed this is one of the fastest rates of urbanization in the world, with almost half of the Vietnamese population expected to be living in cities by 2030.

While more than two-thirds of the population still live and work in provincial towns and villages, the east-coast cities of Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh, Danang and Haiphong are growing rapidly due to the employment opportunities that have arisen from Vietnam’s entry into the World Trade Organization and its consequent integration into the global economy. Significant local and foreign investment in electronics, food processing, textiles and tourism has fuelled strong rural–urban migration, especially to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, which between them attract half of all Vietnam’s inter-provincial migration.

In 2009 these two rapidly urbanizing regions, located on the deltaic floodplains of the Red River (Hanoi) and Mekong River (Ho Chi Minh City), had official populations of 2,632,087 and 5,929,479 respectively. However, official population data actually understates growth: Hanoi is estimated to have between four and five million people and Ho Chi Minh City over eight million. This disparity is due to the high level of unregistered rural–urban migration and the spread of settlement, housing and industry beyond official statistical boundaries. As a result, much of the peri-urban growth in Ho Chi Minh City, for example, occurs in the Dong Nai and Binh Duong provinces. The Ministry of Construction, which has been formally designated as the leading ministry on issues of urban development, seeks to encourage urbanization in smaller settlements rather than Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Nevertheless, the national urban development plans call for an urban system based upon two ‘megacities’, three smaller national cities, eleven regional cities, fifty provincial cities, 1867 district towns, and twenty ‘new towns’ by 2020, with a total population of 46 million.
Vietnam’s two megacities are suffering adversely as a result of these patterns of national growth and the internal dynamics of urbanization. Major problems include environmental quality, urban sanitation and water pollution, with human waste a chief pollutant. However, the situation is intensified by agricultural waste from upstream rural areas and the use of outdated, heavily polluting production processes in factories, which are mainly located in inner-urban areas. Air pollution, especially arising from the growing prevalence of two-cycle motorbikes, is also an issue. Vietnamese cities are said to have the highest number of motorbikes per capita in the world, with more than two million in Ho Chi Minh City and one million in Hanoi.

Urban poverty is on the rise in Vietnam. While most poverty is concentrated in rural areas (20 per cent of rural households are classified as ‘poor’, compared to 8 per cent of urban households), the proportion in cities is growing as Vietnam moves through the double transition from rural to urban, and from a planned to market economy. Living conditions have deteriorated for many civil servants who were made redundant as part of the latter transition and had to seek employment in the market system, where over 70 per cent remain in the informal sector. The rising numbers of unregistered rural migrants moving to cities lack access to social services and face unstable employment and housing. Informal settlements are expanding; for example, at least 300,000 people live in slums in Ho Chi Minh City while 30 per cent of Hanoi’s population is reported to be living in very crowded conditions. Land prices increased by over 500 per cent in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in the 1990s, making it difficult for either the government or private sector to redress housing shortages, especially given the rapid urbanization rates.

Thus, the national urban development strategy focuses on these problems and includes actions aimed at:

- Decreasing densities in urban cores of large cities and increasing peri-urban densities;
- Reducing loss of prime agricultural land resulting from poorly managed peri-urban development;
- Relocating polluting factories from inner cities to outer areas;
- Stemming squatter settlements and implementing measures to increase the supply of urban housing; and
- Improving the provision of urban services, especially water, sanitation, waste management and public transport.
An estimated 300,000 enterprises, ranging from high-tech electronic processing and services to medium and light scale industries, along with others involved in the production and processing of building materials and agro-products, operate in the city. New hotels, clubs, bars and boutiques sit amid traditional-style street markets and stalls, resulting in an atmosphere of exuberant contrasts. Ho Chi Minh City contributes about 20 per cent of Vietnam’s GDP but its IPV (Industrial Product Value) is equivalent to 30 per cent of the entire country’s. The city’s export revenue is 40 per cent of the national total and 70 per cent of the tourists to Vietnam in 2007 visited Ho Chi Minh City.

With more than two million motorcycles on the streets, Ho Chi Minh City has been nicknamed the ‘Capital of Motorbikes’. Accelerating economic growth in other growing economies in Asia has led to private automobiles replacing the ubiquitous motorcycle; if this pattern continues in Ho Chi Minh City it will make increased demands for space on the already congested streets. A single car requires space equivalent of six motorcycles, so it is not hard to imagine the chaos that would result from cars replacing motorcycles as the main mode of private transport.

There are plans for subway and elevated train systems in Ho Chi Minh City, among other bold transportation infrastructure developments, including extensive underground parking facilities. However, these are extremely expensive and will require time to build; the subway, for example, is scheduled for completion in 2020. In the interim the city may become host to increasing traffic problems and decreasing air quality as a trade-off for the benefits of economic growth.

The Mekong Delta is among the world’s most threatened regions from global climate change and faces a serious risk from sea-level rise and climate change induced disasters. Thus Ho Chi Minh City is in an especially vulnerable position. Additionally, the expected population growth of up to 50 per cent in the next two decades entails increasing densification and overcrowding of the inner city districts together with expansion into surrounding areas, often by reclaiming land from the swamps that characterize the geography of the region. The swamplands are part of the larger Mekong River Delta, a unique tropical ecosystem. With the encroaching city, the future of this ecosystem seems uncertain. Thus the development of a fast-growing future megacity has consequences that reach far beyond its own precincts, as Ho Chi Minh City expands its ecological footprint in areas that are the least prepared to deal with these consequences.1

To understand Kuala Lumpur, one has to understand Sejarah Melayu, a rip-roaring narrative, full of adventure, history, myth, migration, poetry and wordplay; where people experience migration, uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis. It is both fiction and history; and as befits such a post-modern epic; it has no dates. Some scholars date it from the Portuguese period, while others claim it was commissioned by Sultan Abdullah of Malacca, who reigned from 1610–1621.

Past and Present

Formed in the 1850s at the confluence of the Klang and Gombak rivers, the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur is the national capital of Malaysia. As Sardar remarks, Kuala Lumpur has grown in a short time from a sleepy little capital-town built around a river into a postmodern city with a thriving, diverse and affluent cultural life. In Malay, the word ‘Kuala Lumpur’ means muddy confluence. The discovery of tin by a group of Chinese miners in 1857, and the opening up of the Klang Valley for tin prospectors by a member of the Selangor royal family, Raja Abdullah, brought many miners to the area and a new settlement soon began. Much of this earlier settlement was destroyed in the fire and subsequent floods of 1881 because of the ephemeral quality of the building materials—wood and atap (thatch roof).

Malacca (now Melaka) had been the main point of entry and administration, and there had been a high concentration of city dwellers in the commercialized areas of the Straits of Malacca prior to colonial rule, but with the rapid development of Kuala Lumpur, the centre soon shifted to Kuala Lumpur. Malaysia’s rich and diverse urban history developed primarily from the second half of the twentieth century when it shifted from a largely rural to a largely urban population. Frank Swettenham, a British official, was charged with the task of overseeing the development of the town; he instructed that all buildings be constructed in brick and tile. The advent of the railways increased accessibility; and growth intensified. The multi-racial community of this period settled in various sections of the town:

- Market Square, east of Sungai Klang became the commercial centre for the whole town. The Chinese congregated around this Square and south into Chinatown.
- To the north, across Java Street (now Jalan Tun Perak), were the communities of the Malays. The Indian Chettiar (money-lenders), and in later years Indian Muslim traders, set up businesses. West of the river, the Padang (now Merdeka Square) was the focal point of the British administration.

1. The Sejarah Melayu or the Malay Annals remain the only available account of the history of the Malay Sultanate in the fifteenth and early-sixteenth centuries. This historical literature holds a historical narration on the origins, evolution and demise of a great Malay maritime empire, with its unique system of government, administration and politics (source: UNESCO Memory of the World Register, accessed 10 July 2010).
5. Anthony Reid (1993), Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce: Expansion and Crisis, 2 Vols, New Haven, Yale University Press.
The town continued to grow despite the two World Wars. Following independence in 1957, and then the formation of Malaysia in 1963, Kuala Lumpur became the administrative centre and took centre-stage in national development. By the 1970s, the gazetted area of the city held a population of about 450,000,7 which grew steadily due to the combination of industrialization and a concentration of government employees in Kuala Lumpur as both a federal and Selangor State administrative centre. Kuala Lumpur industrialized rapidly in the post-Independence period and was conferred city status in 1972. It soon became a separate Federal territory by 1974. By then, Kuala Lumpur had already grown to become part of a larger urban region extending south-westwards into Port Klang (previously Port Swettenham), which also included the industrial estates of the new town of Petaling Jaya and Old Klang Road. In 1972, the greater Klang Valley urban region, incorporating the four Selangor state districts of Gombak, Klang, Petaling Jaya and Ulu Langat was officially recognized. As Bunnell and Nah state:

far from diluting the significance of the Federal Territory, the development of the Klang Valley urban region reaffirmed Kuala Lumpur’s national centrality. The New Economic Policy (NEP) from the early 1970s though designed to primarily address regional distribution goals, favoured developments particularly in this western corridor and towards Kuala Lumpur in particular.8

From the mid-1980s Kuala Lumpur underwent policy shifts, notably privatization and economic liberalization.9 It was fairly evident that the centralization of political authority, particularly within the Kuala Lumpur Federal territory, especially in the Mahathir era, had made Kuala Lumpur the locus of spectacular mega-projects involving government-linked conglomerates and tycoons. Major development and supporting policy shifts were primarily undertaken under the premiership of Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and within two decades, there were major transformations and dramatic landscape changes not just in Kuala Lumpur, but in many of Malaysia’s urban regions. Since the early 1990s, Kuala Lumpur has again undergone another reorientation from local node to a national node in global networks. This city is now known more formally as Wilayah Persekutuan (Federal Territory) Kuala Lumpur, and has an estimated population of 1.6 million (2006 census).

Urban Fabric

This global refurbishing of urban space in Kuala Lumpur from the 1980s right into the late 1990s needs to be understood not just as a strategy to change the landscape and external effects, but was also as a deliberate material and discursive venture of the state and identified corporate partnerships. Under Mahathir’s program of Wawasan 2020, the material and symbolic transformations of the then existing city spaces of Kuala Lumpur and its newly developing territories of Klang Valley were at the forefront of a national identity and positioning in both Asia and the world. The mid-1980s to the mid-1990s saw not just the transformation of Kuala Lumpur, but also that outside the city of Kuala Lumpur and the greater Klang Valley region.

Kien in his extensive study of the processes, visions, narratives and political agendas surrounding the construction of major projects in Kuala Lumpur provides an interesting perspective into the process through which the “issue of ethnic-integration in a plural nation-state was addressed via an architectural medium”.

A principal aspect of the development of Kuala Lumpur, other than the expected population increase, spatial expansion and economic growth, has been the dramatic nature of infrastructural change. This change, according to Bunnell and Phang et al., represents and articulates a Malay-centred conception of national identity through architectural designs and buildings: for example, the Menara Maybank, the Kuala Lumpur City Centre (KLCC) project, the PETRONAS towers, and the Hijas Kasturi (LUTH) tower, and the more recent Telecom Tower. As Bunnell claims, the national political role of Kuala Lumpur was augmented by the progressive centralization of authority over the city. In 1978, the Mayor of Kuala Lumpur was responsible to the newly-created Federal Territory Ministry; in 1983, the authority of the Minister of the Federal territory was shifted directly to the then Prime Minister’s department. Many claimed that this had to do with the fact that the then prime minister, Mahathir Mohammad had a “personal interest in the development of Kuala Lumpur”.

Mahathir’s words that “there is no reason why a skyscraper should not have a roof which reflects our national identity”, captures to an extent the spirit of a rapidly dominant spirit of neo-Malay revivalism.

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10 Wawasan 2020 or Vision 2020 is a phrase in Malaysia that stands for a vision of a more developed future Malaysia. It was a new national development plan introduced in 1991 referring to the development of an industrialized, self-sufficient, modern nation, underpinned by an economy that will eightfold stronger by the year 2020. The slogan was coined by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Mahathir Mohamammed.


13 Bunnell (2002) and S.N. Phang, S. Kuppusamy and M.W. Norris (1996), ‘Metropolitan Management of Kuala Lumpur’, in J. Ruland, ed., The Dynamics of Metropolitan Management in Southeast Asia, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 1996. A search for a Malaysian identity arose from a confluence of a number of diverse factors; primarily the then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad (see Jiat-Hwee Chang, Natural Traditions: Constructing Tropical Architecture in Transnational Malaysia and Singapore, Explorations, Volume 7, Issue 1, Spring 2007) pushing architecture’s potential for the ‘visible politics’ of expressing Malay/Islamic nationalism. Immediately recognizable forms using ethnic and religious symbols were foremost when discussing any architectural designs; and coupled with the growing South East Asian self-awareness from the 1980s, such forms of architecture provided the impetus for Asian countries such as Malaysia to assert difference from the hegemonic West.

14 Hijas bin Kasturi, a graduate of architecture from Melbourne University, (1965) has been a key influence within the Malaysian architectural (and cultural) context; as he states ‘reconciling form and function within cultural continuity’. His landmark buildings include Tabung Haji, Kl (1984), Menara Apera-ULG, Kl (1984), Menara Maybank (1989) and Menara Telkom (2002). Together with Mahathir Mohammad (Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1981–2005), Hijas, probably Malaysia’s first architect hero, Hijas played a significant role in developing the iconic Malay-centred conception of national identity and has managed to find a Malaysian vernacular for modern architecture.

15 Bunnell (2002b)


17 Cited in Udo Kultermann, Architecture in Southeast Asia:Malaysia, Minar, No.26, 1987, p. 64
One of the earliest manifestations of Mahathir’s ‘visible politics’ was the Bumiputera Bank, completed in 1985 by Hijjas’s architectural firm. It was ‘hailed as a pioneer in the emerging post-modern search for a Malaysian identity’—a high-rise international-style office tower, juxtaposed with a low-rise banking hall and articulated as a blown-up version of a traditional Malay house.18 The Putra World trade Center, also designed by Hijjas, was yet another project with projections of an oversized traditional Malay-house with an international-style office tower. Other buildings designed and constructed by Hijjas includes the Dayabumi Compex (1984) and the Tabung Haji building (1986). For both these buildings, plans were derived from Islamic geometric motifs while the five massive pillars within the Tabung Haji (organization that helps arrange pilgrimages to Mecca) allude to the five pillars of the Muslim faith.19 The building itself is shaped like the drum that is supposed to summon pilgrims.

In addition to these massive developments in architectural form, infrastructure development was also a major priority in the 1984 Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan. Modern telecommunications and transport infrastructures were emphasized to ensure that Kuala Lumpur was building for a global network. A new light rapid-transit system (LRT), a commuter train-network and the people-mover rapid transit (PRT) in the commercial core of Kuala Lumpur were completed in 2005, all seeking to reposition Malaysia (through Kuala Lumpur). Certainly the globalization of greater Kuala Lumpur over the past two decades has been manifested in its extensive landscape transformation; and as Morshidi and Suriati claim, it is the clearest sign of the city’s increased role in global financial networks.20 As the authors add, when the Multimedia Super corridor became a reality, mega-architectural icons such as the KLCC were the first to incorporate the idea of a city within a city, connecting the Golden Triangle (Kuala Lumpur’s business hub) and make the area more accessible through a maze of covered veranda ways accessible only by foot. The KLVCC project development encompassed a freehold prime property of nearly 40.5 hectares, enclosing the PETRONAS twin towers and divided into seven sections; office buildings; hotels, retails, a convention centre, residential and recreational facilities. The master plan, driven primarily by the then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad was to turn what was originally a 100-acre horse race track located in the centre of Kuala Lumpur’s Golden Triangle into an integrated, self-contained modern city as well as create a world-class new landscape of a city within a city.

18 Lillian Tay and Ngiom, Eighty Years of Architecture in Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 2000, p. 15;
19 See Jiat-Hwee Chang, Natural Traditions: Constructing Tropical Architecture in Transnational Malaysia and Singapore, Explorations, Volume 7, Issue 1, Spring 2007 for details.
At the same time, an expense of land, about sixty kilometres south of Kuala Lumpur was chosen for the construction of an international airport (now known as Kuala Lumpur International Airport—KLIA). Interestingly, the new city of Putrajaya, a new administrative capital was also begun in 1995. Putrajaya is located about twenty-five kilometres south of Kuala Lumpur. Built on what was originally one of the biggest palm-oil estates in Malaysia, it is stated that the site was chosen as it was located equal distances from Kuala Lumpur and the new Kuala Lumpur International airport. As Moser states,

the building of Putrajaya was intended to demonstrate both to Malaysians and the international community that Malaysia is a stable, prosperous, progressive, and technologically sophisticated Muslim country, but at the same time, showcase Malaysia’s rootedness in traditional culture and religion. It was designed to be the new home to all of Malaysia’s federal government ministries and national level civil servants, host all diplomatic activities for the country, and function as a potent symbol of the nation’s ambitious modernization agenda and of its new ‘progressive Muslim’ identity. At the same time, this was not to take away the importance of Kuala Lumpur as the hub for local global networks and businesses.21

The announcement of the plans to build a new multimedia super corridor in 1996 began to put in place a sense of the building of a vast but interconnected urban region—the Kuala Lumpur Metropolitan Area (KLMA). A series of new transport projects would now integrate Kuala Lumpur with KLIA and Putrajaya and including the new ‘intelligent’ city, Cyberjaya, with the broader Klang valley region. The whole corridor extending from KLCC in Kuala Lumpur to KLIA has been built upon a fibre-optic backbone, both to attract ‘world class’ information technology companies and to hook up the greater metropolitan area into an emerging global information economy and society. As Zainuddin Sardar remarks, the Federal Territory is “the space from which the whole of Malaysia is made; it was made by Malaysian history and today makes the course of Malaysia’s future”.22

The Kuala Lumpur Central train station and the Kuala Lumpur monorail transportation networks, both mega projects, brought in what was easily the most significant design of urban space within what may be termed techno-rational lines. These projects, designed and developed by a consortium consisting of principally Kuala Lumpur Sentral Sendirian Berhad (Private Limited) consisting of Malaysian Resources Corporation Berhad,23 Keretapi Tanah Melayu (Malaysian Railways) and Pembinaan Redzai Sendirian Berhad (Private Limited) ensured that inner-city public transportation to the central business district, shopping malls and tourism precincts within Kuala Lumpur were well connected. Recently a lifestyle complex (centre) was built ‘offering the new-age, discerning

23 The Malaysian Resources Corporations Berhad (MRCB) is one of the largest a property (residential, commercial and industrial) development and investment company in Malaysia. Started in 1969 as Perak Carbide, it has now diversified to include not just property-development activities and investments, but also into the print and electronic media industry.
urbanites unique Health, Beauty & Dining Experiences’. It is strategically located within the integrated precinct of Kuala Lumpur Central; the ‘play’ element of the whole development of Kuala Lumpur Central’s ‘Live, Work, and Play’. In June 2010, the Prime Minister Najib Razak unveiled a 230 billion Malaysian Ringgit (69 billion dollars) development plan as part of the government’s plan to boost growth and propel the economy into high-income status by 2020. Central to this is the building of ‘a world class city’ and encapsulates the ambition to make Kuala Lumpur a city that will be a major global profile and hub.

Engagement and Placement: Contestations over Land

The increased demands for urban space were contested vigorously within new and evolving systems of evaluation about land-use. As in many former British colonies, land-law in Malaysia is based on the Torrens system, and was implemented on a state-by-state basis, beginning with the state of Perak in 1879. The National Land Code which was enforced in 1965 drew on the logic of the Torrens system, but specified precisely who can make legal claims regarding the ownership, alienation and use of land. With the exception of claims made in the name of Malay custom, only the state and the registered owner(s) were able to address the status of the land. At the same time, legally-registered property owners, ‘while formally granted a series of rights under the Code, are ultimately considered entirely subservient in legal matters related to land to individual State authorities’. An amended land Acquisitions Act of 1991 now enables the State Authority, without provision for judicial review, to alter or invalidate any previously disposed land in the name of ‘general public good’. Specifically, the 1991 Act states that the State Authority can, when deemed in the public good, acquire land that is ‘needed by any person or corporation for any purpose which in the opinion of the State Authority is beneficial to the economic development of Malaysia or any part thereof or to the public generally or any class of the public’ (Public Acquisition (Amended) Act 1991, s.3 (b)). This Amended Act was possibly drafted after a series of protests from several political groups opposing the state’s policies regarding land and development in the 1980s, especially the eradication of ‘squatter’ colonies in Kuala Lumpur. Mohd Nasir Hashim gives a good account of these struggles in and around Kuala Lumpur, and the proliferations of pamphlets such as the “Peneroka Bandar Menuntut Keadilan (Urban Pioneers Demand Justice).”

26 Baxstrom, p.16
27 Mohd Nasir Hashim, Urban Pioneers: The Struggle for Justice, translated by C. Kumar, Kuala Lumpur, Daya Komunikasi
According to Sidhu and Bunnell, squatting in Kuala Lumpur can be traced back to the early history of settlement itself when miners from China built temporary shelters near to their place of work. As land and land-administration acts and practices became more stringent and formalized, squatters started to move to the periphery of the city. With the end of the World War II, the demise of plantations and mining activities and the post-war Communist Emergency saw an exodus of rural settlers moving into city fringes. A Federal Capital (Clearance of Squatters) By-Laws was issued in 1963. By the year 1970, there were more than 140,000 squatters in the city. In the beginning, there was some positive response to the squatters, many of whom found jobs in the newly-emerging manufacturing and processing plants in the Klang Valley region. But at the same time, as the demand for and the economic value of land in the city and the Klang valley region grew rapidly, many of these squatter settlements came to be considered a nuisance, their possession of illegal land a hindrance to either public or private-led development activities. For the squatters, this became an increasing tension, especially as many of them had already established places and their own neighbourhoods; while for others illegal squatting was either ignored or tolerated by state authorities. This became an increasing contestation with the Kuala Lumpur City hall, charted with the implementation of the zero squatter settlement directives.

As the city began a process of ‘cleaning up’, many of these squatters, like for example the settlements along the old Klang Road area were either voluntarily or forcibly resettled into temporary long houses with an option to purchase a low-cost flat in the future. An example was the KTM longhouse settlement where people have now resided for well over twenty years. In late 2008, these long houses were demolished and residents relocated to high-rise low-cost flats (complexes) in the vicinity after a two-year waiting period in transit quarters. To an extent, poor planning and building, largely inadequate infrastructures and services as well as poorly-resettled residents are taking their toll; and it is evident that these places are straining to cope within their new settlements and life.

The Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020 indicates that the population base of Kuala Lumpur is set to increase from 1.4 million to 2.2 million over the next 20 years; and that optimizing limited land resources will be a priority. The new Kuala Lumpur 2020 Strategy Plan was undertaken in the early 2000s to revise the existing 1984 Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan (KLSP 1984) and to cope with the unprecedented growth and changes in the urban landscape, particularly given the massive developments of the Multimedia Super Corridor, the Kuala Lumpur International airport (KLIA) and the

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transfer of federal government administrative functions to the newly built Putrajaya township. Strategies in the document appear to cover not just the spatial and infrastructure development, but also identify the need “to understand the less tangible qualities of the City experience that shape and mould people’s perceptions of the City and their place within it”.

At the same time the Kuala Lumpur Strategy Plan also carries a stipulation that enables the Mayor to develop and implement local plans:

The local plan consists of a map and written statement and shall formulate in such details as the Commissioner thinks appropriate, his proposal for the development of use of land in the area of the local plan, including such measures as the Commissioner thinks fit for the improvement of the physical environment and the improvement of transportation and contain such matters as the Minister may in particular case specify.

Communication and Dissemination

The National IT Agenda (NITA) was formulated in 1996 and provided the framework for the development of an extensive infrastructure to support an ICT network that would encompass the KLMA area and into the wider Klang valley region. The length of the ICT corridor was to be served by a 2.5 to 10 gigabit fiber-optic and coaxial network with direct links to Japan, the USA and Europe. This Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) designated a world test-bed for ICT developments in Malaysia, supported by a set of world-leading cyber laws. One of the key ones was the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998. The main cyber law was the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, aimed at promoting deregulation, streamlining licensing procedures and categories as well as facilitating market liberalization.

The MSC was established in 1996 to provide a comprehensive world-class ICT enabled working and living environment to catalyze the development of a knowledge based economy. As a global test-bed for innovative solutions, the enabling environment and incentives provided sought to attract leading global webshapers to use MSC as a hub as well as help spawn both local and foreign small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Seventh Malaysia Plan period bludgeoned rapid growth in ICT utilization. Investments in ICT expanded at a rate of 9.2 per cent per annum from RM3.8 billion in 1995 to RM5.9 billion in 2000. MSC represents the most significant such project in Malaysia to date. Bunnell and Nah suggest that the MSC did not signal the beginning of greater Kuala Lumpur’s global or transnational repositioning. Yet the project may be said to have added a ‘high-tech’ urgency and emphasis to the ongoing globalization of the city-region. Existing urban projects were thus reimagined accordingly; KLCC, for example, was retrospectively termed MSC’s northern node on account of its putatively intelligent features; and Putrajaya was discursively re-imagined as an intelligent garden city.

The development of the new MSC also saw the emergence of new high-tech spaces, the principal one being Cyberjaya, Malaysia’s first intelligent cyber city. Interestingly, this new 2,800 hectare multimedia zone is designed to create an environment that is ‘high-tech savvy’ oriented, including within its precincts a new multimedia university, as well as the existing Technology Park Malaysia. The Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Document (2000) stipulates that the National Telekom Malaysia Berhad (Incorporated) is the sole provider of wired information and telecommunications infrastructure for the MSC. This infrastructure also links MSC’s urban centres and the Kuala Lumpur International Airport with Kuala Lumpur city.

Given such a scale of development, there have been evictions of squatters and marginal groups as well massive resettlement initiatives. Researchers such as Ong, Bunnell, and Graham and Marvin have suggested that this high-tech zone, depicted as a super-privileged and sophisticated area of communication and global networking has really worked to serve the information elite:

private-sector-driven development of wired urban living and working spaces and their purportedly ‘world class’ exclusivity implies new possibilities for social and spatial ‘splintering’. A pervasive discourse of ‘high-tech’ has legitimized the eviction of socio-economically marginal groups for ‘wiring’ of their land.

Conclusion

The social profile of the Kuala Lumpur metropolitan area provides insight into what is an increasingly complex and interwoven confluence of people, political agendas and development trajectories. Kuala Lumpur is emblematic of what is a pattern across former colonies to replace a former colonial city with a city that symbolizes the state’s national ideology and aspirations. As Goh and Laiuw suggest; this search for what the then Prime Minister termed the new Malaysia has seen a shift from rationalistic and Malay revivalist architectural models to what many now claim is a trend which the authors label as Middle Eastern eclecticism. The city of Kuala Lumpur is both a vibrant expression of postcolonial nation-building and a formidable expression of the entanglements of a Malaysian national identity with global political Islam and Malay identifications. The attempts to manifest imaginations and power of the nation over time in post-colonial Malaysia through a city such as Kuala Lumpur may well continue to keep the focus on this city as the site of continuing contestations over what is ‘national’, what is ‘global’ and what inevitably is rooted in local sensibilities.

References


38 Goh and Laiuw, ‘Post-Colonial Projects of a National Culture’.
2.10 Melbourne, Australia

Paul James and Andy Scerri

How did Melbourne come to be? How did it become a city of such variable qualities—still distinctly liveable, but nevertheless heading towards being unsustainable? Melbourne has a strikingly-diverse multicultural population of around four million people, but this is founded on an Anglo-European heritage that, until the 1960s, fiercely attacked multiculturalism as anathema to its cultural-political harmony. It has a densely urbanized and vibrant activities centre of high-rise buildings, restaurants, parks, and blue-stone footpaths. But its metropolitan footprint radiates outwards into a region of ever-stretching car-dependent suburbs, peri-urban zones of mixed use, and a hinterland of temperate dry-land farming where most of the trees have been cut down. It is a trading city with a global port, though its manufacturing base has steadily declined since the 1970s. It is the administrative and service centre for the south-east corner of Australia—and yet 90 per cent of traded imports stay in the metropolis. It is a city with a well-educated population, and one with a growing and sophisticated public consciousness about climate change, recycling and water consumption issues, and yet the city is becoming less sustainable.

For all the public sensitivity to ecological sustainability issues in Melbourne, resource-use and carbon emissions continue to grow, including land and energy consumption on a per capita basis. One of the few successes in this area has been a widely-supported political campaign to place legal restrictions on water-use. Nevertheless, a massive energy-intensive desalination plant is being built to supply freshwater to the city, and the entrance to bay on which the city sits has been dredged to allow ‘super-sized’ freight ships to import global commodities through Australia’s largest container port—both projects, paradoxically, are defended by the government in terms of environmental sustainability.

At the same time as allowing these projects to go ahead with minimal critical response, Melbournians have become increasingly concerned to nurture life-style amenities, urban aesthetics, place-making activities, tourist-oriented events, and cafés. This mix of civic concern and complacency is symbolized by the way in which the city’s politicians and media respond to being consistently listed as one of the world’s most liveable cities. The city thrives on its self-perception (and uneven reality) of being extraordinarily liveable and prosperous, while, at the same time, the ‘liveability’ standing of the city has been slowly dropping and its social wealth has been increasingly privatized or ‘developed’ through public-private partnerships and wrapped in commercial-in-confidence contracts.

1 This essay was written collaboratively drawing upon research done by others including Ifte Ahmed. The background work was done in response to critical input from Mary Lewin and the members of Metropolis Commission 2. The views presented in this essay however are not necessarily those of our collaborators on that Commission.

2 There are 3,995,000 in the Melbourne metropolitan area according to 2009 Australian Bureau of Statistics figures. Of those persons, 31 per cent were born outside of Australia and 27.9 per cent speak a language other than English at home (2006 Census).

3 In places the metropolitan area is close to 100 kilometres across.

4 Price Waterhouse Coopers, Economic Analysis of the Port of Melbourne, Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Infrastructure, Melbourne, 2007, while primarily a study of economic benefits, notes “a reduction in local air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions which would result from fewer total ships calls to the Port of Melbourne because larger ships could call at the port” (p. 9).

5 On the two main indices, the Economist Intelligence Unit (third-ranked city globally in 2010, down from being first-ranked in 2003 and 2004) and the Mercer Quality of Living Survey (eighteenth-ranked city globally in 2010, down from equal twelfth-ranked in 2005). On the way in which this is interpreted see for example the commissioned report by Gerrard Bown, Liveability Report: Capitalising on Melbourne’s Status as One of the World’s Most Liveable Cities, Committee for Melbourne, Melbourne, 2006.
Melbourne, Australia, 2010.
Melbourne thus represents a series of mixed responses to dominant global processes. Historically, across the nineteenth century, it was similarly formed in response to a number of fundamental global processes. Given its place in the world and the time of its formation, this gave Melbourne some unusual characteristics that still inform the present. The key processes that formed Melbourne from its inception included the imperial colonization of ‘empty’ or ‘savage’ spaces, the globalization of trade in basic and precious commodities, and an increasing movement of people. Firstly, in the context of the British imperial project to settle Terra Australis, colonial efforts in the early-nineteenth century displaced the indigenous population. Regularizing the future shape of the township was accompanied by discriminatory and exclusionary relations with the numerous Aboriginal groups that had long-inhabited the area at the mouth of the Yarra River. In this context, land was seen as an empty open resource—terra nullius—and the topology they lay beneath the mapping of the region was treated largely incidental to its growth; hence the uncompromising imposition of a grid pattern onto the landscape. Secondly, Melbourne grew rapidly in the mid-nineteenth century after a series of gold rushes. In the 1850s, the hinterlands of Melbourne were producing a third of the world’s gold and the population of the area increased seven-fold. By the 1880s, Melbourne had become one of the richest cities in the world, the ‘Chicago of the South’. There was a massive flow of imports, and, concurrently, primary industries in the region, in particular wool growing, expanded greatly. Melbourne became a key global trading port. Thirdly, Melbourne was established as a city during the period of the great global migrations. Between 1870 and 1930, migration to Southeast Asia was comparable to the migration to the USA, usually seen as the centre of the great migrations. Migration from the so-called ‘Old World’ to the ‘New’ was therefore only part of the story. The whole world was on the move, and Melbourne became one locus of that movement among many.

In the twentieth century, Melbourne, was again responding to global economic trends, exploiting its own hinterlands agriculturally, while industrializing its metropolitan area. Together with Sydney, Melbourne was central to the industrialization of Australia. Melbourne attracted working-class immigrants from around the world, but particularly from southern Europe and the Balkans in the immediate post-war period, and then more recently from such areas as Southeast Asia in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and in the 1990s the Horn of Africa in the context of civil war there. Melbourne, like other major cities, became a global city that continues to attract significant numbers of migrants—although it should be said that it is different from large Southeast Asian cities to the extent that they tend to be the focus of internal migration while Melbourne is the end-point of international migration. The last four censuses show that between 90 per cent and 95 per cent of overseas migrants coming to Victoria settle in Melbourne. Permanent migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds tend to settle in lower-cost housing in outer areas, while temporary migrants such as international students and wealthier business-migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds tend to reside close to the city centre. Metropolitan Melbourne’s population is projected to increase by 1.8 million people between 2006 and 2036, growing to a population of 5.5 million by the mid-2030s. How did Melbourne develop into such a city, and what are some of the specific issues of sustainable development that confront it now? To answer this question, the essay first briefly contextualizes the history of Melbourne, and then maps the contemporary shape of the metropolis through four domains of social life: ecology, politics, culture, and economy.

6 See the early maps of Melbourne in the University of Melbourne digital repository, at http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/maps/map-links.html
Past and Present

Melbourne was settled as part of the global expansion of Britain. In 1803, a colonial party was sent from Sydney to establish a British presence in Port Phillip Bay. However, the colonists landed on the arid and sandy eastern side of the bay near the present-day Sorrento, and, after five months of failure were evacuated. European settlers from Tasmania in 1835 established an insignificant agricultural settlement on the fertile northern side of the Yarra River that would eventually developed into the present city. The colonial leader and entrepreneur John Batman sought out a number of elders of local Aboriginal clans in 1835 and presented them with an assortment of trinkets, axes and blankets, requesting that they sign a document. Batman held up this document as a treaty of sale for 600,000 acres of land on which the city now stands; he boasted of being “the greatest landowner in the world”. Some Melbourne residents and descendants of the Aboriginal groups involved continue to argue that the offering of gifts from Batman was received as part of a tanderrum ritual—that is, as a symbolic gesture sealing an agreement for temporary access to the territory. The colonial administration did move to void the deal in 1836, but news of the new settlement’s fertile soil spread, and people with entrepreneurial aspirations continued to arrive informally, until the New South Wales Governor accepted the presence of the increasingly chaotic settlement and established political control over the community.

In all of this the freshwater of the Yarra River, and access to a seawater port, was the key to the placement of Melbourne in the region, however, across the nineteenth century the river and its drainage patterns were substantially re-engineered. From 1837, implementation began on the first urban plan, a modern grid-pattern similar to that applied to settler-colonial cities in North America. Known as Hoddle’s Plan, the grid differs from the common North and Central American city grids insofar as both north and south running easements interpose (major) ‘streets’ with (minor) ‘lanes’, and they are given names rather than numbers. From the early 1850s, Melbourne went through a period of rapid market-driven economic growth. Rising public revenues generated by rapid population increase followed the discovery of gold in central-western Victoria. Key groups arriving in the period were British, Irish, United States’ American, German and Chinese. As a sign of its economic growth and global orientation, Melbourne hosted the International Exposition of 1880. London had hosted the first Expo in 1851 and Paris in 1878 before the hosting shifted to the antipodes: Sydney and then Melbourne in successive years. The economic growth was accompanied by a large-scale construction boom from the 1860s until 1890 when the collapse of the global financial bubble that had been building for several decades reverberated across the colony. Nevertheless, by 1900, Melbourne was Australia’s industrial centre and a world leader in the development of what would later become the ‘social democratic’ political movement. Melbourne workers were among the first in the world to achieve legislation mandating an eight-hour working day, and in 1908 the ‘Harvester Judgement’ established a minimum-wage standard and industrial relations law system that was to remain in place in Australia for one-hundred years. However, while the city remained central to Australian political life and was the proxy national capital until 1927, the ensuing economic recovery was slow.

9 The ‘eight hour monument’ stands in the grounds of RMIT University, the former working men’s college in the city centre.
The city did not experience the ‘Roaring Twenties’ phenomenon to the extent that other metropolises around the world did. However, despite entering a period of economic stagnation also experienced at the time by global ‘second cities’ such as Vancouver and Boston, major public infrastructure projects were undertaken, including the electrification of the suburban rail and tram networks and the construction of a brown-coal-fired electricity plant. By 1928, Melbourne was the dominant commercial/administrative centre of Victoria. It had a sophisticated electrified public transport system which was shaping the metropolitan area, with most of the present-day train and tram network in place. Owing to the nature of the land to the west—a flat, dry, infertile, and relatively featureless lava plain—Melbourne showed a bias of development to the south and east which has been sustained to the present day.

The global ‘great depression’ of the 1930s further dampened economic growth in the city. However, by the 1950s Melbourne’s industrial production rose with the Global North’s ‘post-war boom’ and again attracted migrants from around the world, in particular from the Mediterranean and Baltic regions. A spate of feverish ‘modernization’ spread across the city’s built environment in the 1950s, 1960s, and into the 1970s, though many major buildings erected in the ‘gold rush era’ prior to 1890 were left standing and remain in use across the central business district today. By 1950, Melbourne had grown out further along the radiating railways and roads, spurred on by high immigration, high birth-rates, and the desire by an increasingly affluent and ‘automotive’ population for suburban housing.

In the 1970s, as the ‘long economic boom’ in the Global North faded, so population and economic growth in Melbourne slowed. The context to the slow-down included a diversity of globally-framed issues. They ranged from the new phenomenon of stagflation—high inflation was first the first time associated with recession and significant unemployment—and the first rumblings of OPEC oil-producing countries which leading to a quadrupling of oil prices, to the placing of the oral contraceptive pill on the Australian Medical Benefits List, reducing its cost while increasing its social acceptability (fertility rates dropped from 2.8 in 1971 to 1.8 in 1981). It was at this time that the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works published its new metropolitan plan, expanding its planning area and introducing a nature-corridor system that fanned out from the centre, known locally as the ‘green-wedge’ growth strategy. Ironically the plan was being released as the momentum for growth was slowing. Even so, in 1974 the nine-corridor plan was cut down to three corridors plus two satellite townships.

By the turn of the millennium, Melbourne had become a large suburban city. About two-thirds of the built-up area had been constructed since 1945, making it a very different city to somewhere like Greater London which had ceased its continuous outward growth around 1945 due to its green belt policy. Melbourne at the turn of the Millennium had continued the strong bias to the southeast and east. Three-quarters of the population lived east of a line drawn north-south through the central activities district.
Ecology

Place and Habitat

Metropolitan Melbourne is situated in the south-eastern temperate zone of the continental land mass, and has cool winter-autumns and longer, warm-to-hot spring-summer seasons. It is built around Port Philip Bay which is linked to the Tasman Sea by a narrow inlet to the south, the shipping entrance mentioned earlier that has recently been dredged. The Yarra River, originating in the upper reaches of the Yarra Ranges National Park to the east, flows out into the bay through the docklands near the city centre. Metropolitan Melbourne stretches over an area of 8,800 square kilometres and had a population of 3.74 million at the time of the 2006 census. Cities with comparable status as second-cities in the settler societies of the Global North are not as spatially extensive, such as the Vancouver Metro Region (2,877 square km) and Greater Boston (3,680 square km). Notably, cities with much higher populations, such as Greater London, for example, are much smaller: the Greater London metropolitan area is 1,579 square kilometres. The inner core—formally called the ‘City of Melbourne’—covers an area of 36.5 square kilometres with an estimated resident population in 2006 of 81,366 residents.

Melbourne has extensive parkland and reserves of various sizes throughout the metropolitan area to protect ecosystems and to provide recreational opportunities. Melbourne 2030 designates twelve ‘Green Wedges’ for protection from inappropriate development. The Green Wedges that were once designated as spaces that cut into the greater urban boundary now, much less impressively, designate non-urban areas that surround the built-up urban areas. The previous government announced in 2009 that it would establish a 15,000 hectare grassland reservation to protect some of the world’s largest remaining concentration of Volcanic Plains Grasslands, as well as a range of other habitat types including wetlands, riparian habitats and scattered open grassy woodlands. While this sounded good on the face of it, the announcement was made in the context of a decision to extend dramatically the urban growth boundary across these open areas (discussed below). It is estimated that less than one-third of native vegetation remains in the metropolis, with approximately one-third of what remains situated on private property. There are over eighty introduced plant-species that cause significant damage to waterways in the metropolis. Natural areas at risk form an arc across the middle sector from west to east, and the outer south-east.
The hinterland surrounding Melbourne can be divided roughly into a number of zones. To the north lies relatively fertile soil that is suited to a variety of agricultural uses, while to the west the land is characterized by clay over basalt which is difficult to farm, while to the east and south-east the soils are sandy and of little agricultural value except when built up. Further away, the vast plains of central and western Victoria have been Australia’s most fertile agricultural region since the colonial settlement of the city. To the east of the city, massive coal deposits have been used to fuel electricity generation in the La Trobe Valley. The Melbourne metropolitan area is the cultural, political and economic hub for a number of provincial centres: the La Trobe Valley to the east and the cities of Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo to the west. Geelong is a major port and industrial city on the west coast of Port Phillip Bay, while the former gold-mining centres of Ballarat and Bendigo lay inland to the northwest and are currently agricultural and service-economy centres. Each of these cities is linked to Melbourne by rail and freeway, with some people commuting between them and metropolitan Melbourne.

Earth, Water and Air

In Australia, state of the environment reporting occurs at both the national and state/territory level. National reports provide information about environmental and heritage conditions, trends and pressures for the Australian continent, surrounding seas and Australia’s external territories. Victoria’s comprehensive State of the Environment Report, last delivered by the Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability in Victoria in 2008, covers a wide range of issues from details on the status of Victoria’s natural environment to the impacts of consumption and an analysis of climate change. The Melbourne 2030 strategy sets out nine criteria for measuring and assessing the environmental impacts of planning and development across the metropolis: ensure that water resources are managed in a sustainable way; reduce the amount of waste generated and encourage increased reuse and recycling of waste materials; contribute to national and international efforts to reduce energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions; reduce the impact of stormwater on bays and catchments; protect ground water and land resources; ensure that land-use and transport planning and infrastructure provision contribute to improved air quality; protect native habitat and areas of important biodiversity through appropriate land-use planning; promote the concept of sustainability and develop benchmarks to measure progress; and, lead by example in environmental management.

The most important ecological trend identified is the climate change problem itself, and the response by city institutions and citizens to it. Despite a break in the decade-long drought, water-usage patterns are of paramount concern, and efforts to rein in water-consumption rates by industry and householders will shape metropolitan growth and change in the future. Similarly, efforts to reduce emissions from transport and electricity generation will also shape the metropolis. To a lesser yet still important extent, the need to address hard-waste ‘landfill’ and damage to waterways, flora and fauna will emerge as other key drivers of change.

Despite a break in the decade-long drought, water-usage patterns are of paramount concern
The State of Victorian does operate a range of programs to help Victorian communities to meet climate challenges, including the following:

- The Black Balloons Campaign advertising that gives Victorians an understanding of how their activities at home are linked to emissions and climate change;
- Programs such as GreenHome, the Regional Sustainable Living Program and EcoLiving Centres, which gives hands on sustainability advice to Victorians;
- Support for local councils to develop sustainable energy precincts known as Smart Energy Zones to bring energy-generation closer to communities;
- The ResourceSmart Program which provides practical support to reduce emissions in businesses, schools, households and communities;
- The Victorian Solar in Schools Program which is installing grid-connected solar photovoltaic systems in 500 schools and community buildings across the state;
- The Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative which provides a framework for schools to incorporate education for sustainability into school operations and infrastructure.

However, the substantial effects of these programs are questionable. And more problematically, there are larger structural issues linked to the strength of the economy that cut against whatever these programs do achieve. The electricity utilities in Melbourne, which were privatized in the mid-1990s, are highly reliant for energy generation upon unsustainable brown coal-fired power plants in the La Trobe Valley to the east of the city. These activities serving Melbourne contribute to Australia having one of the highest per capita greenhouse gas emissions in the world. The controversial Port Phillip Bay Channel Deepening Project, recently completed to enable entry of larger shipping vessels to Australia’s largest working port, has further challenged the environmental sustainability of the city. As have two other major and equally-controversial water-infrastructure projects: the Wonthaggi Desalination Plant and the Sugarloaf Pipeline Project, which centres upon a 70 kilometre pipeline linking the Goulburn River near Yea to the Sugarloaf Reservoir in Melbourne’s north-east at a cost of $750 million. The pipeline will distribute water to regional Victorian agricultural irrigators and increase natural flows to watercourses, while the desalination plant is intended to supply potable water to the city. A key environmental constraint upon the growth of the city is the availability of fresh water. The experience of a long-term drought affecting southeastern Australia over the last decade had prompted the state government to set relatively stringent binding ‘water restrictions’ upon commercial and residential water-use, but this was not seen as sufficient.
It is estimated that the Ecological Footprint for those living in the Melbourne metropolitan area is 4.5 hectares per person, which is 3.5 times the global average per person. Average temperatures are predicted to increase by 0.7o Celsius over the next sixty-five years. Waterways and storage dams to the east of the city supply most of the potable water to 75 per cent of the population, and are continuing pressure. Motor transport is a major contributor to airborne pollution across the city, and mortality due to airborne pollutants is higher than that attributed to vehicle accidents.

It was questionable whether or not the Brumby government’s 2009 Melbourne@5Million provided a plan that could respond to this complexity. It included a number of refinements to Melbourne 2030:

- Designation of six new Central Activities Districts with functions like Melbourne’s Central Business District;
- Employment corridors to improve accessibility to jobs and services and reduce congestion on the transport network;
- Provision for 600,000 new dwellings by 2026, with established areas to accommodate 53 per cent and growth areas to accommodate 47 per cent of new dwellings;
- Proposals to extend growth areas with a focus on the north and west to accommodate future population growth and align with significant transport projects, with proposals set out in Delivering Melbourne’s Newest Sustainable Communities (June 2009);
- More efficient use of green-field land with a target of fifteen dwellings per hectare;
- Creation of two grassland protected areas in Melbourne’s west.\(^\text{10}\)

However, this is a moot point now as we wait on the plan of the newly-elected Baillieu government, sworn into power in December 2010.

**Building and Infrastructure**

Apart from a few new landmark constructions and retrofit buildings, most of Melbourne’s building stock was constructed prior to official recognition of the need for environmentally-sustainable construction methods, raising questions about environmental issues especially in relation to thermal insulation and water metering in multiple-occupancy dwellings. Melbourne has an extensive public transport system based on rail, tram and bus networks, with its light-rail (tram) services much more extensive than most cities in the world. Once a publicly-owned system, the transport services are now all privately-owned and managed, and like most public transport infrastructure, are operating at a loss. On the positive side, most of the city’s major attractions, including museums, galleries, cinemas and theatres, as well as its many major sporting facilities—swimming centres, cricket and football grounds, and soccer

\(^{10}\) Department of Planning and Community Development, Melbourne 2030: A Planning Update—Melbourne@5Million, DPCD, Melbourne, 2009.
and tennis stadiums—are accessible by public transport. Also on the positive side is government awareness of growing problems: the Victorian Transport Plan sets the direction for transport planning and investment to 2020.11 Indeed, due to population growth and rising automotive fuel costs, demand for public transport services has increased in recent years. Because of lack of public investment over the past few decades—with money alternatively poured into a freeway system since the 1970s—public transport now faces a crisis of congestion and quality of infrastructure. The only major public investment recently has been $850 million for a troubled electronic ticketing system called Myki, three times the cost of the second most expensive system in the world, London’s Oyster Card—and for this Myki is yet to work as it was planned.12

Over 75 per cent of dwellings in the Melbourne metropolitan area are detached homes, characterized by single-family occupancy. High and medium-density dwellings are concentrated within a ten-to-fifteen kilometre arc around the central business district. The number of informal dwellings is negligible. A key environmental issue relating to housing is that while the size of households in decreasing over time, the size of dwellings is increasing—prompting the now frequent use of the North American term ‘McMansions’ to describe houses in the some of the new developments. Both demand for purchase and rental of all types of dwelling is extremely high, and this is set to continue into the future. As is the case across the rest of Australia, private ownership of dwellings, typically financed by twenty to thirty-year term mortgage loans, is the primary and popular means of obtaining private freehold ownership of a dwelling. High-density public housing makes up only a small percentage of dwellings, and these are concentrated in the inner areas of the city. Most public housing is spread across the middle and outer areas and the building-stock comprises largely single-family occupancy dwellings.

As is the case in Canada and the United States, Australia is a ‘settler society’ where great cultural, economic and political emphasis has been placed upon private family home-ownership. The ideal of the domestic ‘quarter-acre block’ with home and garden for a nuclear family has thus entrenched high levels of demand for low-rise, low-density suburban housing. Given ecological considerations, important cultural shifts are required in relation to the normality of the single-family occupancy of standalone dwellings and the use of private transport for occupational, business and leisure practices.

Within the metropolitan area, residential land-use makes up 47 per cent, most of which is privately-held freehold properties with some social (state-owned) housing, and followed by industrial use, public parks and conservation areas. Commonwealth-controlled land has declined significantly over the last fifty years, and accounts for only 0.5 per cent of land-use. The proportion of land dedicated to conservation and parkland in the expanding city has also declined over this period, even though the area occupied by such land has increased threefold. The size of the city itself—the sum of all land-use areas combined—has increased fourfold since 1951. Debates over political issues continue to shape the social

12 This figure is only the capital cost, and its overall and eventual cost will be much greater. A state-owned enterprise called the Transport Ticketing Authority was set up in 2003 to manage the process of developing the Myki system through a private consortium (TTA, Annual Report 2009–10, Transport Ticketing Authority, Melbourne, 2010). It currently has 120 staff and an annual government financial input for 2010 of $111 million.
and built environment across the metropolis, especially in relation to mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, but despite this the Victorian parliament voted in July 2010 to increase the city’s borders by 43,000 hectares with a plan to accommodate an additional 134,000 homes. One of the urban myths that abounds is that the state needs to keep on releasing land on the urban fringe as the basis for keeping land-prices affordable. The consequences are the creation of two-tier metropolitan society with a tendency for poorer people to live in the new outer suburbs with fewer services.

One of these services is health. The metropolitan area of Melbourne has thirty public hospitals and thirteen public health-centres. The network of Community Health Services covering the city’s Eastern, North and West, and Southern Metropolitan Regions is recognized as Australia’s most comprehensive, but the service-area of hospitals increases as one goes out beyond the inner-city area. Melbourne also hosts a number of internationally-renowned medical, neuroscience and biotechnology research institutions with most located close to the centre of Melbourne. It has a number of major research and teaching universities as well as research centres for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) and the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories (CSL). The number of general practitioners as a percentage of population is high in global terms. In summary, Melbourne is well served by its health infrastructure, but some people are better served than others. Costs are escalating and hospital services, and in particular emergency services, are under immense pressure given population increases and technological intensification.

Politics

Melbourne has a stable and sustainable political life, marred by a tendency for the democratic processes of the State of Victoria to be thinly procedural and its decision-making activities to be increasingly centralized in the inner executive of government. At the municipal level, politics is much more open and contested, with significant and active attempts in some municipalities of Melbourne to enjoin citizen participation. The greater metropolitan Melbourne is administratively and politically divided into thirty-one local government regions with no formal connection. Of the thirty-one local-level governments, twenty-six are designated ‘cities’ and five are ‘shire’. The ‘City of Melbourne’ is the most prominent among these, one council overseeing a small area that includes the central business district of the metropolitan area called ‘Melbourne’. This dispersal of authority is both a strength (allowing local participation), and a weakness—emphasizing participation without negotiating the terms of its authority. One weakness in this respect is that the fragmentation of local government in Melbourne allows a small political coterie at the centre of the state-level of government to make uncontested decisions about the city with little public consultation on such issues as its energy sources, the dredging of its bay, and its boundaries of urban growth.
Local councils are largely responsible for planning and waste-management within their geographical areas, and also provide library and public information services, with the local town hall often doubling as a community centre. Overall governance of the metropolitan region is thus the responsibility of the Victorian State Government. This includes responsibility for metropolitan and state-wide land-use and transport planning and implementation, public transport, main roads, traffic control, policing, primary, secondary and in part, tertiary education, healthcare and planning for major infrastructure projects. The development of Melbourne thus needs to be understood as caught in a tension between the state government and local-level governments. It tends to be the state government that decides upon and initiates all major development projects.

Political life is lively, even if crucial decision-making is centralized. As with all federal, state and local council elections in the Commonwealth of Australia, voter registration and participation in the electoral process is compulsory for all adult citizens eighteen-years-old and over, and non-compliance is penalized by a fine. The city’s main broadsheet, The Age, hosts regular discussion of urban political, cultural, economic and environmental issues, as do city area-based newspapers such as The Melbourne Times. Local councils across the metropolitan region frequently host community forums and public consultations on planning, environmental and social issues. Agencies of the State Government regularly undertake community engagement in relation to a vast range of planning, development, infrastructure and other issues, and such engagement is also sometimes a feature of Federal political issues.

Large business groupings, trades unions and social and environmental organizations are based in the city, and are vocal on many urban issues. These include the peak body representing Australian corporations, the Business Council of Australia, the peak body representing Australian workers, the Australian Council of Trades Unions, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the United Nations Global Compact Cities Programme, the influential quango Environment Victoria, and a large local chapter of the global environmental organization Friends of the Earth.

In keeping with Melbourne’s diversity of cultures, the city is home to a strong and influential group of ethnic and cultural organizations dedicated to advancing the political and cultural interests of their members. Key forums for these groups are hosted by the Victorian Multicultural Commission and Multicultural Arts Victoria. Politically-motivated violence is largely unknown, and, although occasional opportunistic violence is directed across ethnic lines, there has never been racially-motivated rioting or civil unrest akin to relatively recent histories in such cities as Los Angeles (1992), Bombay (1992), London (1995), Paris (2005) or Mumbai (2008). While relatively minor corruption scandals periodically erupt at the level of local government, politics in the city are on the whole transparent and in accordance with liberal-democratic principles. The former State Government’s A Fairer Victoria social policy action-plan seeks to address disadvantage and promote inclusion and participation, and the newly incumbent government has also proclaimed its support for narrowing socio-economic inequalities. Almost all local councils in the metropolitan area have developed and implemented social inclusion policies that are specifically designed to address the needs of particular neighbourhoods or districts. All this suggests a sustainable and vibrant political domain, but it is one that is dependent on continuing support for multicultural difference, continuing relative prosperity, and properly directed social investment.

Culture

The area now occupied by the city had for about 40,000 years been inhabited by Aboriginal peoples, primarily of the Wurundjeri-Willam, Boonwurrung and Wathaurong tribes, and was an important meeting place for several Kulin clans. Aboriginal Australians continue to have a presence in the city, especially in inner northern and western suburbs, but it is no longer a major visible presence. This presence is overlaid by a series of waves of settlements from elsewhere. In metropolitan Melbourne, nearly a third of residents were born overseas, with almost the same percentage of residents in metropolitan Melbourne speaking a language other than English at home (based on 2006 census figures). The city is home to significant British, Italian, Vietnamese, Chinese, New Zealand, Greek, Indian, Sri Lankan, Malaysian, Croatian, German, Maltese, South African, Macedonian, Hong Kong Chinese, Polish, Pilipino, Lebanese, Dutch and Bosnian-born residents, as well as increasing numbers of persons born in the Horn of Africa countries and the Sudan. The city is home to large Italian, Greek, Maltese, Vietnamese and Chinese communities. A large influx of Central and Eastern Europeans of Jewish faith also arrived in Melbourne in these decades, making a major global centre of Judaic culture.

The city hosts a number of refugee-immigrant communities. In the late 1960s and into the 1970s, large groups of refugee-immigrants arrived from the Lebanon and Vietnam, and more recently refugees have settled in the city from the Sudan and Horn of Africa countries. Melbourne is also home to large Orthodox Christian communities from various nations and communities from each of the major Islamic traditions. Although the phenomenon of ethnic enclaving has not been apparent in the city, several different areas of Melbourne possess a distinctive character that is linked to a particular culture. Languages other than English spoken at home across the city include, in declining order, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Macedonian, Turkish, Spanish, Croatian, Maltese, Polish, Tagalog, German, Serbian, Russian, Sinhalese, Hindi, French, Indonesian, Khmer, Hungarian, Tamil, Netherlandic, Persian, Japanese, South Slavonic, Samoan, Portuguese and Korean (2001 figures).

Educational Attainment

According to figures in the ABS 2006 Census for the Melbourne area, 15,216 males and 37,677 females had no formal school education; 93,092 males and 214,901 females had only primary school education; while 652,231 males and 702,737 females had completed the highest level of high school. It is estimated that the relatively high overall numbers of people with only primary or no educational attainment, and the high proportion of these people who are female, (practically 2:1) is a condition of the city's high migrant and refugee population. Such estimates are supported by the inverse figures for higher-education attainment, where fractionally more females than males hold university or higher degrees, which suggests that established groups are more likely to attend university than recent arrivals.
Education infrastructure across the city is well developed by world standards. Melbourne has 837 government schools and approximately 600 religious and independent schools. There are eight main university campuses in the metropolitan area: the University of Melbourne, Monash University, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, La Trobe University, Deakin University, the Swinburne University of Technology, Victoria University and the Australian Catholic University. Other universities with a presence in the city include Ballarat, Central Queensland, Charles Sturt and James Cook universities, which cater primarily for international students. Melbourne's universities, while still strong, face the same issues that are confronted by universities globally—most basically, an increasing withdrawal of state funding in relation to overall cost. There is a substantial dependence on the fees of international students, a phenomenon that is connected to the city's ethnic diversity and the increasing Asian presence, particularly given that gaining access to higher education was a way for international students to later settle in the city. This also makes university funding, to a lesser extent private-school funding, and by extension an important aspects of the city's economy as whole, vulnerable to the fluctuations of student demand from Asia.

Celebrations and Events
Melbourne has many commercial popular music and talk-based radio stations, as well as a number of uniquely popular, well-supported community (public) radio stations offering popular and classical music. Attending live music events is a popular pastime, and large sports stadiums regularly host international touring popular musicians, while a number of dedicated venues and bars host performances by classical, jazz and popular artists. In the sporting arena, Melbourne hosted the 1956 Olympic Games, an event which is widely seen as the city's 'introduction to the world'. Other major events in the city that attract international audiences are the horse-racing Melbourne Cup and associated Spring Racing Carnival, the automotive Melbourne Grand Prix and the Melbourne Open Tennis Tournament. Melbournians are avid observers and participants in a range of sports. The Melbourne Cricket Ground hosts an international contest every Boxing Day (26 December). Melbourne is the historical home of Australian Rules Football, which is played professionally in front of large crowds from March until September. The city also hosts professional Rugby League and Rugby Union football teams, which play in the national competitions from March to September. Melbourne hosts two professional Association Football (soccer) teams, which play in the national A-League competition from August to March. There has been a tendency for the increasing professionalization and nationalization of the sporting codes. Although, still, across Melbourne and throughout the year, people play all of these sports socially in local fields and parks, as well as highly popular sports of netball, golf, hockey and basketball.
Regular political-cultural events include the ANZAC Day Memorial March, a national
day of remembrance commemorating the contributions and sacrifices of Australian
military service men and women. Public cultural events held in Melbourne include the
International Film Festival, Writers’ Festival, an International Comedy Festival. The city
is a UNESCO City of Literature. Melbourne hosts the Moomba Parade in May each
year, a commercially-driven parade (once controversially) organized by city businesses
to coincide with May Day celebrations. It has since largely displaced the original
celebration. The Royal Agricultural Show presents regional agricultural products to the
city in a carnival atmosphere in March-April and the Melbourne International Flower
and Garden Show provides a forum for the city’s gardeners. Multicultural events
include the Greek Antipodes Festival, the Melbourne Italian Festa, the Asian Food
Festival and Australian Chinese New Year Celebrations which centre upon the city’s
long-established Chinatown. The city has around 5,000 cafés and restaurants, and
hundreds of bars and nightclubs are scattered across the inner city and middle sectors
of the metropolitan area, largely around existing public transport hubs.

Economy

Like Australia as a whole, the prevailing economic system in Melbourne is a regulated
capitalist market, jointly overseen by the federal and state-level governments. Although
economic activity across the metropolis is widely dispersed and divergent, the city
can be divided into three broad spatial sectors. The inner-city areas are characterized
by the predominance of finance, banking and high-level services industries, the
‘middle sector’ is characterized by manufacturing and services; the ‘outer areas’ by
manufacturing, services and small-scale agriculture, such as market gardens. The
Central Business District located in the City of Melbourne council area remains the focal
point for the economy of the metropolis. The GDP per capita for Melbourne at the end
of 2008 was USD$30,700, with an overall GDP of USD$611.7 billion.

The Melbourne metropolitan area represents a significant financial centre not only for
Australia, but also for the wider Asia-Pacific rim, containing the headquarters of several
large banks and corporations, and important manufacturing industries. The sea-port
is Australia’s largest with US$75 billion’s worth of trade moving through it annually.
Melbourne’s ICT industry employs more than a third of Australia’s workforce in this
sector and generates high rates of turnover and export revenue. The major sources of
employment in Melbourne are property and business services, finance and investment
services, and retail services, transport and storage, accommodation and cafes,
manufacturing, and wholesale trade. Most businesses in Melbourne employ less than
twenty people, and only 1 per cent employs more than 200 people.

Overall labour-force participation varies across the metropolis, from 18 per cent to 69
per cent depending on the local government area, while female participation (which is
more likely to be part-time) varies from 42 per cent to 49 per cent. As with the rest of
Australia, anecdotal evidence suggests that the informal sector centres upon part-time,
often student and female employment in bars, cafes and other small service sectors of
the economy. The unemployment rate across Melbourne is around 4.5 per cent (2008
figures), which is close to the national average. Unlike comparable North American and
European cities, but like other Australian cities, spatially-concentrated poverty and social
dislocation are highest on the peri-urban fringes. Inner city areas are largely areas of high
per capita wealth, yet pockets of homelessness in the central activities district do exist.

8, 2009, pp. 1553-76.
Conclusions about the Present

Melbourne, like metropolitan regions across the globe, is confronting the challenge of providing for substantial population growth in an economically, ecologically, politically and culturally sustainable manner. The approach to managing growth is sometimes characterized as an unhelpful choice between the extremes of ‘urban sprawl’ or ‘high density towers’. Within these debates, urban sprawl is sometimes characterized as being associated with poor transportation options, neighbourhoods that are not pedestrian-friendly, loss of valued non-urban land, and associated environmental and health impacts. Similarly, urban consolidation is characterized as ghetto-ization and even ‘un-Australian’. However, restricting land supply is also criticized for the impact it has on housing affordability and housing choice. At the same time, there is community concern regarding the possible impact of intensification on existing urban amenity and the greater complexity of developing housing amongst existing urban fabric.

Wealth in Melbourne is unequally spread. In 2006 according to the last census figures, 1.86 million people had jobs in Melbourne. This is expected to grow to nearly 3 million in 2036. Most of these jobs are located in central and inner Melbourne, with a jobs’ ratio of more than three local jobs for every resident of working age. This ratio drops to 0.7 in Melbourne’s west and 0.8 in Melbourne’s east. The imbalance between the location of jobs and where people live is increasing congestion on the transport networks in the inner and middle suburbs. The predominance of single-direction travel during morning and evening peaks congests roads and public transport. Outer-suburban dwellers experience long commute times and are much more likely to use cars as their primary means of travel. All this means is that, like many other cities, Melbourne is caught in the problems of an uneven growth-and-development cycle, where increasing ‘success’ brings increasing vulnerability.

Finding a path through these challenging issues and the extremes of views represents a significant challenge. While Melbourne 2030 included a focus on getting more housing and development into established areas, it also decided politically that there would continue to be a need to provide for some outward growth. Substantial effort has been focused on growth-area planning since the release of Melbourne 2030 and has included undertaking long-term planning for growth areas and establishing a Growth Areas Authority to work in partnership with local councils, developers and infrastructure providers to ensure effective co-ordination of growth area planning, infrastructure and service provision. The incoming Baillieu government has promised to scrap the Melbourne 2030 Plan and other associated plans to date, and made clear its commitment to expanding the growth boundaries, based upon the claim that Melbourne requires more ‘affordable’ housing. This suggests a continuing drive towards ecological unsustainability, and it is doubtful whether it will deal adequately with the increasing divisions of wealth across the city and other looming social issues.
3. Researchers

3.1 Members

Iftekhar Ahmed  
Research Fellow, Climate Change Adaptation Programme, Global Cities Research Institute, RMIT University

Research interests: post-disaster reconstruction, climate change adaptive built environment, disaster risk management and low-income housing; author, co-author or editor of nine books; extensive professional and research experience in South and Southeast Asia.

Aliakbar Akbarzadeh  
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Research interests: biodiversity management, environmental decision analysis; institutional change for sustainability; education for sustainability.

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Research interests: systems analysis applied to social change and education for sustainability, factory farming in relation to attitudes and transition to sustainable practices, and visual research methods.
Mike Berry  
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Research interests: housing markets and policy, environmental economics, urban social theory, urban development.

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Research interests: microfinance, examined within the frameworks of community development and social inclusion; and the migrant experience, issues of identity and belonging.

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Robin Cameron (from 2010)  
Research Manager and Research Fellow, Human Security, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University  
Research interests: Critical security studies and human security; global criminology; counter-terrorism, 9/11 and the war on terror, in particular the effects on social cohesion and community resilience; the incorporation of foreign policy and global discourses into local practices of social order and control.

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Val Colic-Peisker  
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Tony Dalton  
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**Researcher, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University**

Research interests: currently focused on visual culture and global social imaginary, art and global ideologies, art history and theory, visual and critical studies, philosophy and aesthetics, and several aspects of culture that rely on visual images, including hybrid electronic media and any other media that have a crucial visual component.

Toni Erskine  
**Senior Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University**

Research interests: moral agency and responsibilities of formal organizations in world politics, ethics of war (including issues of non-combatant immunity, torture, and intelligence collection), and communitarian and cosmopolitan conceptions of duty; author of *Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Duties to Strangers and Enemies in a World of ‘Dislocated Communities’* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

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Research interests: art as a site of knowledge in the contemporary context of globalization on the way art is positioned in education; and art in a contemporary knowledge economy.

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Research interests: environmental assessment and policy, carbon-neutral communities, eco-design, sustainable production and consumption, environmentally-sustainable housing and households.

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Research interests: the global imaginary in an Asian context, global cultural flows, cultural politics in Southeast Asia, art and globalization, city cultures of Asia. Chris is currently working on a project entitled ‘Theatre in the Asia-Pacific: Regional Cultures in a Global Context’ funded by the ARC.

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Research interests: nationalism and globalization; author or editor of twenty-four books including Nation Formation (1996); Work of the Future: Global Perspectives (1997); Global Matrix (2005 with Tom Nairn) and Globalism, Nationalism, Tribalism (2006).

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Research interests: media and cultural theory; transculturalism; new communications technology; textual studies; globalization studies; cultural democracy and the media; 9/11, terror and the mediation of war; community responses to the Bali bombings. His publications include *Cultural Studies* (2002) and *Language Wars* (2005).

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Adela McMurray  
*Collaborating Scholar, Associate Professor, Director, Research Support & Performance, RMIT University*

Anne McNevin  
*Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University*

Research interests: citizenship, irregular migration, globalization; recent publications in *Citizenship Studies*, *Review of International Studies*, and *Australian Journal of Political Science*.

Cecily Maller  
*Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University*

Research interests: households and consumption, socio-technical aspects of urban infrastructure, housing and health and well-being, and interactions and relationships between people and the natural, built and social environments.

Paul Mees  
*Collaborating Scholar, Senior Lecturer, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University*

Dave Mercer  
*Collaborating Scholar, Associate Professor, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University*

Alemayehu Molla  
*Collaborating Scholar, Associate Professor, School of Business Information Technology and Logistics, RMIT University*

Susie Moloney  
*Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University*

Research interests: sustainable urban environments, social practices around energy use and the infrastructures and institutions of energy provision, urban planning and environmental policy.
Brian Morris
Collaborating Scholar, Senior Lecturer, School of Media and Communication, RMIT University

John Morrissey
Collaborating Scholar, Research Fellow, Centre for Design, RMIT University

Jane Mullett
Research Manager, Climate Change Adaptation, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: art and the community, adapting to climate change.

Martin Mulligan
Director, Globalism Research Centre, RMIT University
Research interests: sense of place and community wellbeing in particular Victorian communities; the recovery of local communities in post-tsunami Sri Lanka; strategies for nature conservation in the post-colonial era; rethinking attitudes to water in Australia and internationally; social history of ecological thought and action. His books include Ecological Pioneers (2001 with Stuart Hill) and Decolonizing Nature (2003 with William Adams).

Yaso Nadarajah
Research Manager, Community Sustainability, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: local-global perspective, community formation and resistance and community engaged research methodology.

Tom Nairn (to 2010)
Collaborating Scholar, Innovation Professor of Nationalism and Cultural Diversity, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University
Research interests: nationalism and internationalism; author of many books including Faces of Nationalism (1997); After Britain (2000); and Global Matrix (2005 with Paul James).

Barbara Norman (to mid 2009)
Research Manager, Climate Change Adaptation; Research Partnerships Manager, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: urban and regional planning, sustainable development, coastal planning and management.

Lin Padgham
Collaborating Scholar, Head of School, School of Computer Science and Information Technologies, RMIT University

Sharon Parkinson
Collaborating Scholar, Research Fellow, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University
Heikki Patomäki
Innovation Professor of Globalization and Global Institutions, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: global democratization and global political theory; author or co-author of nine books, including Democratising Globalisation (2001); After International Relations (2002); and A Possible World (2004).

Simon Perry
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Art, RMIT University

Peter Phipps
Collaborating Scholar, Senior Lecturer, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University
Research interests: postcolonial cultural politics, history of theory in anthropology; tourism; transnational religious movements; indigenous–settler relations in Australia.

Nattavud Pimpa
Collaborating Scholar, Senior Lecturer, School of Management, RMIT University

Siddhi Pittayachawan
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Business Information Technology and Logistics, RMIT University

Nichola Porter
Collaborating Scholar, School of Applied Sciences, RMIT University

Izabela Ratajczak (from 2010)
Research Fellow, Climate Change Adaptation, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University

Shams Rahman
Collaborating Scholar, Professor, School of Business Information Technology and Logistics, RMIT University

Shanthi Robertson
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University

Felicity Roddick
Senior Advisor, Climate Change Adaptation, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: potable water treatment, wastewater treatment and recycling, biochemical engineering.

Selver Sahin
Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: changing perceptions of security in the post-Cold War era, international state-building, democracy promotion, and the process of national identity formation in conflict-affected societies.

Andy Scerri
Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University
Research interests: cultural politics of globalization and national identity formation across Australia, Britain and the United States; the nature of contemporary subjectivity.
Kristen Sharp  
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Art, RMIT University

Research interests: globalization and culture, art, cultural identity formation in visual culture, transnational studies (with a particular focus on Japan and China), the role of art in the formation of urban cultures and experience, cultural studies and art theory.

Mohini Singh  
Collaborating Scholar, Professor, School of Business Information Technology and Logistics, RMIT University

Supriya Singh  
Research Leader, Community Sustainability, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University

Research interests: user-centred design of new technologies, cross-cultural design, the sociology of money and methodological issues relating to qualitative research, author of a number of books including The Bankers (1991) and Marriage Money (1997).

Joseph Siracusa  
Collaborating Scholar, Associate Dean, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University

Research interests: international diplomacy, ethical and humanitarian intervention; international security; Australia–United States security issues; United Nations reform; strategic responses to terrorism.

Victoria Stead  
Researcher, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University

Research interests: changing patterns of power across customary and modern social forms; social connection to land; contemporary politics and society in Melanesia, particularly Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste; post-colonial activism and resistance; global ethnography and the local-global nexus.

Manfred Steger  
Research Leader, Globalization and Culture, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University


Richard Tanter  
Collaborating Scholar, Adjunct Professor of International Relations, Research and Innovation; Director, Nautilus Institute.

Ian Thomas  
Collaborating Scholar, Associate Dean, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University

Ly Tran  
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Education, RMIT University
Lakshmi Venugopal  
Research Assistant, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University  
Recent research: community resilience, identity and belonging in modernizing Malaysia.

Karli Verghese  
Collaborating Scholar, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Design, RMIT University

Deb Verhoeven  
Collaborating Scholar, Associate Professor, School of Media and Communication, RMIT University

Sue-Anne Ware  
Collaborating Scholar, Deputy Head of School (Research), School of Architecture and Design, RMIT University

Wasana Weeraratne  
Research Assistant, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University  
Recent research: assessing post-tsunami resettlement projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India.

Peter Westwood  
Collaborating Scholar, Lecturer, School of Art, RMIT University

Leone Wheeler  
Collaborating Scholar, Learning Community Partnerships, RMIT University

Linda Williams  
Collaborating Scholar, Associate Professor, School of Art, RMIT University

Erin Wilson  
Research Fellow, Global Cities Institute, RMIT University  
Recent research: globalization, ideology, religion and secularism; the relationship between religion and politics in the West and its impact on world politics through foreign policy; religion and global justice; NGOs and social change.

Gavin Wood  
Collaborating Scholar, Director, RMIT-NATSEM Centre, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, RMIT University  
Recent research: labour economics.

Christopher Ziguras  
Associate Professor, International Studies, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University  
4. Administrative Structure

4.1 Administrative Structure
Paul James, Director
Frank Yardley, Manager
Michelle Farley, Administrative Officer

4.2 College Reference Group
Tony Dalton, College of Design and Social Context Representative
John Fien, College of Business Representative
Felicity Roddick, College of Science, Engineering and Health Representative

4.2 Research Leaders Group
Paul James, Director, Global Cities Institute
Caroline Bayliss, Director, Global Sustainability (to 2010)
Anuja Cabraal, Doctoral Student Representative
Prem Chhetri, Research Manager, Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures Program
Tony Dalton, Dean Research and Innovation, College of Design and Social Context
John Fien, Research Leader, Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures Program
John Handmer, Research Leader, Human Security Program
Ralph Home, Research Leader, Sustainable Urban and Regional Futures Program
Chris Hudson, Research Manager, Globalization and Culture Program
Jeff Lewis, Research Leader, Human Security Program
Mark Littlejohn, Manager, Research and Innovation Portfolio
Stephanie McCarthy, Manager, UN Global Compact Cities Programme (to 2010)
Darryn McEvoy, Research Leader, Climate Change Adaptation Program
Jane Mullett, Research Manager, Climate Change Adaptation Program
Yaso Nadarajah, Research Manager, Community Sustainability Program
Lin Padgham, Head of School, School of Computer Science and Information Technology
Heikki Patomäki, Innovation Professor, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning
Felicity Roddick, Senior Advisor, Climate Change Adaptation Program
Supriya Singh, Research Leader, Community Sustainability Program
Manfred Steger, Research Leader, Globalization and Culture Program
Frank Yardley, Manager, Global Cities Institute
4.3 Steering Committee

Paul James, Director, Global Cities Institute
John Buckeridge, Head of School, School of Civil, Environmental and Chemical Engineering
George Cairns, Head of School, School of Management
Esther Charlesworth, Senior Lecturer, School Architecture and Design (from 2010)
Brian Corbitt, Head of School, School of Business Information Technology
Tony Dalton, Dean of Research, College of Design and Social Context
John Fien, Professor, College of Design and Social Context
Annette Gough, Head of School, School of Education
Elizabeth Grierson, Head of School, School of Art
John Hearne, Head of School, School of Mathematical and Geospatial Sciences
David Hayward, Dean, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning
Chris Hudson, Assoc. Professor Asian Media and Culture, School of Communication and Media
Stephanie Hemelryk Donald, Dean, School of Communication and Media
Fang Lee Cooke, Deputy Head, Research, School of Management
Lin Padgham, Head of School, School of Computer Science and Information Technology
Felicity Roddick, Professor, School of Civil, Environmental and Chemical Engineering
Ronald Wakefield, Head of School, School of Property Construction and Project Management
Bruce Wilson, Head of School, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning (to late 2009)
4.4 Advisory Board

Michael Barlow, Managing Director, Urbis, Committee Chair (from 2010)
Cheryl Batagol, Chairman and CEO, EPA Victoria
Charles Berger, Director Strategies, Australian Conservation Foundation
Naomi Brown, Chief Executive Officer, Australasian Fire Authorities Council
Prue Digby, Deputy Secretary, Department of Planning and Community Development
Neil Furlong, Professor Emeritus, RMIT University
Dick Gross, Local Government Specialist
Paul James, Director, Global Cities Institute
Andrew Jaspan, Former editor of The Age
Kevin Love, Deputy Secretary, Department of Sustainability and Environment
Graeme Pearman, Climate Change Scientist
Cath Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Victorian Council of Social Services
Marcus Spiller, Vic Urban Board member, past national Planning President
David Waldren, Sustainability Manager, GROCON Melbourne
Andrew Wisdom, Director, Melbourne, ARUP Australia
Melbourne, Australia, 2010. Fatal accident memorial attached to a road-side electricity pole.
5.1 Fellows and Distinguished Visitors

2010

Professor Haider A. Khan, Joseph Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, USA
Scott Leckie, Director and Founder of Displacement Solution
Lee Coates, Founder of Ethical Investors (UK 1989) and Ethical Screening (1998), and Director of Cruelty Free Superfund, Australia.
Professor Mark Harvey, Director, Centre for Research in Economic Sociology and Innovation, Department of Sociology, University of Essex
Professor Kate Auty, Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability
Dr Laurence Murphy, Acting Director, National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries, The University of Auckland, New Zealand
Jennifer Dixon, Dean, National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries, The University of Auckland, New Zealand
Mr Shibo Geng, Deputy Director-General, Counsellors’ Office of the State Council, China (as part of the Chinese State Council delegation)
Mr Lijun Gou, Deputy Director of Tianjin Municipal People’s Government (as part of the Tianjin Government delegation)
Dr Rencheng Jin, Director General, The Education Commission of Tianjin Municipal People’s Government (as part of the Tianjin Education Commission delegation)
Mr Shigao Wang, Vice Chairman, Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, Hua’ian Municipal Committee, from Jiangsu province (Victoria’s sister state) (as part of the Hai’an Municipal People’s Government delegation)
Prof Zhihua Yao, Vice President, Tianjin Medical University, Tianjin, China (as part of the Tianjin University Leaders’ delegation)

2009

Professor Ibrahim G Aoudé, Professor of Ethnic Studies, University of Hawai’i—Manoa
Stephen Berry, Director, Green Loans programme, DEWHA
Gavin Killip, Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University, United Kingdom
John Doggart, Chairman, Sustainable Energy Academy, United Kingdom
Dr James Goodman, Senior Lecturer, Social and Political Change Group, University of Technology Sydney
Dr. Anna Kajumulo Tibajjuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi
Professor James Mittelman, American University, Washington DC, USA
Professor Elizabeth Shove, Professor of Sociology, Lancaster University, UK
Dr Martin Weber, Lecturer in International Relations, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland
Le Vu Cuong, Researcher, Vietnam Green Building Council
Previous Visiting Scholars

Professor Clyde Barrow, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, USA
Professor Roland Benedikter, University of Vienna, University of Innsbruck, Austria; Free University of Bolzano, Italy
Professor Roland Bleiker, University of Queensland, Australia
Professor Neil Brenner, New York University, USA
Michaela Bruel, City of Copenhagen; European Green Cities Network, Denmark
Dr Harriet Bulkeley, Durham University, Tyndall Centre, UK
Sir Bernard Crick, Eminent Fabian and Scholar, UK
Professor Simon Dalby, Carleton University, Canada
Professor Siri Hettige, Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
Professor Robert Holton, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
Professor Helge Hveem, University of Oslo, Norway
Dr Le Thanh Sang, Southern Institute of Social Sciences, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam
Neville Mars, Dynamic Cities, Foundation Rotterdam and Beijing, China
Josse Materu, UN-Habitat Nairobi, Kenya
Santha Sheela Nair, Department of Drinking Water Supply, Government of India, New Delhi, India
Dr Nguyen Duc Vinh, Institute of Sociology, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam
Carmenesa Moniz Noronha, Globalism Research Centre, Timor-Leste
Helena Norberg-Hodge, International Society for Ecology and Culture, UK
Professor Susan Ossman, University of California-Riverside, USA
Dr Susan Park, University of Sydney, Australia
Professor Chris T. Paris, University of Ulster, Londonderry, Ireland
Mr Phan Ngoc Thach, Institute of Chinese Studies and Centre for ASEAN and China Studies, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences, Vietnam
Dr Chris Radford, UN-Habitat
Professor Saskia Sassen, Columbia University, USA
Professor Michael J Shapiro, University of Hawai‘i, Hawai‘i
Professor Lyman Tower-Sargent, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand; University of Missouri-St Louis, USA
Professor Xinhua Zhang, Center for Policy and Strategic Studies, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, China

Alice Springs, Australia, 2010
6.1 Climate Change Adaptation

Research Leader: Darryn McEvoy
Research Manager: Jane Mullett
Senior Advisors: Peter Hayes (2009), Felicity Roddick
Research Fellow: Iftekhar Ahmed

How will cities and communities best plan for climate change?

Research Focus
Changes to our climate will be one of the greatest challenges that we are likely to face in the twenty-first century. The primary focus of research activity is to better understand the likely impacts facing different ‘elements at risk’ in the urban environment—categorized broadly as critical infrastructure, buildings, space between buildings, and people—and the often diffuse portfolio of different possible adaptation responses (from technological through to institutional) and the corresponding institutional barriers and opportunities for change.

Due to the complexity involved, CCAP applies an analytical ‘prism’ that enables research questions to be tackled according to different hazards, sectors, spatial scales (from conurbation down to individual buildings), and case study locations (the Asia-Pacific region being a key component of the CCAP remit, with a specific research interest in sustainable urban development in Vietnam and China). This research approach is one based on the integration of quantitative (modeling), qualitative (scenarios) and participatory methodologies; with an active promotion of multi-disciplinary work, reinforced by new forms of engagement between scientific, policy, and wider stakeholder communities.
Whilst cities form the centrepiece of attention, it is recognized that the urban system cannot be understood in isolation from its regional and global hinterlands, and as such multilevel influences and interactions (particularly urban rural linkages and state-wide climate-related issues) are considered explicitly by the program where relevant. This additional emphasis is reinforced by the leader of CCAP occupying the role of Deputy Director of the Victorian Centre for Climate Change Adaptation Research.

The program’s research agenda is structured according to six discrete themes.

1. The characterization of climate-related risks and evaluation of potential adaptation options for different ‘elements at risk’ in the urban environment. This involves collaboration with other national institutions to undertake strategic and multi-disciplinary research which leads to a better understanding of the climate-related risks, and adaptation options, facing Australian cities;

2. Addressing risk and adaptation issues for vulnerable sectors and analysing critical cross-sectoral cascading effects;

3. Collaboration with partners in the Asia-Pacific region to assess climate-related risks facing vulnerable communities, identify and evaluate adaptation options, replicate and test methodologies developed in an Australian context, and actively promote the transfer of knowledge and toolkits with countries in the Asia Pacific region in order to contribute to the building of local adaptive capacity though a process of mutual learning (as well as disseminating findings to an international audience);

4. Involvement with global frameworks / networks of cities that actively share knowledge of good adaptation practice (i.e., cities as laboratories of innovation);

5. Better understanding adaptation as an institutional process, with consideration of structural driving forces (political, economic, etc), risk perceptions of different actors in the urban regime, institutional adaptive management, barriers to (and opportunities for) change, and the building of local adaptive capacity;

6. Identification and communication of barriers and opportunities to adaptation in the form of risk assessment and adaptation best practice guidelines (i.e., mapping out strategic pathways to more climate resilient communities, consideration of adaptation-mitigation synergies and conflicts, analysis of different sectors and issues, mainstreaming adaptation considerations into policy and practice).
Projects

An Extensible Agent-Based Framework for Exploring Climate Change Adaptation
Team: Lin Padgham, Fabio Zambetta, Alexis Drogoul, Colin Fudge, Sarah Hickmott, David Scerri, Cecily Maller
Funding provider: Australian Research Council Discovery Scheme
To develop an extensible agent based simulation framework which enables exploration of cities’ response to climate change adaptation issues. The vision is to provide mechanisms which facilitate modular and transparent development of simulations, allowing more rapid development of simulations than is currently possible. A prototype simulation exploring adaptation of the built environment in Melbourne CBD, to be more responsive to climate change, is being developed as an interdisciplinary project.

Reducing and Monitoring Blue-Green Algal Blooms
Investigator: Felicity Roddick
Funding provider: Smart Water Fund
The development of a multi-barrier approach to the prevention of interruption of recycled water supply from Western Treatment Plant for crop irrigation and other uses due to the presence of toxic blue-green algal blooms (which are increasing in frequency due to climate change).

Application of AOPs in Recycling Municipal Wastewater
Team: Felicity Roddick, Prita Puspita
Funding provider: Smart Water Fund
Climate change means decreasing rainfall over much of populated Australia resulting in decreasing quantity and quality of traditional water sources, and the consequential need to utilise alternative sources such as wastewater. Advanced treatment, such as advanced oxidation processes, can produce high quality water from wastewater. This project will investigate the application of advanced oxidation processes to secondary effluent, using effluent from a Victorian wastewater treatment plant as an example.
Influence of Rising Temperatures Affecting Drinking Water
Team: Felicity Roddick, Stephen Grist
Funding provider: Water Quality Research Australia

There has been increasing incidence of customer complaints regarding taint in some of Melbourne’s water supplies over the warmer months. This has been associated with lower water flows and generally higher temperatures over recent years. The aim of this project is to identify the cause of the taste and odour, the factors which control its generation, and to develop prevention strategies.

Exposures to Recycled Water—Measuring Methods
Team: Felicity Roddick, Stephen Grist
Funding provider: Water Quality Research Australia

Decreasing surface water supplies associated with decreased rainfall is driving water authorities to seek alternative water supplies, including recycled wastewater. Requirements for the microbial quality of recycled water intended for non-potable use are defined in the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling on the basis of log-reductions from pathogen levels in sewage. These log-reductions have been set using quantitative microbial risk assessment to estimate disease risks from inadvertent ingestion of small quantities of recycled water during non-potable use. There is a need to determine the volume of water which may be ingested under these circumstances so that the guidelines are appropriate, neither under-estimating risk nor being overly conservative in requiring higher levels of pathogen removal than necessary. It is planned to use a non-toxic chemical as a tracer to measure inadvertent water ingestion during non-potable use (e.g., showering, washing a car with high pressure hose). Due to the small volumes likely to be ingested it is necessary to develop a method to enable detection of small ingested volumes before human exposure studies can be undertaken.

Agent-Based Simulation Framework for Improved Understanding and Enhancement of Community and Organisational Resilience to Extreme Events
Team: Lin Padgham, Darryn McEvoy, Gaya Jayatilleke, Karyn Bosomworth, Sarah Hickmott, Dave Scerri
Funding provider: National Climate Change and Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF), Research Grant Program, Emergency Management

A multi-disciplinary project that is exploring the value of using agent-based modelling as a decision support tool for better informing responses to, in this instance, bush fires.

This project aims to develop a modular agent based simulation platform, tailored to end-user needs, that allows exploration of complex multi-scalar, multi-actor, emergency management interactions in order to promote more effective governance arrangements. The first funded stage of the project is developing a discrete scenario within a bushfire emergency response context. The scenario is being developed in close partnership with key stakeholders in Victoria’s emergency services sector.
Impacts and Adaptation Response of Infrastructure and Communities to
Heatwaves: The Southern Australian Experience of 2009—Melbourne Case Study
Team: Darryn McEvoy, Ifte Ahmed, Jane Mullett
Funding provider: National Climate Change and Adaptation Research Facility
(NCCARF) Synthesis and Integrative Research Program
This piece of research was commissioned as part of a larger project: “Impacts and
adaptation response of infrastructure and communities to heatwaves: the southern
Australian experience of 2009”. The research consortium was led by Queensland
University of Technology and funded by the Synthesis and Integrative Research
Program, National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF). CCAP
research activity focused specifically on Melbourne’s critical urban infrastructure.
Findings, derived from actor-based research, highlighted the most significant impacts
as being on the electricity and transport systems.
This project focused on the impact of heat on the critical infrastructure of Melbourne;
namely energy, transport, water, and telecommunications. It examined risks and
adaptation measures for each part of the urban system, and concluded by outlining
some of the challenges faced by these sectors in dealing with the effects of heatwaves.

Study of Risk and Adaptation Policy and Research in Melbourne, Victoria
Team: Darryn McEvoy, Jane Mullett
Mapping current and recent climate change adaptation research and policy responses
with a particular emphasis on the built environment (in Melbourne particularly).

Enhancing the Resilience of Seaports to a Changing Climate
Team: Darryn McEvoy, Sujeev Setunge
This seed grant focused on developing a (successful) proposal to be funded in
2011 that aims to make a substantial contribution to the growing climate change risk
and adaptation knowledge base with regards ‘climate change and ports’ in Victoria,
and more specifically to develop state-of-the-art assessment methodologies and
decision support toolkits which will help to inform infrastructural, functional, and
institutional responses to climate change.

Climate Change and Sustainable Urban Development in Vietnam
Team: Darryn McEvoy, Ifte Ahmed, Philip Buckle, Izabela Ratajczak, Ralph Horne, Jane
Mullett, Julia Werner
To engage with key Vietnamese stakeholders around issues of adaptation, mitigation,
vulnerability and sustainable development with a specific focus on secondary cities in
central Vietnam. Working with Vietnamese counterparts to provide scientific support
and capacity building training in support of the climate change and sustainable urban
development agenda.
Research Grants

‘An Extensible Agent-Based Framework for Exploring Climate Change Adaptation’ (2008-2010), ARC (Discovery), Lin Padgham, Fabio Zambetta, Alexis Drogoul, Colin Fudge.

‘Reducing and Monitoring Blue-Green Algal Blooms’ (2008-11), Smart Water Fund, Felicity Roddick.

‘Application of AOPs in Recycling Municipal Wastewater’ (2008-11), Smart Water Fund, Felicity Roddick.

‘Influence of Rising Temperatures Affecting Drinking Water’ (2010-11), WQRA, Felicity Roddick.


‘Agent Based Simulation Framework for Improved Understanding and Enhancement of Community and Organisational Resilience to Extreme Events’ (2010), NCCARF (Research Grant Program, Emergency Management), Lin Padgham, Darryn McEvoy.


‘Study of Risk and Adaptation Policy and Research in Melbourne, Victoria’ (2010), Urban Infrastructure Program, Global Cities Institute, Darryn McEvoy, Jane Mullett.

Increasing the Resilience of Port Infrastructure to Future Changes in Climate’ (2010), School of Chemical, Environmental, and Civil Engineering Grants Scheme, Darryn McEvoy, Sujeeva Setunge.

Research Publications

Books


Book Chapters


Journal Articles


Refereed Conference Papers


A. Meizler, F. Roddick and N. Porter, ‘Continuous Enzymatic Polymerization of 4-bromophenol Initiated by UV Irradiation’, proceedings of Reuse 09 (7th IWA World Congress on Water Reclamation and Reuse), 2009.

S. Nguyen, F. Roddick and J. Harris, ‘Membrane Fouling and Fouling Mechanisms in Microfiltration and Ultrafiltration of an Activated Sludge Effluent’, proceedings of Reuse 09 (7th IWA World Congress on Water Reclamation and Reuse), 2009.

T. Nguyen, L. Fan, F. Roddick and J. Harris, ‘Correlation of Water Quality Characteristics with Filterability in Low-pressure Membrane Filtration of Biologically Treated Effluent’, proceedings of the 7th IWA World Congress on Water Reclamation and Reuse, 2009.

Art and artists are considered as important cultural conduits for raising issues about contemporary life and contributing to community dialogues about those issues.

Bario, Malaysia, 2009.
6.2 Globalization and Culture

Research Leader: Manfred Steger
Research Manager: Chris Hudson
Associate Researchers: Irene Barberis, Mick Douglas, Aramiha Harwood, Geoff Hogg, Kim Humphery, Peter King, Jeff Lewis, Maggie McCormick, Leslie Morgan, Andrew Scerri, Gyorgy Scrinis, Sue Anne Ware.

How can we understand the intensification and expansion of cultural flows through globalizing cities and their regions?

How will cities best respond to the impact of globalization on cultural identity and civic orientation?

Research Focus

This program is engaged in a range of research projects that investigate cultural aspects of globalization in local and global forums and in cities around the world. It brings together theoretical inquiry with empirically grounded and socially engaged research. Program members use diverse methodologies in order to understand how globalization impacts upon cultural expression and how culture manifests in urban settings. Culture is understood broadly as shared webs of meaning through which we experience and interpret the world around us. Culture manifests in symbolic acts, everyday routines, identities and desires. It shapes our social relations, built environments, and relations with the non-human world. The program investigates culture through a range of social phenomena, institutions and symbolic expressions. Crucially, it examines the tensions and complexities of transnational cultural flows in terms of homogenisation, fragmentation, hybridity and commodification. Analysis is focused on urban arenas for cultural contestation and ideological dissent. The program envisages creative solutions to global challenges by encouraging long-term thinking and designing alternative global futures. This approach enables research in such areas as ethical global visions, global governance, and imaginaries of hope.
Description of Program

Research within the Globalization and Culture Program is clustered into three broad themes:

1. Transforming Identities and Subjectivities

This theme concerns the transformation of identities in Asian-Pacific cities through processes of globalization. Cities are nodes in vast global networks of people, governance, ideas and industry as well as distinctly local places that generate diverse responses to globalization. As the world becomes increasingly urbanised, city life shapes our sense of self in new ways. As we move between cities, we experience new modes of trans-local belonging. Accordingly, we ask how various global processes such as migration, economic development, or technological change manifest in cities and impact upon our subjectivities. This theme addresses the means through which identities are shaped and contested, from modes of governmentality to forms of artistic expression. The ideologically induced transformation of citizens into neoliberal subjects constitutes one potential area of inquiry. Of equal interest are the social movements and cultural currents that resist subordination to hegemonic norms and enact alternative subjectivities.

2. Culture and Ideology

Key questions in this research theme include: what is the relationship between globalization, culture and ideology? How do social imaginaries, narratives, metaphors, symbols and myths contribute to ideological change? How do language and space intersect in the cultural milieus of Asian-Pacific cities? Hierarchies based on sharp distinctions between local, national, regional and global scales no longer hold in the global age. Established boundaries are defended, erased, or redrawn. Consequently, we investigate the transformation of our conventional cultural-spatial frameworks into multi-directional constellations and multi-nodal networks. The shifting grounds of discourse emerging in advance of clearly articulated ideological platforms are also key sites of inquiry. This theme recognizes cities as principal hubs for the construction, dissemination and contestation of cultural and ideological discourse.

3. Material Cultures

This theme approaches material culture as an expression of the critical disputes and tensions characterising globalization and global cities. We investigate the conditions for the creation of new cultural spaces and the role of technology in cultural production. How do text and image, art and performance, media and communication combine to construct new cultural forms? Potential areas of investigation include critical analyses of art-works, urban screens, advertising, global-branding, media representations and alternative forms of communication.
Projects

Closing the Gap Between the Wellbeing of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Youth: A Comparative Case Study
Team: Manfred Steger, Jenny Martin, Allan Murray
Funding provider: Australian Research Council
Indigenous communities in Australia (and elsewhere) suffer from extreme disadvantage. Northern Australia and many other places face a demographic time bomb of alienated, self-destructive and culturally disoriented youth, manifesting in violence and abuse. This project takes an evidence-based approach to build upon community strengths and knowledge to design new measures of Indigenous well-being. It identifies factors that contribute to cultural, spiritual, psychological, emotional and social wellbeing, moving beyond welfare or paternalistic approaches. The project aims to develop interventions for Indigenous youth that work towards closing the gap between the wellbeing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth.

Online@Asia-Pacific: Social Networking Systems and Online Communities in the Region
Team: Larissa Hjorth
Funding provider: Australian Research Council
Project description: One way to investigate the emerging forms of sociality, creativity and politics within networked media is through the relationship between emerging and remediated forms of user created content (UCC) and the social networking systems (SNS). Through the lens of localised notions of online “communities” (and their relationship to offline life), Online@AsiaPacific explores the material and symbolic practices of media literacy, creativity and new politics. Drawing from six case locations—Manila, Tokyo, Seoul, Singapore, Shanghai and Melbourne—Online@AsiaPacific analyses and brings new insights into localised and regional online communities that are, like the Internet, dynamic and ever-evolving.

Theatre in the Asia-Pacific: Regional Culture in a Modern Global Context
Team: Chris Hudson (with external leaders: Denise Varney, Peter Eckersall, Barbara Hatley)
Funding provider: Australian Research Council Discovery Scheme
Project description: Focusing on the region’s diverse traditions of theatre and performance, ranging from traditional pre-modern to contemporary postmodern forms, this study offers a multi-regional perspective on contemporary culture in the Asia-Pacific region. An enabling premise is that theatre and performance are significant cultural sites charged with both preserving ancient and pre-modern modes of performance, and also with displaying the vibrancy of contemporary arts practice. Changes in theatre practice are motivated by transformations at the level of history, philosophy and society; theatre is not an autonomous aesthetic sphere but part of the social and material world. The project’s case studies explore theatre practice in Australia, Indonesia, Japan and Singapore and show how theatre bears witness to transformations at the level of the global, the national and the local.
Mapping Justice Globalism: Reassessing the Ideological Landscape of the Twenty-First Century

Team: Manfred Steger, Heikki Patomäki, Erin Wilson (plus external leader: James Goodman)

Funding provider: Australian Research Council Discovery Scheme

Project description: This project investigates and assesses the ideological status of “justice globalism” - the political ideas and public policy vision associated with the global justice movement. Through qualitative textual analysis and in-depth interviews, the project scrutinizes key documents of justice globalism generated by 150 civil society organizations associated with the World Social Forum. The outcome of this research will be a detailed conceptual mapping and policy analysis of justice globalism that furthers our understanding of the ideas, values, and policy proposals behind one of the major global political forces shaping the 21st century.

Mapping the Movies: Understanding Post-War Cinema as a Located Example of Globalization-in-Process

Team: Deb Verhoeven, Colin Arrowsmith (plus external leaders: Richard Maltby, Jill Julius Mathews, Kate Bowles, Mike Walsh)

Funding provider: Australian Research Council

Project description: This project investigates the significance of Australian cinemas as sites of social and economic activity. The project analyses the responsiveness of cinemas and their audiences to social and cultural change through several detailed case studies. We investigate distribution practices and audience preferences using a combination of archival, demographic and spatial data and oral histories. As one of the first Australian research projects to produce historical maps of the social, economic and cultural patterning of media consumption, the project makes a groundbreaking contribution to the analysis of regional and community differentiation in Australian media and cultural history, and enhances our understanding of the ways in which local media practices sustain community identities.

Irregular Migrants and Political Belonging in Global Cities

Team: Paul James, Anne McNevin

Funding provider: Australian Research Council

Project description: This project investigates the transformation of citizenship in four globalizing cities with respect to irregular migration. We ask how irregular migrants (present in a state without the state’s official sanction) are becoming politically active and claiming rights and membership in places from which they are technically excluded. The project involves case studies and in-depth interviews with irregular migrants in Melbourne, Los Angeles, Berlin and Kuala Lumpur. We attempt to build new conceptual approaches to belonging and political community that can capture both the agency and vulnerability of irregular migrants' civic status.
Globalizing Indigeneity: Indigenous Cultural Festivals and Wellbeing in Australia and the Asia Pacific
Team: Paul James, Manfred Steger, Peter Phipps, Lisa Slater
Funding provider: Australian Research Council, Telstra Foundation
Project description: This project investigates the role of cultural festivals in Indigenous community wellbeing. Festivals are understood as domains which both deploy and exceed a rights based discourse as an assertion of Indigenous presence. The project’s starting point is that festivals are a particularly effective forum for communities to assert and re-frame this presence, engage and educate other communities, institutions and levels of government on Indigenous terms, garner resources and strengthen the transmission of cultural knowledge across generations; all with varied wellbeing outcomes. We investigate these outcomes in the context of very different impacts of globalization upon the communities and festivals in question.

Biodiversity Planning in the Urban Fringe: Multiple Actors, Multiple Actions, Multiple Uncertainties
Team: Sarah Bekessy, B Wintle, M McCarthy
Funding provider: Australian Research Council
Project description: Over forty percent of nationally listed threatened ecological communities occur in urban areas. Accelerating urbanisation in Australia is considered one of the greatest threats to biodiversity. This threat will increase without a more strategic approach to conservation planning in urban environments. Protection of biodiversity in urban areas brings numerous societal benefits but involves complicated tradeoffs between competing land uses including housing development, agricultural production and conservation. This project builds on recent advancements in ecological modelling and mathematical optimisation to develop and test tools to facilitate transparent decisions based on optimal trade-offs between competing values. It will result in a more strategic approach to planning conservation in urban environments.

Urban Rivalry
Team: Brian Morris, Deb Verhoeven
Project description: The primary aim of this project is to produce an analytical model for understanding the historical importance of urban rivalry to city identities and cultures (in Australia and internationally). It will do this by connecting research into the political, economic and social dimensions of city identity formation, with research into the more prosaic articulation of inter-city rivalry through media and popular cultures. The research will be focused via two case studies: a) Melbourne/Sydney; b) Tokyo/ Kansai metropolitan area. The research tests the proposition that the cultural identity of individual cities is not, as is often assumed, innate, but emerges from a process of constant comparison. It is through these mediated relationships with other locations that cities are able to define their own sense of ‘place’ in the nation and world.
Silicosis on South African Gold Mines: The History and Politics of an Occupational Disease, 1902 to 2005
Team: Jock McCulloch
Funding provider: Australian Research Council
Project description: This will be the first transnational history of silicosis, perhaps the most important occupational disease of the twentieth century. The project will explore the roles of medical knowledge, capital, trade unions, legislatures, and the state in the identification of risk and the provision of compensation. Using archival sources, and medical literatures, it will examine the transfers of knowledge and compensation systems across the Anglo-American jurisdictions of South Africa, Australia, the UK and the US. The resultant book and articles will illuminate key aspects of knowledge creation and will provide tools for those seeking improved working conditions and legal redress.

The Role of the Wittenoom Asbestos Mine in the Lives and Deaths of Italian Transnational Workers
Team: Jock McCulloch, Pavla Miller.
Funding provider: Australian Research Council, Italian-Australia Institute
Project description: Reconstructing the lives of Italian workers in the context of transnational migration and the mining of one of the world’s most hazardous minerals is significant in itself as part of the Australian historical record. To the Italian community, the story exemplifies the disproportionate contributions and sacrifices of postwar migration. Importantly, the evidence produced will be of use in improving public health and policy responses to the legacy of asbestos disease, both in Australia and in Italy. In drawing on Italian and Australian scholarship, community networks and government initiatives, the project provides valuable training to a doctoral candidate, and contributes to furthering the practical internationalisation of Australian research.

Cultural Precincts
Team: Peter Phipps, Martin Mulligan, Tommaso Durante
Funding provider: City of Melbourne, Victorian Multicultural Commission
Project description: This project is concerned with three inner-city cultural precincts in Lonsdale, Lygon and Little Bourke streets in Melbourne. The project explores the policy settings around cultural precincts here and internationally, conducts research on the cultural history of these precincts, and makes specific policy and implementation recommendations. The project is an example of theoretical questions around cultural identity and community in conditions of globalization offering insights in applied cultural policy. The policy recommendations in the final report will be considered closely by the State Government in framing state-wide cultural precincts policy.
Determining Necessary Survey Effort for Detecting Invasive Weeds in Native Vegetation Communities

Team: Sarah Bekessy (RMIT), Georgia Garrard (RMIT), Brendan Wintle (University of Melbourne)

Funding provider: Australian Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis

Project description: When new invasive species are discovered a decision must be made about whether to attempt eradication. The feasibility of eradicating an infestation is critically influenced by the amount of search effort applied relative to the detectability of invasive organisms. Furthermore, if eradication is to be achieved not only must the area invaded be treated, but a barrier zone around the invasion must also be treated to prevent invaders from escaping and colonising new areas. These issues have been studied by our research team in the context of weed invasions in a homogeneous environment. A particular innovation of this work is the application of search theory, which offers a framework for defining and measuring detectability, taking account of searcher ability, biological factors and the search environment. This project extends previous research and will develop methods to incorporate search-theory concepts into spatially-explicit population models and then use decision analysis to identify efficient management responses. The analysis will consider the rate of spread of the invasion, the costs of search and control, and the economic and environmental benefits of early response. The project will provide a tool to estimate the cost and duration of eradication programs to assist in prioritising infestations for control as well as to determine how best to allocate limited resources. While the focus will continue to be on invasive plants, generalisation of the tool for application to other classes of invasive organisms will be explored.

Research Grants


‘Online@Asia-Pacific: Social Networking Systems and Online Communities in the Region’ (2009-11), Australian Research Council Discovery Grant, Larissa Hjorth.

‘Theatre in the Asia-Pacific: Regional Culture in a Modern Global Context’ (2009–11), Australian Research Council Discovery Grant, Chris Hudson (with external leaders: Denise Varney, Peter Eckersall, Barbara Hatley).

‘Cultural Precincts’ (2009–10), Competitive Industry grant, Peter Phipps and Martin Mulligan, Tommaso Durante, in partnership with the Reputation Group, Melbourne.

‘Media Religion and Culture Project’ (2009–10), funded by Media Religion and Culture Project, Chicago; Peter Horsfield.


‘Biodiversity Planning in the Urban Fringe: Multiple Actors, Multiple Actions, Multiple Uncertainties’ (2008–10), Australian Research Council Linkage Grant, Sarah Bekessy, B Wintle, M McCarthy.

‘Determining Necessary Survey Effort for Detecting Invasive Weeds in Native Vegetation Communities’ (2008–09), funded by the Australian Centre of Excellence for Risk Analysis, Sarah Bekessy, Georgia Garrard, Brendan Wintle (University of Melbourne).

Research Publications

Books


T. Wilson, Understanding Media Users, Malden, MA: Wiley Interscience, 2009

Book Chapters


Refereed Journal Articles


Refereed Conference Papers


Children’s festival, Alice Springs, Australia, 2010.
6.3 Community Sustainability

Research Leader: Supriya Singh
Research Manager: Yaso Nadarajah
Research Team: Alperhan Babacan, Anuja Cabraal, Chris Chamberlain, France Cheong, Val Colic-Peisker, Fang Lee Cooke, Kim Humphery, Margaret Jackson, Paul James, Shahadat Khan, Alemayehu Molla, Martin Mulligan, Yasothara Nadarajah, Shanthi Robertson, Andrew Scerri, Mohini Singh and Supriya Singh.

How do communities shape, and how are they shaped by, processes of globalization and the use of information and communication technologies?

Research Focus

The study of communities is vital to understanding how cities can sustain themselves, given their unprecedented global growth. It is critical to think of community as a constant process of formation and reformation in response to ever-changing local and global conditions. We are increasingly interested in diasporic communities in the Asia-Pacific region and their influence on national identities and the changing nature of citizenship.

The focus on communities connects lived urban experience and the traditional study of urbanization which draws on demography, urban planning, infrastructure and development, transportation and affordable housing, environmental politics and citizenship. By reinvigorating the study of community formation and adaptation within changing city environments, particularly in the 'global south', we aim to establish a new theoretical and methodological agenda for addressing the big social challenges of city life. This program offers an important opportunity to rethink the question of community sustainability at local, national and international levels from multi-disciplinary perspectives. These transnational collaborations also involve incremental processes which determine the theoretical contributions the Community Sustainability group brings to research and to ways of deepening discourses on resilience, environmental and social sustainability of local communities.
Description of Program

The program is developing strengths in empirical research in the primary cities, developing policy tools for measuring indices of community sustainability across these cities, and translating this research for more effective theory and policies around community sustainability.

Current research falls into the following major themes:

- Community Sustainability Indicators
- Connecting the Local and Global
- Building Communities
- Information and Community Sustainability
- Migration and Diaspora Communities and
- Civic Repair

Projects

Community Sustainability Indicators

Team: Andy Scerri and Paul James

Funding partners: Australian Research Council Linkage Grant: City of Melbourne, FujiXerox Australia, Cambridge International College-Melbourne CBD Campus, Common Ground Publishing and Microsoft Corporation, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver City Council, Cambridge Western College-Vancouver Downtown campus.

Key case study sites: Melbourne and Vancouver.

This project is developing a tool for integrating quantitative with qualitative methods of assessing and monitoring community sustainability. Framed by sociological accounts of public deliberation and participation in science, the project will develop a web-based software “tool” using Artificial Intelligence decision support modelling. This tool will provide an immediately visible dashboard that measures changes in key indices of community sustainability across the key global cities. This project will contribute to policy and theory, building on the detailed empirical work across the sites. The research also uses critical social theory to examine some of the issues that arise when setting out to develop and implement qualitative indicators of sustainability that incorporate quantitative metrics.
Local-Global

Team: Yaso Nadarajah, Martin Mulligan, Paul James, Andy Scerri with research assistance from Wasana Weeraratne and Lakshmi Venugopal

This long-term research project, studying localities around the globe, seeks to determine if and how communities are negotiating transformations across the complex layers of social life from the local to the global. The research is engaged with multiple communities within each site, ranging from the urban to the rural, and from those embedded in face-to-face communities to those which are closely integrated into global flows of exchange and information. The research is located at sites in Melbourne and regional Victoria, nationally around Australia and globally, with a particular emphasis on the Asia-Pacific region. These include Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, South India, Sri Lanka, Ecuador, and Australia. Relationships in these sites vary according to the scale, depth and layers of networks established previously.

Research has been going for a number of years already, with the aim of maintaining at least, initially a ten-year relationship, first as an expression of an underlying ethic of commitment to a long-term relationship, and secondly to enable us to draw temporal as well as global comparisons. The individual projects below come under this broad theme.

Negotiating Identity and Belonging in Modernizing Malaysia

Research team: Yaso Nadarajah and Lakshmi Venugopal, with The Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), NGO Sisters-in-Islam Forum, and Datuk K. Govindan, Head, National Economic Advisory Council (Prime Minister’s Department, Malaysia).

The Community Sustainability program draws from nearly three years of ethnographic fieldwork of community life in a large squatter settlement in the epicentre of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as part of broader community sustainability research across four countries in the Asia Pacific. To date, it has involved in-depth and ongoing mapping of the transition of squatter settlement communities to their new low-cost high rise housing complexes in the same location, focusing on the relationship between the notion of community in perspective of the recent national elections and current contestations surrounding constitutional perspectives on freedom of religion, secularism and national public life, and the affect of Tamil community mobilization activities, such as the Hindu Rights Action Force (HINDRAF).

In 2009, Yaso Nadarajah was invited to become a senior research associate with University Kebangsaan’s International & Malaysian Studies Research Centre (IKMAS) and the Sisters-in-Islam Forum NGO. Currently, Yaso is engaged with the Sisters-in-Islam national study on the practice of polygamy amongst Malay society in peninsular Malaysia. This study also seeks to affect public policy on Malaysian marriage and family law and Islamic Syariah law.
**Negotiating the Local-Global in the Hamilton Region**

Research team: Yaso Nadarajah with Martin Mulligan and Wasana Weeraratne; Community Facilitators Terrie Nicholson and Cicely Fenton

Community Critical Reference Group: John Callinan, Cicely Fenton, Terrie Nicholson, Sue Pizzey, Judy Warne, Coralie Coulson, Olive McVicker, Howard Templeton, Bob Cadden and Jenny Kane, Tony MacGillivray, Ken Saunders and Damien Bell – Correspondence Members

**Climate Change Project**

It explores the impacts of climate change and other global uncertainties for people living in the Hamilton region. It is the outcome of a collaborative research project built on the methodology of community-engaged research, which explores community participation in future planning through policy development and implementation. A two-day scenarios mapping workshop in 2008 and a series of sessions with local community co-authors and story contributors explored the impacts of climate change and other global uncertainties on the future for people living in the Hamilton region.

**Building Communities**

**Reconstructing Community Livelihood after Tsunami (ARC Linkage Grant)**

Team: Martin Mulligan, Yaso Nadarajah, Dave Mercer, Judith Shaw (Monash University), with Professor Siri Hettige (University of Colombo), Kaleel Aqeel (South Eastern University, Pottuvil), Ashraff Ahmed (NESDO NGO, Sainthamaruthu) and Kushil Gunasegara (Foundation of Goodness, Seenigama)

Institutional partners: Monash University, Deakin University

Funding partner: Australian Research Council

It is the longest and most intense study of social recovery from the tsunami, to develop an understanding of how communities have been rebuilt after the 2004 tsunami, thereby evaluating the long-term benefit of disaster aid. This is contributing to policy and theory development, building on detailed empirical work across five case study sites - Seenigama, Hambantota, Thirukkovil, Sainthamuruthu, and Chennai. The "community-engaged" research methodology involved consultation with local advisors and reliance on local guides and research assistants. Research methods included: the construction of social profiles of case study areas, surveys, community member profiles, lengthy interviews, and the collection of relevant local stories.
**Sustainable Community Development in Tamil Nadu, South India**

Research team: Yaso Nadarajah, Martin Mulligan, Sona Thomas (RMIT post graduate student) with Professor Thangavelu Vasantha Kumaran, Dr. Guna Narasinga and Dr. Kavi Arasan (University of Madras); Mr. D. Sivakumar and Mr. S. Raji (Thillagar Nagar community leaders), and Sylvester (University of Madras postgraduate student).

The focus of this project is on sustainable community development, with a particular emphasis on the implementation of participatory methodologies to enhance sustainability at the community level. The partnership of the Centre with the University of Madras has been in part a process of developing comparative basis for developing changing indicators of social wellbeing and community sustainability. This includes a research focus on livelihood trajectories, communal conflict/politics, and traditional and local knowledge systems.

In 2009, the study focused on two of the fishing slum communities (Chennai) who were relocated after the Tsunami disaster as part of the larger ARC research study entitled Rebuilding communities after the 2004 Tsunami.

**ReGenerating Community: Arts, Community and Governance**

Team: Martin Mulligan, Pia Smith

Funding Partners: Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria, Arts NSW, Arts Queensland.

This project examined the role of community art projects in enhancing local government in Australia. It tracked the development of the national ‘Generations Project’ in five local government areas across Victoria, NSW and Queensland and resulted in both a national conference—held at RMIT in September 2009—and a research report to be circulated nationally by the Australia Council for the Arts. Researchers from the Globalism Research Centre at RMIT worked closely with the Melbourne-based Cultural Development Network to complete the research and communicate its key findings within the local government sector nationally. Over 300 people attended the conference in September 2009.
Information and Community Sustainability

Information and Communication Technology Programs in E-Government and E-Learning: Their Impact on Rural and Regional Communities

Team: Mohini Singh

This research examined the outcomes and impact of publicly funded ICT-based initiatives on e-government and e-learning on rural and regional communities. It included case studies from Victoria and Queensland to determine a strategy for reducing the digital divide. Key findings of this research indicate that e-government and e-learning initiatives delivered in rural Australia through Neighbourhood and Community Houses, Social Clubs, Rural Transaction Centres and TAFE Institutes result in an improved profile of the rural community, create business opportunities, improved governance and enhance inclusion and social capital. It recommends strategic alliances with technology providers, State government agencies, trainers and community groups to further augment the adoption of ICT based programs with rural communities. This research highlights the urgent need for upskilling TAFE teachers in rural Australia to keep up with technological developments so that they can in turn develop rural communities.

The Implementation and Management of Mobile Technologies with Victoria Police

Team: Mohini Singh

This research evaluated the implementation, use and impact of mobile technologies with Victoria Police. It identified implementation issues, information management issues, relevance of technologies to tasks, security issues, performance outcomes and innovation of police processes and operations with these technologies. Information in this report has been compiled from an analysis of data gathered from informal interviews, observations and focus groups guided by the theory of Task Technology Fit. The findings of this research highlight that mobile technologies lead to a more efficient and effective operational police work, based on the relevance of technologies to the context of tasks. This research highlights that mobile technologies are important tools for police organisations that are ‘intelligence-led and information intensive’. It confirms that the implementation of mobile technologies with Victoria Police is analogous to police organisations in the UK, Europe and USA, and an essential requirement to better service the community.
ICTs and Eco-Sustainability

Team: Alem Molla, Hepu Deng, Vanessa Cooper, Siddhi Pittayachawan, Brian Corbitt
To develop an understanding of the direct and indirect effects of ICTs on environmental sustainability at community and organisational levels. This is contributing to G-readiness and Green ICT Capability assessment tools to help IT using organisations and the IT industry towards sustainable IS/IT.

Cash in Remote Districts of Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea: A Community Centered Approach to Mobile Money

Team: Supriya Singh, Yaso Nadarajah and Naup Waup
The aim is to explore proposals for mobile money in Papua New Guinea and to see how the needs of remote communities differ from urban and other rural communities. This empirical study will be used to develop a community centered approach to policy, building policy from the ground. It will emphasise the common needs of the community that will supplement policy that is focused on the provision of services and technology.

Money in the Pacific

Team: Supriya Singh, Yaso Nadarajah and Naup Waup
This project is about the everyday uses of money and remittances (sending and receiving of money) in the Pacific. By discovering more about how people use money in the Pacific, we hope to identify the likelihood of mobile money becoming a part of everyday life in the region. If the likelihood is high, we aim to find out more about what characteristics mobile money initiatives would require to lead effective use and financial inclusion.

Migration and Diasporic Communities

Money, Migration and Family

Team: Supriya Singh, Anuja Cabraal, Shanthi Robertson
This is a study of the Indian diaspora in Australia, with a particular emphasis on family and community remittances and issues of identity and belonging. The study covers the experiences of first and second generation migrants, as well as recently arrived Indian students.
**Cultural Precincts**

Team: Peter Phipps, Martin Mulligan, Aramiha Harwood, Yaso Nadarajah and Supriya Singh

Funding Partners: City of Melbourne and Victorian Multicultural Commission

The notion of a precinct, or social corridor, in urban design encompasses political, economic and social spheres of influence in a ‘place’ in the cityscape. The goals and objectives of the cultural precincts project were to engage multiple stakeholders within three city precincts in order to capture and communicate the story and character of each precinct in ways that could enhance their visibility, public profile and commercial viability. The three precincts were centred on Lygon Street, Lonsdale Street (the ‘Greek precinct’) and Chinatown. As well as informing the City of Melbourne on how to better communicate the story of each precinct, the RMIT study looked at international literature and experience in regard to ‘cultural precincts’. The study informed the VMC and state government in regard to statewide policy on the identification, projection and maintenance of ‘cultural precincts’.

**Migration and Mobility**

Team: Val Colic-Peisker, Supriya Singh, Alperhan Babacan and Anuja Cabraal

The Migration and Mobility project established as a research network brings together an interdisciplinary group of academics from Melbourne universities together with policy-makers, people from NGOs and anyone else interested in the themes of migration and mobility. The network is a forum to exchange current research and forge research collaborations with academics, government and NGOs.

**Multinational Firms in Asia and their role in Global Standards and Host Country Development**

Team: Fang Lee Cooke, Charles Lau, Ling Deng and Jiaying Zhang

Funding Partner: College of Business

This project studies Chinese multinational firms in two industries (telecom and manufacturing industries) that operate in two selected Asian countries (Vietnam and Malaysia). Existing studies of multinational firms have primarily focused on those funded from western economies. Little is known about those that are owned by firms from the emergent economies such as China and India. Nor do we know how they may shape global standards or the consequences of these changes for local producers and workers, both within the parent country of these two rising powers and in the host countries, particularly those in the developing world.
Cross-border migration often renders the loss of human and social capital for the immigrants and their family. This is because this capital is cultural-specific and not always readily transferable across countries with markedly different institutional and cultural environments. In many economies, cultural, social and even political capital display enduring, and in some countries and occupations crucial, influence in career advancement. Migrant Chinese professional men and women tend to lose much of their competitive advantage that they once held in the labour market in China. Being ethnic minorities may present a barrier to social and professional integration for migrant Chinese professionals. Informed by quantitative and qualitative data, this project aims to establish patterns of employment of migrant Chinese professional workers, their nature of work and career aspirations. It also seeks to identify potential barriers, if any, to employment and career advancement of migrant Chinese professional workers in Australia and to explore what can be done to enhance the alignment between their career aspirations and organizational goals.

Civic Repair

Counting the Homeless

Team: Chris Chamberlain (RMIT) and David MacKenzie (Swinburne University)

Funding Partners: The Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, with in-kind support provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

This is a study of homelessness in each state and territory in Australia, based on census data, supplemented by information from the National SAAP Data Collection and the third national census of homeless school students. This work will be critical in providing state and territory governments with essential information that will inform the policy process and the provision of new services. This is a joint project with Swinburne University.
Pathways into and out of Homelessness

Team: Chris Chamberlain (CASR) and Dr Guy Johnson (AHURI)

Funding Partners: Australian Research Council (Linkage), Salvation Army Crisis Services and HomeGround Services.

Effective interventions to assist homeless people depend upon understanding the reasons why people become homeless and how they exit from homelessness. This research investigates people’s pathways into and out of the homeless population, and explains why some individuals experience a short period of homelessness, whereas others remain homeless for a sustained period of time. The findings will inform our knowledge about best practice and effective service delivery.

Breaking the Cycle: The Role of Housing and Support in Resolving Chronic Homelessness

Team: Chris Chamberlain (CASR) and Dr Guy Johnson (AHURI)

Funding Partners: Australian Research Council (Linkage) and Sacred Heart Mission.

This is a longitudinal study of formerly chronically homeless people who are residents in a supportive housing facility in inner city Melbourne. It will interview forty residents twice over a twelve month period, analysing what factors enable people who have been chronically homeless to maintain their housing. The project will provide vital information on the best ways to assist chronically homeless people to remain housed and to address their social exclusion. It will enable policy makers and service providers to identify appropriate housing configurations and better identify ‘at risk’ tenancies. It will identify strategies to improve tenancy retention, and develop support programs that better assist the chronically homeless.

Research Grants

‘Rebuilding Sustainable Communities: Assessing Post-Tsunami Resettlement Projects in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India’ (2007–09), Australian Research Council (Linkage grant) AusAid, the Foundation for Development Cooperation (FDC), Martin Mulligan, Yaso Nadarajah, Matthew Clarke, David Mercer, Judith Shaw.

‘Accounting for Sustainability: Developing an Integrated Approach for Sustainability Assessments’ (2010-2012), Australian Research Council (Linkage Grant), Paul James, Lin Padgham, James Thom, Hepu Deng.

‘Digital Cultural Collections’ (2009-2010), Smart Services Cooperative Research Centre, Supriya Singh, Margaret Jackson, Sheila Bellamy and Clive Morley.

‘Mobile Innovative Banking Solutions’ (2009-2010), Smart Services Cooperative Research Centre, Supriya Singh, Margaret Jackson, Sheila Bellamy and Clive Morley.

‘Multinational Firms in Asia and their role in Global Standards and Host Country Development’ (May – December 2010), College of Business, Incentive Fund scheme, Fang Lee Cooke.

‘Chinese Migrant Elites in Australia: Nature of Work, Career Prospect and Implications for Organisational and Government Policy Development’ (March to December 2010), Seed Fund Scheme, College of Business, 2010, Fang Lee Cooke.

‘Counting the Homeless’ (2006-2009), The Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs, with in-kind support provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare; Chris Chamberlain and David MacKenzie.

‘Breaking the Cycle: the role of Housing and Support in Resolving Chronic Homelessness’ (2010-2013), Australian Research Council (Linkage) and Sacred Heart Mission, Chris Chamberlain and Dr Guy Johnson.

Research Publications

Book Chapters


Refereed Journal Articles


Refereed Conference Papers


Y. Nadarajah, ‘Community Engagement through the Creation of Future Stories’, Panel presentation and paper, Regenerating Community: Arts, Community and Governance National Conference, 2009, Melbourne, Australia
Bario, Malaysia, 2009.
6.4 Sustainable Urban & Regional Futures

Research Leader: Ralph Horne and John Fien
Research Manager: Prem Chhetri

How will cities respond to the increasing demands on infrastructure in knowledge economies? This program will primarily address issues of social and environmental sustainability in urban areas experiencing global economic forces and climate change.

Research Focus

The growing environmental footprints of cities are intensifying the consumption of natural resources. This phenomenon conflicts with the need to reduce urban environmental footprints, implying significant reconfiguration of the social and technical dimensions of the urban realm. Additionally, there is growing socio-spatial inequality and problems of social exclusion, increasing the likelihood of urban social conflict. In addressing these challenges the program is organized around overlapping themes:

Theme 1: Housing and Urban Planning
Urban planning and policy; urban governance and political economy of cities; city-region infrastructure and urban mobility systems; city scale economic restructuring; urban housing and labour markets; effective communication for disaster management.

Theme 2: Climate Change and Social Context
Housing and social-environmental change; socio-technical systems; beyond behaviour change; social practice and social change; niches in transition; carbon neutral communities.
Theme 3: Urban and Regional Transitions
Urban and regional low-carbon transitions; greening economies and regions; equity and justice in regional transitions.

Theme 4: Learning Cities
Social learning; knowledge in low-carbon economies; capacity building; education and training in innovation systems; education for sustainability; green skills; community learning partnerships.

Theme 5: Urban Metabolism and Low Carbon Systems
Sustainable production and consumption systems; Closed loop design; Product stewardship; Life cycle assessment; Eco-footprinting; Environmental assessment and modeling.

Theme 6: Sustainable Business Practices
Sustainable logistics and supply chain management; sustainable procurement; sustainability indicators and reporting; ethical governance and finance; Corporate Social Responsibility; carbon accounting and management.

Theme 7: Sustainable Built Environments
Affordable housing; sustainable construction management and procurement; built environment industry studies; buildings environmental performance assessment and modeling; innovative building materials and fabrication; retrofitting for climate change; building life cycle assessment.

Projects

**Understanding the Patterns, Characteristics and Trends in the Housing Sector Labour Force in Australia**
Team: Tony Dalton, Ralph Horne, Prem Chhetri, Jonathon Corcoran
Funding provider: Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (category 1 competitive grant), 2009-11

This study aims to enhance understanding of the characteristics, patterns and trends of the housing sector labour market and to ensure the sector is better equipped to meet the future needs of the Australian housing system. Combining the use of GIS in spatial mis-matching and qualitative research with the built environment industry, the project will differentiate between new-build and renovation subsectors within the housing industry and investigate areas of expected labour shortage.
Resilient Urban Systems: A Socio-Technical Study of Community Scale Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives

Team: Yolande Strengers, Cecily Maller, Ralph Horne

Institutional partners: The Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Research Centre, The University of Melbourne Victorian Eco Innovation Lab (VEIL)

Funding provider: The Victorian Climate Change Adaptation Research Centre (VCCCAR) competitive grant 2010

Resilient energy and water systems are required to reduce Victoria’s vulnerability to climate change, which if not addressed, could have serious impacts on health and wellbeing. This project aims to address knowledge gaps concerning these systems, such as how households and communities use them, and how and why ‘local’ stakeholders develop these systems. The findings will be used by policy makers aiming to encourage wider uptake of community energy and water systems resilient to the impacts of climate change.

What Future for Australian Public Housing? A Critical Analysis

Team: Keith Jacobs, Mike Berry, Val Colic-Piesker, Tony Dalton

Institutional partner: AHURI

The project is informed by two major assumptions. First, that the demand for low-cost housing will remain high and that many of the people who require low-cost housing will be individuals with a high level of need. Second, that the demands on public expenditure in areas such as health and education make it unlikely that any future government will invest significant new funds into the public housing sector. The project looks beyond the day-to-day issues that confront State Housing Authorities and to focus on the question of the viability of the sector, both in the medium and long-term. To achieve this aim, the research project will undertake three strands of data collection activities that will be used to inform an incisive commentary about the future of Australian housing policy and the specific role of public housing.

Investigative Panel on a Socially Sustainable Housing System

Team: Mike Berry, Peter Williams (JRF, UK)

Institutional partner: AHURI

The project will develop policy options for reducing the negative impacts of housing market volatility on vulnerable households through a comparison of two studies (Australia and UK) and considering ‘lessons learnt’ in each country and their implication for each other. The panel will identify further opportunities for continuing AHURI-JRF collaboration in relation to the key directions identified in both studies. Williams’ membership of both studies and his prior contribution to both AHURI and NHSC are critically important resources that will maximize the comparative reach of the Australian panel, as well as cement the burgeoning collaborative relationship between the two research networks.
The Environmental Sustainability of Australia’s Private Rental Housing Stock
Team: M. Gabrielle, Gavin Wood
Institutional partner: AHURI
The project will address living standard issues for renters, in particular low-income renters, and evaluate the adequacy of existing compensation mechanisms by providing policy makers with estimates of the effectiveness of state energy rebates in cushioning the impacts of CET on private renters, and the state government budgetary implications of higher energy rebates due to CET. In addition, the project will provide policy makers with insight into strategies that can encourage providers and consumers of rental housing to adopt more energy efficient practices, whilst ensuring that such policies do not exacerbate existing socio-spatial inequalities in Australian cities.

Other Countries’ Policy Initiatives to meet the Housing Needs of Asset-Poor Older Persons: Implications for Australia
Team: Gavin Wood, Mike Berry, Val Colic-Piesker, Tony Dalton
Institutional partner: AHURI
This study will conduct a systematic review of the international academic literature and policy documents concerning government and financial institution initiatives to meet the housing needs of asset-poor older citizens. The purpose of this comparative review is to identify whether overseas experiences (looking at 6 countries: USA, UK, Canada, France, Italy and Germany) are applicable in the Australian context. We will also use secondary data sets from the Housing and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey to document the size of this group of older Australians and the scale of their likely needs for housing assistance. These needs will then be explored in more depth using qualitative techniques, drawing on participants sampled from two groups of homeowners and renters that previous research has identified as particularly vulnerable (Wood and Nygaard, 2009, forthcoming; Wood et al. 2008).

Planning and the Characteristics of Housing Supply in Melbourne
Team: Robin Goodman, Gavin Wood, Michael Buxton, Prem Chhetri
Institutional partner: AHURI
The aim of this research is to establish the link between land use planning policies and mechanisms and the form of housing supplied by examining details of both planning policy and housing supply in the state of Victoria over a time period covering two significant policy regime shifts. We investigate the impact firstly of the major overhaul of the planning system in 1996 known as the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP), intended to facilitate development and remove constraints and secondly the introduction in 2002 of a major strategic plan, Melbourne 2030, aimed at urban consolidation and containment. While the research is confined to metropolitan Melbourne we believe the results will be applicable to other Australian cities, most of which have adopted similar policies in recent years.
Movements In and Out of Housing Affordability Stress and Dynamic Modelling of Initiatives to Improve the Supply of Affordable Housing

Team: Gavin Wood
Institutional partner: AHURI

This project explores the range of factors affecting movements in and out of housing affordability over time and to analyse potential policy responses that can improve affordable housing outcomes. In so doing it will address a range of questions: How many households in different tenures move in and out of housing affordability stress over time, how frequently, and why? What are the key factors causing this movement, or lack of movement? To what extent do these temporal movements, or lack of movement, vary geographically? How do tax policy settings (e.g. capital gains tax and negative gearing provisions) affect durations of investment in the private rental market? What implications do these effects have upon housing affordability? What policy mechanisms might alleviate any negative outcomes with regard to housing affordability?

Mortgage Default in Australia: Nature, Causes, and Social and Economic Impacts

Team: Mike Berry, Tony Dalton
Institutional partner: AHURI

This research addresses the sources, nature and implications of mortgage default among Australian homeowners over the last several years, i.e. since the study of Berry et al. (1999). Substantive recent research, including the reports published under National Research Venture 3, has clearly established that there is a growing housing affordability crisis in Australia. Although private tenants account for the majority of households in housing stress, more than 300,000 lower income home owners (overwhelmingly purchasers) were paying more than 30 percent of gross income for their housing in 2002-03 (Yates and Gabriel, 2006). This number has almost certainly increased over the past five years. Not surprisingly, recent indicators suggest that mortgage arrears, defaults and repossessions are rising.

Sustainable Families

Team: Susie Moloney, Cecily Maller
Institutional partners: Kildonan Uniting Care, Yarra Valley Water and Department of Human Services (DHS)
Funding provider: Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) Sustainability Fund competitive grant scheme

This pilot project will introduce sustainability to family services clients of Kildonan Uniting Care. The project involves discussion with family services clients (low-income households) about ways to reduce energy, water and waste at a household level. The data collection will be interview based over three years. 144 households will be visited up to four times by a Family Services worker and a trained energy auditor to collect longitudinal data.
Beyond Behaviour Change
Team: Yolande Strengers, Cecily Maller, Ralph Horne
This is a cluster of projects convened by Yolande Strengers and based on the application of social practice theory to attempts by policy and program makers and deliverers to alter household practices towards low carbon futures. Case studies to date include the use of design, interventions in behaviour change program design, and applications of social practice theory to household ‘greening’.

Remaking Suburbia: The Practice of Going Green
Team: Cecily Maller, Ralph Horne, Tony Dalton
This project explored household improvements of ‘green’ renovators, those households who sought to improve the environmental sustainability of their home. Conducted in Melbourne, the research explored why households undertook home improvements and their concerns about the environment. The methods used were in-home, semi-structured interviews and observations recorded through field notes. Sixteen households participated in the research over two phases. Qualitative analysis software analysis techniques were used to analyse the data. Findings to date show that home improvements are undertaken largely for reasons of comfort and wellbeing despite households having genuine concerns about the environment.

Exploring the Influence of Cultural Background on First and Second Generation Migrants’ Use of Energy and Water in the Home
Team: Cecily Maller
Funding partners: RMIT University, Emerging Researchers’ Grant 2009
There is a strong push from governments and environment organisations for households to reduce their consumption of water and energy, and to improve the environmental sustainability of their lifestyles. Australia has a unique demographic profile, with one in four people being born overseas. These diverse cultural backgrounds will influence how households view and make use of resources like energy and water. This diversity implies that programs based on ‘typical’ Australian lifestyles may be inappropriate for those with different heritage. This project explores how established migrant families in Sydney and Melbourne conceptualise waste, energy and water in the context of their everyday lives. Findings will potentially inform sustainability programs and policies aimed at reducing household consumption.
Accelerating Sustainable Buildings in Local Government
Team: Usha Iyer-Raniga, Ralph Horne, Paula Arcari
Funding providers: Victorian Government’s Sustainability Fund under the Victorian Local Sustainable Accord competitive grant scheme. Four participating Local Governments: Manningham, Darebin, Moreland and Yarra.
The project commenced with the premise that local government practitioners can make changes within areas of their control to enable sustainable outcomes for their organisations. The aim of ASB was to identify ways to improve the uptake of sustainable building in the Local Government sector. The initial step was to understand the barriers experienced by those delivering built assets in local government. Interventions could then be applied to overcome those barriers.
Four Councils identified and implemented planned interventions then assessed the impact of those interventions on practices. Local Government practitioners involved included Facilities Managers, ESD Officers, Project Managers, Accountants, Engineers, Service Providers, CEOs and Councillors. The project highlighted risk-averse cultures in local government as a significant barrier to innovation for sustainable buildings. Also identified were success factors from case studies of Councils delivering sustainable built environments. Case studies indicated that creating an innovation culture is valuable in delivering sustainable built assets, and relationships are the highest order determinant in information gathering and complex decision making for practitioners.

National Heritage and Sustainability Project – Residential Buildings
Team: Ralph Horne, Usha Iyer-Raniga, James Wong, Deepak Sivaraman
Funding providers: Heritage Victoria, EPHC, HCOANZ
The research project has received considerable national and international attention since it was first commissioned in 2009. The aim of the project is to provide empirical research evidence in the form of a comparison between life cycle embodied and operational energy performance, greenhouse gas emissions, water and other environmental impacts of a range of heritage building designs compared to ‘improved’ retrofitted designs where heritage values are preserved.
The project has received support from the Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ), and has been adopted as a Cooperative National Heritage Agenda project by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC). The research findings indicate opportunities and challenges in retrofitting heritage residential buildings for climate change. The success of the project has led to a second project now commencing (2010) involving heritage commercial buildings.
Integratesion of Building Assemblies and Materials Scorecard (BAMS) and Rating Tools

Team: Usha Iyer-Raniga, Paula Arcari, James Wong

Funding provider: Sustainability Victoria

The BAMS methodology provides an opportunity to establish a definitive method and reporting format to assess the environmental performance of building assemblies. Learning from initiatives such as the Green Guide in the UK and MRPI in the Netherlands, BAMS uses Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) to ensure consistent and science-based evaluation of building assembly construction options and provide potential for its integration with the building energy rating tools for a more comprehensive environmental assessment of the impacts of the built environment.

The project explores the role of embodied energy in the current new housing market, aiming to identify general issues with incorporating embodied energy outcomes into rating tools and identify specific issues for integration with FirstRate5 and the BAMS methodology.

Household Sustainability Assessment Tools

Team: Karen Rosenberg, Usha Iyer-Raniga, Alan Pears, Tony Isaacs, Nyclo Wood, Ralph Horne

Funding providers: Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Sustainability and Environment (VIC), EPA VIC.

The Australian Greenhouse Calculator, developed by Adjunct Professor Alan Pears for the Environmental Protection Association (EPA, VIC), formed the starting point for development of Australia’s first comprehensive energy and water and greenhouse gas assessment tool for Australian households. A series of research projects (ongoing) has led to the new calculator tool being provided in a Web 2.0 interface form and further developed for a variety of settings.

Drivers, Attitudes and Barriers to ‘Green’ Investment by Landlords of Private Rental Properties

Team: Tony Dalton, Mike Berry, Ralph Horne, Anna Strempel.

Funding providers: Victorian Government, Department of Sustainability and Environment

This research project has been undertaken in two stages. Stage 1 is a qualitative component, where a series of interviews were conducted with landlords and real estate agents to explore their approaches to property management and upgrading. Outputs of Stage 1 include a background paper, which summarises the private residential rental sector and the issues associated with environmental upgrading of the existing stock including the legislative, taxation and policy frameworks within which private rental housing is provided; and a draft report on the data collection and analysis. Stage 2 involved a large scale survey of over 800 landlords in Victoria, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data to validate and expand upon the findings of the initial qualitative research. The research provides a body of knowledge regarding the practices of landlordism and the constraints and opportunities these present in retrofitting rental housing for climate change.
Learning for Carbon Neutral Communities

Team: Ralph Horne, John Fien, Susie Moloney, Yolande Stengers, Jon Kellett (UniSA), Cathryn Hamilton (UniSA), Steve Hamnett (UniSA)

Funding provider: Australian Research Council Linkage Grant

The project commenced with community based greenhouse assessments and renewable resource assessments to determine the technical potential for carbon neutral communities. The research has then developed a strong critique of information, social marketing and behaviour change approaches to individual and household energy conservation. Out of this critique has come a framework for analyzing community-based climate change education programs and strategies for supporting businesses, institutions, households and individuals to collaborate in establishing the conditions needed for reductions in the overall greenhouse gas emissions of their activities. The project is now addressing how to build such societal capacity for the environment through research in three areas: how to develop local frameworks that are open to public participation and scrutiny and the education of citizens to use them; processes for integrating public participation into local climate change policy and decision-making; and how to build capacity for strategic environmental action by all stakeholders.

Education for Sustainability

Team: John Fien, Leone Wheeler, Annette Gough, Robbie Guevara, Jodi-Anne Smith, Jo Lang

Funding providers: Australian Research Council Discovery Grant, Australian Research Council Linkage, UNESCO, Department of Sustainability and Environment, State Government of Victoria

The project analyses the processes that can enhance inter-sectoral collaboration in lifelong learning for sustainability and develops and evaluates strategies for influencing learning for sustainability throughout Australia and, cross-culturally, within the Asia-Pacific region. It also assesses the social, economic, cultural and environmental changes brought about by the development of sustainable learning cities and communities. This provides a theoretical framework for a number of current projects on learning for (i) youth culture and sustainable consumption, (ii) curriculum and professional development, (iii) community learning partnerships, (iv) training for indigenous housing construction, and (v) water management.
Adaptive Learning Networks for Sustainable Procurement

Team: Adela McMurray, Derek Walker, John Fien, Ralph Horne. In addition, the project involves three colleagues from the University of Bath (Steve Gough), University of Warwick (Helen Walker), and industry representative, David Doherty.

The project continues work begun in the School of Management to develop improved sustainable procurement (SP) outcomes in public and private sector organizations through a program of adaptive learning and networks. This involves new research designed to embed SP into organizational cultures and overcome the existing capacity barriers found in the effective implementation of SP in project partner organizations at the national and international level.

Sustainable Procurement in the Public and Private Sector: A Case Study in Malaysia

Investigator: Adela McMurray

The aim of this study is exploring the nature and extent of current level of Sustainable Procurement (SP) practices, identifying the opportunities to implement SP, what barriers they have encountered and what the executive/senior manager is thinking, and how they are acting, in relation to the SP challenges we all face. The headline results of this study are: Malaysian organizations have given a greater emphasis on the aspects of purchasing from small and local suppliers, and workers’ health and safety, rather than environmental practices and there is significant variation between public and private organizations in the nature of SP practices; organizational efficiency and transparency has been found the best opportunity to implementing SP; financial pressures reported the most significant barriers to implementation of SP and the study confirmed that most of the executives/senior managers do not have adequate knowledge about SP.

Learning for Sustainability in Higher Education

Team: Ian Thomas, Sarah Bekessy, Ron Wakefield, Annette Gough, Barbara de la Harpe, John Fien, Kathryn Hegarty

Funding provider: Australian Research Council Linkage Scheme

This project aims is to identify influences and processes for promoting organizational learning for sustainability in complex organizations. In the research to date, a need has emerged to extend the research beyond its current/prospective focus to analyse the processes that have led to the success or failure of previous sustainability initiatives. The project is co-hosting the 2010 National Conference of the Australian Campuses Towards Sustainability Conference.
School-Community Learning Partnerships

Team: Robbie Guevara, Annette Gough, John Fien, Jodi-Anne Smith, Leone Wheeler, Jo Lang, Susan Elliott

Funding provider: Australian Research Council Linkage Scheme

School-community partnerships in peri-urban regions have the potential to contribute to the ‘community resilience trinity’ of social, human and natural capital. Eighteen case studies of successful learning partnerships have been conducted in and around Melbourne, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, Townsville and Cairns. Each case study has been written in three phases through student, teacher and community workshops using the Most Significant Change Technique. An analysis of the case studies is being undertaken (i) to analyse patterns of approaches and outcomes of the range of existing school-community learning partnerships for sustainability; (ii) to identify the factors that are facilitating and limiting the enhancement of educational as well as social and natural capital outcomes of different approaches to school-community learning partnerships; (iii) to identify principles for the establishment and management of effective learning partnerships; (iv) to identify the capabilities required of the different stakeholders in building effective community learning partnerships for sustainability and the associated learning processes that can assist in developing these capabilities; and (v) to identify the factors that influence the adoption of the lessons learned about effective community learning partnerships for sustainability.

Bushfire Community Safety

Team: Peter Fairbrother, John Fien, Gerald Elsworth, Keith Toh, Helen Goodman, Julie Stratford, John Gilbert

Funding provider: Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre, Country Fire Authority (CFA)

A suite of projects is directed at improving community education for bushfire preparedness among residents in high-risk bushfire areas. Focused on the question of “What works in bushfire community safety: how, for whom and in what settings?”, a nation-wide set of case studies conducted between 2005 and 2009 was used to develop an overarching framework and methodology for planning evaluating bushfire community safety and education programs. The framework reflects a theory-based (realist) approach to the complex interventions in diverse settings that are necessary to enhance the community capacities necessary for reducing the loss of life and property and environmental damage caused by bushfire. Workshops on this framework with fire agency staff have led to the development of an on-line training programme (see www.lococolour.net/bushfire).

A related project has been undertaken for the Victorian Country Fire Authority (CFA) with the objective of conducting a research-based assessment of the Community Fireguard (CFG) programme. The research covers questions of consistency in selection and recruitment of CFG facilitators across all nine CFA areas, an assessment of the training packages and delivery, the involvement of CFG groups in this process and the role of the facilitators. Based on this assessment the research team has recommended a quality control and assurance framework.
Repco Logistics Solutions
Investigator: Prem Chhetri
Funding provider: Industry Research Grant
This project assesses the characteristics of Repco distribution systems, that link feeder stores and stores with the end customers, for both retail and trade. It evaluates areas of improvement and identifies critical success factors for the successful implementation of a distributed hub and spoke structure for Repco.

Life Cycle Assessment of Beverage Container Systems
Team: Andrew Carre, Simon Lockrey, Enda Croissin
Funding provider: Aluminium Can Group
This peer reviewed research project developed an updated life cycle inventory for aluminium cans, and also compares this beverage container system to other similar packaging formats (glass and PET) across their respective life cycles. The project has been supported by interested stakeholders, with updated figures being supplied for each stage of aluminium production, from the extraction of bauxite and the production of alumina, through to the manufacture of the can sheet. The can manufacturers have also provided information relating to the formation and delivery of the can. The intention of the study is to provide the updated life cycle inventory dataset for an aluminium can manufactured in Australia. The project outcomes assist with internal decision making and provide consumers with information regarding the environmental profile of each of the packaging materials. The study is also intended to be communicated to researchers, consultants, packaging manufacturers and members of the public with an interest in LCA and sustainability.

Status of Green Careers in Australia
Team: Ian Thomas, Kathryn Hegarty, Teresa Day
Institutional partners: Environment Jobs Network, Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand
A 2004 survey conducted by RMIT and Environment Jobs Network provided data to begin to understand the types of environmental jobs and what they involved. Five years on we need to see if there are any significant changes in the range of environmental jobs. Given the current interest in green jobs, where the focus is often on trade and non-professional employment it will be useful to see if these types of jobs are also being identified and included in the broad category of ‘green-collar jobs’. As with the 2004 survey the intended output is both a report, Guide to Environmental Careers in Australia, and journal papers. However, in this will use Survey Monkey to assemble and collate the data.
Assessing the Engagement of Professional Associations in Sustainability

Team: Ian Thomas, Kathryn Hegarty, Stuart Whitman
Institutional partner and funder: Sustainability Victoria

Professional Associations (PA) have a strong influence over their members’ behaviour in terms of what is required to practice in the specific profession. In many disciplines the related PA also has influence over the qualifications that graduates require to enter the PA and practice in the profession. As a result the requirements of PAs can have a direct influence on the content and learning approaches adopted by universities. In this situation, if PAs have embraced sustainability we will see sustainability capabilities being required of members, either through them being evident in their professional qualifications and content of their university degrees, or though in-service professional development programs.

Given the limited coverage of sustainability as core material that is evident in university programs the indication is that PAs generally have not embraced sustainability. As a consequence, if we are to see greater inclusion of sustainability in university programs we need to determine the extent to which PAs are facilitating sustainability curricular, and the opportunities they have to increase this coverage.

Graduate Capabilities Required by Employers: Relationships to Education for Sustainability

Team: Ian Thomas, Kathryn Hegarty, Teresa Day
Institutional partners: Environment Jobs Network, Sustainability Victoria

Since the early 1990s graduate skills, attributes and capabilities have been on the agendas of universities in Australia. The sets of attributes they have developed have evolved from the interests of employers and more recently been influenced by the need for employees to have broad skills and the capacity for flexibility and ‘life-long learning. In parallel Environmental Education, and more recently Education for Sustainability (EIS), have developed to meet the needs of the community to give recognition and value to ecological and social matters. Initial indications to date suggest that there are clear similarities between the attributes sought by employers, those set by universities, and EIS. If a close relationship between the sets of attributes and EIS can be shown to exist, then the implementation of EIS in universities will be facilitated as academics will more easily be able to see the rationale of changing curricula to focus on EIS
What Planners Do: Ongoing Conversations with Planners in Glasgow, Melbourne and Toronto

Investigator: John Jackson

In the highly competitive global economy, cities now use their metropolitan plans to place market themselves: as a means to attract and hold onto footloose investment, specifically young professionals working in advanced service industries. These conversations focus on what planners say and do as regards people and places not sought after, not so connected. Conversations to date points to plans speaking of social inclusion but planners implementing the plans working to other priorities. Future conversations will try to tease out why this is so. Have planners been captured by the prevailing neoliberal mindset?

What Planners Do: Have RMIT Planning Graduates made any Significant Changes to Planning Practices and Outcomes?

Team: John Jackson

RMIT’s first planner graduated in 1981. Nine hundred or so have followed. Have they made any difference to practice and outcomes? Using the current rhetoric of triple bottom line planning, have they contributed to the efficient operation of the urban and regional system, have they worked towards delivering more environmentally sustainable outcomes, have they assisted in creating a more equal or inclusive society? This research in the first instance wants to find out what planners do as described by planners themselves. It then seeks to find out what practitioners profess and whether they can point to evidence that their professions have been delivered upon: have they made a difference? It will then focus explicitly on the notion of triple bottom line planning and ask RMIT planning graduates to evaluate their achievements measured in economic, environmental and social terms, and other terms they consider important. It will then reflect on these findings drawing on predominantly American research.

Planning Sustainable Futures for Melbourne’s Peri-Urban Region

Team: Michael Buxton

The Environment and Planning (E&P) program is involved in Australia’s largest research project into peri-urban regions. This research orientation began in 2002 with a twelve month research project investigating development in Melbourne’s green belt. In 2005 E&P gained a $375,000 research grant from Land and Water Australia, which resulted in the publication of four monographs in partnership with Griffith University. Since then E&P has extended this research with Victorian government research grants of $405,000 to investigate vegetation loss in Melbourne’s green belt, sectoral trends in Melbourne’s peri-urban region, risks and impacts associated with climate change, and currently to analyse future scenarios for the region and associated policy implications. The reports on risks and impacts and scenarios are due in December 2010. E&P has also investigated bushfire risk for the Melbourne peri-urban region, contributing to the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission consideration of this issue, and is involved with Latrobe University (Bendigo) in research into a localised food supply in Melbourne’s peri-urban region.
Research Grants


‘Undertake a short report listing recommendations of ‘non-financial’ programs for a Smart City’ (2009), Energy Australia, Yolande Strengers.


‘International Measures to Channel Investment Towards Affordable Rental Housing and the Adaptation to Australian Conditions’ (2009–10), Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Gavin Wood.

‘Mandatory Disclosure Prototype Tool’ (2009–10), Department of Sustainability and Environment Victoria, Usha Iyer-Raniga.

‘Sustainable Precincts - Knowledge Bank’ (2009–10), Sustainability Victoria, Ralph Horne.


‘Support for in-Australia Research and Capacity Building of RMIT-AWF’ (2009–10), Planet Wheeler Foundation, Dr Esther Charlesworth.


‘Understanding Drivers, Attitudes and Barriers to ‘Green’ Investment by Landlords of Private Rental Properties in Victoria - Stage 2’ (2009–10), Department of Sustainability and Environment, Victoria, Ralph Horne, Tony Dalton, Mike Berry.


‘The Environmental Sustainability of Australia’s Private Rental Housing Stock’ (2009–10), Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Gavin Wood.


‘Other Countries’ Policy Initiatives to Meet the Housing Needs of Asset-poor Older Persons: Implications for Australia - AHURI Project 30563’ (2009–10), Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Val Colic-Peisker, Michael Berry, Gavin Wood.


‘AHURI Top-up Scholarship - Bronwyn Meyrick’, (2009–12), Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, Michael Berry.


‘Life Cycle Assessment of JD MacDonald Products Phase 2’ (2009), Macdonald Johnston Pty Ltd, Ralph Horne.


‘Aque Dux - Learning and Applying Water Wisdom’ (2009–10), Sustainability Victoria, Adela McMurray.

‘Joint Sustainability and Heritage Project’ (2009–10), Department of Planning and Community Development, Ralph Horne, Usha Iyer-Raniga, Karen Rosenberg, Timothy Grant, Alan Pears, Andrew Carre.

‘Resource Smart Schools – Waste (Sustainability Victoria funding)’ (2009–11), Centre for Education and Research in Environment Strategies, Ralph Horne.


Research Publications

Books


Book Chapters


Refereed Journal Articles


**Refereed Conference Papers**


P. Mees, ‘How Dense are We? Another Look at Urban Density and Transport Patterns in Australia, Canada and the USA’, proceedings of the State of Australian Cities National Conference 2009.


6.5 Human Security

Research Leaders: John Handmer and Jeff Lewis
Research Manager: Robin Cameron (2010) and Jason Flanagan (2009)
Research Team: Karyn Bosomworth, Robin Cameron, Toni Erskine, Damian Grenfell, Vandra Harris, Katherine Haynes, Paul James, Elizabeth Kath, Adriana Keating, Blythe McLennan, Heikki Patomäki, Andrea Reale, Selver Sahin, Victoria Stead, Joseph Siracusa, Richard Tanter, Karin Reinke, Anna Trembath, Mayra Walsh, Joshua Whittaker.

How can cities harness their immense resources to cope with crises?

Research Focus
The Human Security Program is informed by research that conceptualizes a wide range of resources that can be drawn upon in responding to crises. Security from this perspective is human-centred, finding its location within communities not an abstracted, unified understanding of the state. The promotion of health, protection against violence and sustainable environmental and economic development requires reflexive policies that effectively build upon existing communal and cultural dynamics in order to foster resilience and harness creative and productive responses to crises and conflict. Human security in this sense encompasses equally material security and a relational and identity-based sense of existential security. The scope of necessary policy-responses thus does not simply encompass formal governmental interventions into static populations. Indeed governmental policy is fluid and subject to political and social exigencies of media and public opinion. Policy-making institutions in this sense are similarly complex communities that, however bureaucratically structured, interact with the layers of overlapping communities constituting society. In short, by conceptualizing the available resources of the city in terms of human security the productivity and creativity of communities can be more effectively harnessed.
Description of Program

This program focuses on the pathways for recovering from conflict, building resilience and reducing disaster-vulnerability.

Metropolitan spatial concentrations are the focus of human creativity and desire. They are able to harness immense resources to cope with crises, and are able to project themselves to the world through being the focal point for international media and politics. However, they are also concentrations of diverse and often conflicting cultures, sources of insecurity from natural, technological and social agents. The sense of insecurity has been made more acute by globalized violence and the War on Terror. Our immediate region provides numerous examples. We are frequently reminded that Australia is situated within an ‘arc of instability’; and the massive destruction and resilience of Asian communities following the recent tsunami is an instance of disaster striking at cities from environmental forces that go a long way beyond the locale or immediate region. Disasters have the proven capacity to halt development in poorer cities. This Program will focus on the pathways for recovering from conflict, building resilience and reducing disaster vulnerability. This can be achieved by understanding and building on the strengths of cities and working to reduce the forces promoting violence and vulnerability to disaster. For many cities in our region, and throughout the world, this is a key factor in any hope of sustainability.

Projects

After the Violence: Truth, Reconciliation and National Integration in Timor-Leste

Team: Damian Grenfell
Funding provider: Australia Research Council
Project description: With the closure of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR) and the dissemination of its findings across 2006, this project examines the impact of CAVR on national integration. By focusing particularly on how CAVR sought to find ‘the truth’ regarding political violence that had occurred between 1974 and 1999, as well as to secure the reintegration of past human-rights offenders back into society, the central role of the Commission in underpinning the transition to a new nation will be considered.

While the project has continued to focus on CAVR, the socio-political crises that began in 2006 and the Presidential and Parliamentary elections of 2007 have both been drawn into the study so as to help answer the underpinning questions of the project that relate to the nature of nation-formation in a post-conflict Timor-Leste. As such, in 2009 research on the themes of both justice and governance were drawn into the study through an extensive survey of five sites across Timor-Leste. With the project winding up at the end of 2009, the process of writing up various findings is now underway.
The Bali Bombings Monument: Global Cosmopolis
Team: Jeff Lewis, I Nyoman Darma Putra (Udayana University), Belinda Lewis (Monash University)
Project Description: This project examines the current changes in Balinese culture and economy through a study of the Bali bombings monument. The study uses a range of heuristic tools, including an analysis of the monument design features and an observational study of visitor uses. The study examines the site as a sacred and public space. The study examines, in particular, the complex inter-national and inter-cultural relationships that are generated through the monument site.

Climate Changes / Australian Forces Abroad
Team: Richard Tanter and Peter Hayes
Project Description: This project involves two distinct sub-projects.
1. Australian Forces Abroad Briefing Books - prepared by Nautilus Institute at RMIT with support from the Human Security Program. The Australian Forces Abroad Briefing book series draws together existing knowledge concerning ADF and AFP deployments on missions outside of Australia, with the aim of creating a pool of common knowledge which will assist both the Australian community and those communities in which ADF and AFP forces are deployed to assess Australian government policy and its impact.
2. NI-GCI CCAP Project on Climate Change and Security and Australia-Indonesia Relations.

Human Security and the Asia-Pacific
Investigator: Damian Grenfell
This project examines the most critical and pervasive threats to the vital core of all human lives in key cities and communities across Australia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea. Through site specific research it seeks to understand not only the nature, source and impact of human security threats in these communities, but also local, national and international sources of recovery and resilience in the region. Findings from each of the sites were presented and developed through the 2008 Human Security seminar series.

Crime Wars
Team: Joseph Siracusa and Paul Battersby
Project description: This project examines the many points of intersection between political legitimacy, law, political violence and criminal activity. It questions why generally law-abiding persons and states sanction rule-infringement, law-breaking and amoral policy or grand strategy. It also examines the criminalization of the developing world in a legal technocratic sense, as well as at the level of public debate about rights, morals and security. A book targeted to graduate students and researchers and policy and military professionals is in development.
Gender and Contemporary East Timorese Social Relations: Meanings, Importance and Possibilities

Investigator: Anna Trembath

Project Description: This project seeks to understand the importance of gender in contemporary East Timorese social relations. It is argued that Timor-Leste is a society that is complex and unevenly integrated across different ontological formations. Moreover, it is undergoing unprecedented change in this period of nation-building and globalisation. In this context, gender is deeply implicated in contested processes of social integration, disintegration, change and continuity. Mapping possible routes for the pursuit of greater gender equality suitable to the East Timorese context requires understanding how gender figures in these complex social relations.

Global Human Security

Team: Joseph Siracusa, Paul James

Project description: This project involves the analysis of key security debates surrounding globalization and human security. A conceptual background paper on human security was prepared and presented in April 2008 as part of the Program’s seminar series, and is currently being revised for publication. An edited volume on Human Security is also currently in the planning stages.

Global Media Crisis: Desire, Displeasure and Transformation

Investigator: Jeff Lewis

Project Description: Crisis in the Global Mediasphere examines the evolution of contemporary global crises as an effect of mediation and cultural change. While the project focuses on the conditions and episteme of contemporary crisis, the foundations of this crisis emerges through the ecological and social changes associated with Holocene global warming and the rise of agriculture and surplus economy. The book argues that a crisis consciousness has emerged through the interaction of crisis conditions and a more expansive human desire for pleasure. Contemporary crisis is, therefore, articulated in the mediation of economy, sexuality, ecological change, terrorism and war.

Global Reconciliation

Investigator: Elizabeth Kath

Project Description: This project supports Global Reconciliation—an Australian-initiated network of people and organisations around the world seeking to promote “reconciliation”—that is, communication and dialogue across national, cultural, religious and racial differences.

Global Reconciliation is an ambitious and innovative partnership that draws together the vast resources of communities in Australia and elsewhere to establish specific, outcome focused collaborative projects around the world, particularly in the areas of health, education, sport, the arts, spirituality, livelihoods & money, justice & ethics, and environment.
Globalization and Human Security
Team: Paul Battersby and Joseph Siracusa
Project description: This project provides an introduction to the concept of human security and questions the utility of traditional national-security frameworks in the post–Cold War era. This project reconsiders the principle of state sovereignty in a global world where threats to humanity are beyond the capacity of any one nation to address through unilateral action. In doing this, it highlights circumstances, actors, and influences beyond the traditional focus on state security, especially the role of international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Impacts of NGO National Gender Programming in Local Communities in Timor-Leste
Team: Anna Trembath and Damian Grenfell
Funding providers: Trocaire, Irish Aid and RMIT University
Project description: This project involves RMIT Timor-Leste Research Program researchers working with four East Timorese NGOs (Feto iha Kbiit Servisu Hamutuk, Fundasaun Alola, Grupo Feto Foinsae Timor Lorosa’e, and Judicial System Monitoring Programme) in order to collaboratively research and evaluate the impacts of their NGO gender programming in local communities in Timor-Leste. NGO partners are to develop research and evaluation capacity.

Indonesian Nuclear Power Proposals
Investigator: Richard Tanter
Project Description: This project documents Indonesian nuclear power proposals. It currently focuses on the proposed Muria peninsula development, but will in the future address the Gorontalo and Madura proposals. The project is being conducted through the Nautilus Institute at RMIT.

Insecurity and Cultural Change in Nusa Tengara, Indonesia
Team: Jeff Lewis, Selver Sahin and Belinda Lewis (Monash University)
Project Description: This project is designed as a pilot study to explore major human security and development challenges in East Nusa Tenggara province of Indonesia and establish partnerships with key local stakeholders for future grants applications to 2010 AusAID Research Awards and/or 2011 ARC Linkage funding scheme.
The Introduction of New Food Security Technologies in Lautem, Timor-Leste

Team: Damian Grenfell, Mayra Walsh and Carmenesa Noronha.

Funding provider: Concern Worldwide

Project description: This research is underpinned by questions around the information dispersal that occurs in communities after a training program is run and the reasons that underpin the adoption of new technologies. Essentially, we want to understand how and why rural communities have adopted new technologies that have been promoted through Concern’s food security program. There are three key project objectives:

1. To assess the uptake pathways for new technologies and determine the ways in which related information has been distributed within the communities, actors involved, and the strengths and weaknesses to this process;

2. To ascertain the degree to which new technologies have been used/implemented by the community; and

3. To determine the sustainability of new technology adoption in the two study sites and the key challenges in regards to the transfer of information that have limited the adoption of new technologies.

Land, Power and Change: Globalization and Customary Land Tenures in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste

Investigator: Victoria Stead

Project Description: Employing a methodology which draws upon both social theory and ethnography, with empirical research in three countries in the Pacific region — Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste — the research addresses itself to the following question: In conditions of globalization, how are systems of customary land usage and tenure in the three countries under consideration being transformed, and with what effect on structures and relationships of power? Theoretically, the research is framed by an attentiveness to the intersection of different social formations — customary, traditional and modern — which provides a conceptual basis for theorising and making sense of the transformations which are underway. Philosophically, the research is driven by a concern with questions of change, power, conflict and agency; particularly, with the ways in which people and communities in politically-marginalised parts of the world are impacted by, and in turn respond to, conditions of massive social change.
Nation-Building Across the Urban and Rural in Timor-Leste

Team: Damian Grenfell, Mayra Walsh, Victoria Stead and Anna Trembath

Partners: NGO Forum Timor-Leste, Australian Volunteers International and Charles Darwin University

Funding provider: AusAID, RMIT University, Caritas Australia Timor-Leste, Asia Pacific Futures Research Network, Airnorth

Project description: In July 2009, RMIT University coordinated an international conference held in Dili, Timor-Leste. This conference brought people from across Timor-Leste together with those working at national and international levels to discuss issues related to nation-building in Timor-Leste. A conference report has recently been released.

Political Economies of Democratisation

Team: Milja Kurki (project leader; University of Wales, Aberystwyth); Heikki Patomaki, Jeff Bridoux (University of Wales, Aberystwyth) and Anja Gebel (University of Wales, Aberystwyth)

Funding provider: Australian Research Council (Discovery Project); RMIT University

Research Grants


‘Impacts of NGO National Gender Programming in Local Communities in Timor-Leste’ (2009-10), Trocaire and Irish Aid in Timor-Leste, Anna Trembath and Damian Grenfell


Research Publications

Books


Book Chapters


Book Chapters (Reprints)


Referred Journal Articles


P. James, V. Stead, Y. Nadarajah and K. Haive, ‘Hinterland Communities: Tokain Group of Villages, Madang Province; Boera Village, Central Province; Inuma and Alepa Villages, Central Province; Vanapa Area, Central Province’, Local-Global Papua New Guinea: Projecting Community-Life, vol. 5, 2009, pp. 64–114


Reports


Caroline Bayliss worked in the Global Cities Institute as Deputy Director of the UN Global Compact Cities Programme until the end of 2010. Here she is pictured in Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2010, coming out of a garbage storage tunnel.
Globalization, Human Security and Human Capabilities: Challenges and Opportunities

Melbourne (Australia) February 2010

Speaker: Professor Haider A. Khan, Joseph Korbel School of International Studies
University of Denver, USA

The word globalization, as commonly used, is largely a descriptive and not an analytical category. This paper attempted to give the term analytic content. Likewise, the term human security also requires some Wittgensteinian “linguistic therapy” to bring out its analytical reach in enhancing human social capabilities. After this preliminary analytical ground clearing, the paper focused on both the positive and normative analysis of globalization. Trade, environment, finance and gender issues receive special attention. As part of a general ecological global political economy approach in a world where economic development is uneven and power is acutely asymmetrically distributed, a global governance structure based on transparent principles of both economic efficiency and social justice is shown to be a desirable state of affairs. However, the present fractured process of globalization is more likely to end up in regionalism or even national protectionism and great power chauvinism and rivalry. Multilateral cooperation on the basis of the framework advanced here is an urgent necessity. Global social and political movements for advancing human rights and human security—properly understood—are, therefore, significant elements of a project to make globalization work in a fair and equitable manner.

Indian Students and Community Sustainability

Melbourne (Australia) March 2010

Speakers: Professor Supriya Singh, Professor of Sociology and Communications; and Anuja Cabraal, PhD Student, RMIT University

Prof Supriya Singh and Anuja Cabraal presented on ‘Indian students and community sustainability’. They argued that the over 120,000 Indian international students are changing the profile of the Indian community in Australia. The professional Indians who migrated with their families came from metropolitan cities and had positive experiences of multicultural experiences compared to the recent students. For some of these students Melbourne is their first urban experience. The second generation Indian Australians and the Indian students are young, but otherwise have little in common. The Indian religious organisations are playing an important role in bridging some of these differences and addressing the problems faced by the students. But they could do more if they consulted with each other and spoke with one voice, while strengthening their links with other ethnic groups who have faced similar kinds of racism and violence.
Climate Change and Displacement
Melbourne (Australia) April 2010
Speaker: Scott Leckie, Director and Founder of Displacement Solution
This seminar was a discussion of recent research in PNG/Bougainville, Tuvalu, Kiribas and Bangladesh, funded as a 2009-2012 project by German Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ), German Technical Agency (GTZ), the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies and the Bodyshop Foundation. Scott Leckie is the Director and Founder of Displacement Solutions (www.displacementsolutions.org), an organisation dedicated to resolving cases of forced displacement throughout the world, in particular displacement caused by climate change and conflict.

Community Sustainability Seminar
Melbourne (Australia) April 2010
Speaker: Julian Bondy, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice, RMIT University
This seminar focused on recent headlines in The Age which revealed almost half of the assaults in the central business district, Southbank and Docklands are by offenders from Melbourne's west and north-west, but these suburbs house just one-quarter of the city's population. There are two related questions. First, where and in what circumstances is violence in taking place in this city? Second, what do we know about the characteristics and experiences of offenders that set them apart from non-offenders? While there have been a number of recent policy initiatives that focus on the first question there has been comparatively little emphasis on the second - yet this is the area that evidence indicates has the most potential for effecting significant change.

This presentation explored how violence has been framed in Melbourne and the role of socio-economic disadvantage, and the implications of violence in relation to community and sustainability.
Are the Homeless Mentally Ill?
Melbourne (Australia) May 2010

Speakers: Dr Guy Johnson, Research Fellow, School of Global Studies and Social Science and Planning; and Professor Chris Chamberlain, School of Global Studies and Social Science and Planning, RMIT University

In Australia, it is widely believed that most homeless people have mental health issues, and that mental illness is a primary cause of homelessness. This paper used information from a study of 4,291 homeless people in Melbourne to investigate these propositions. The research found that neither proposition was plausible. Fifteen per cent of the sample had mental health issues prior to becoming homeless, and sixteen per cent developed mental health issues after becoming homeless. For those that had mental health issues prior to becoming homeless, it was the breakdown of family relationships that usually precipitated homelessness. For those who developed mental health issues after becoming homeless, it was often their experiences in the homeless population that brought on mental illness. Regardless of whether mental illness preceded or followed homelessness, most people with mental health issues experienced long-term homelessness. The paper concluded with two policy recommendations.

Post Tsunami Rebuilding in Sri Lanka and India
Melbourne (Australia) June 2010

Speaker: Dr Martin Mulligan, Director and Senior Research Fellow, Globalism Research Centre, RMIT University

Although there have been many serious natural disasters in the world since 2004, the Indian Ocean tsunami remains the most devastating in terms of the numbers of towns and communities that were devastated, in countries ranging from Indonesia to Sri Lanka and India. Major studies of the relief and recovery effort across the affected countries agree that the world learnt a lot from the experience about how to handle the immediate relief phase but much less about how to ‘put affected communities in the driving seat’ of longer term social recovery. However, a shift from relief to community development is very hard to achieve, especially when extensive relocations are required. Martin Mulligan and Yaso Nadarajah have recently completed the most thorough and penetrating study undertaken on what can be learnt about the post-disaster rebuilding of viable and inclusive communities from the tsunami experience in Sri Lanka and India. While the study found that international aid agencies often made things worse rather than better, there were some examples of good practice that need to be understood better. The study, which was conducted in five tsunami-affected areas of Sri Lanka and southern India, has been submitted to AusAID and the authors are keen to communicate their key findings as widely as possible.
Transitions in Practice - Climate Change and Everyday Life

Melbourne (Australia) February 2009

Speaker: Elizabeth Shove, Professor of Sociology, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

This informal seminar aimed to generate discussion among RMIT and other researchers about research, methods and techniques in socio-technical studies related to climate change.

Professor Elizabeth Shove has pioneered and promoted novel, practice-oriented approaches to the study of consumption, everyday life and sustainability and has recently been awarded a prestigious ESRC Climate Change Leadership Fellowship (2008-2011) to develop her work in this field. To date Elizabeth’s research on the dynamics of consumption and the social organisation of ‘normality’ has been developed and sustained with funding from the European Science Foundation Tackling Environmental Resource Management programme and a Leverhulme fellowship resulting in the very well received book Comfort, Cleanliness and Convenience (Berg 2003). She has recently completed and ESRC funded project, part of the cultures consumption programme, resulting in the book The Design of Everyday Life (Berg 2007) which established new ways of conceptualising innovations in consumption, material culture and practice.

Mobility for the Globalisation Era: Transnational Knowledge Workers

Melbourne (Australia) February 2009

Speaker: Val Colic-Peisker, Senior Research Fellow, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute

This paper identified a type of transnational mobility that has grown fast in the era of globalisation - the last several decades - due to technological, economic and political changes on a global scale. This type of spatial mobility, although primarily dictated by the global labour market, is different from the previously dominant ‘settler migration’ - it is a migration of relatively privileged ‘transnational knowledge workers’ (TKWs), often temporary and recurring in nature, thus creating a class of people who cross national borders easily and also in a way live beyond the sedentary national principle. The paper looked at the context of globalisation and the new nomadism and then focused on the identity-belonging of TKWs.
Remaking Suburbia - Sustainable Home Improvements Research and Initiatives from Australia and the United Kingdom

Melbourne (Australia) March 2009
Hosted by: RMIT University (Global Cities Institute, AHURI & Centre for Design)

Keynote speakers:
Professor Tony Dalton, RMIT University; Suburban transitions; a policy framework.
Professor Elizabeth Shove, Lancaster University, UK; Social practices in the home
Stephen Berry, Director, Green Loans Programme, DEWHA; Green loans and more; Federal initiatives in housing retrofitting.
Gavin Killip, Environmental Change Institute, Oxford University, UK; Prospects for low-carbon housing industries.
John Doggart, Chairman, Sustainable Energy Academy, UK; Old Home Superhomes; UK experiences in retrofitting.

Halving Homelessness: The Challenge for the Rudd Government

Melbourne (Australia) March 2009
Speaker: Professor Chris Chamberlain, Director of the Centre for Applied Social Research, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning, RMIT University

According to the ABS report, Counting the Homeless 2006 (catalogue no. 2050.0), every night 105,000 Australians are homeless. Around half rely on the hospitality of friends or relatives, about one-fifth bed down in boarding houses, and the rest rely on emergency accommodation or sleep rough under bridges, in cars or other public places. The Rudd Government’s white paper, Which Way Home? A New Approach to Homelessness’, sets an ambitious target to halve homelessness by 2020 and to offer supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it. This paper explores the policy context and discusses the challenges ahead.
Global Frameworks Project Climate Change Adaptation Program
Melbourne (Australia) March 2009
Speakers: Will McGoldrick, Professor George Cairns, RMIT University

The aim of the Global Frameworks Project is to develop an empirically grounded and theoretically informed model of structures of governance, regulation and rule that would enable and support collaboration between cities on climate change adaptation.

As an initial stage in understanding the ways in which effective governance and regulation to foster and enable climate change adaptation collaboration between cities might be designed, the Global Frameworks Project has commissioned a report on the current status of literature on:

- Climate change adaptation: defining adaptation, linkage of adaptation and mitigation, anticipating adaptation needs, understanding adaptive capacity
- Collaboration between cities: current CCA strategies, CCA concerns, current and proposed collaborative networks on CCA and other issues.

Sustainable Built Environments in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Vietnam, April 2009
Speaker: Dr. Ifte Ahmed, Research Fellow, Centre for Design and Global Cities Institute, RMIT

This seminar was based on a recent scoping study undertaken with support from and collaboration between the Global Cities Institute and Centre for Design, RMIT and partner institutions in Vietnam - the Vietnam Green Building Council (VGBC) and the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences (VASS). Given the rapidly changing urban context and RMIT’s strategic interest in Vietnam, the study arose from the need to conduct research to identify and develop options for promoting sustainable urban development through collaborative work with the Vietnamese partners. As a basis for that, the institutional and policy context of urban development in Vietnam was examined with a focus on its two largest cities, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to understand the changing relationships in urban governance, bureaucratic roles, capacity development regarding future sustainability needs and objectives, and housing and development policy with regards to equity, social, economic and environmental goals.

Key sectors of the urban built environment and strategic planning issues were also explored within the framework of the study. An analysis of capacity development needs within this context allowed positing recommendations on how RMIT might play a valuable role through its partnerships to promote sustainable urban development and climate change adaptive built environments in Vietnam.
Greening Information Technology
Melbourne (Australia) April 2009
Speaker: Alemayehu Molla, Associate Professor at the School of Business Information Technology, RMIT University
The role of information technology (IT) in causing and resolving environmental and sustainability issues has been attracting policy makers’ and consultants’ interests but remains a less researched topic. Usually coined as “Green IT”, each stage of the IT lifecycle from manufacturing to usage and disposal poses environmental concerns such as power consumption, greenhouse gas emission, land and water contamination. Beside environmental sustainability, Greening IT has been touted to offer opportunities for reducing the total cost of IT operations. This presentation covered findings from an exploratory study of Green IT adoption among Australian and New Zealand organisations. It also discussed the influence of the regulatory, normative and economic drivers and motivating factors on Greening Information Technology.

Securing Globalization: Neoliberalism, War and Bailouts
Melbourne (Australia) May 2009
Speaker: Professor James Mittelman, American University, Washington DC
Does globalization promote security or insecurity?
Some policy analysts maintain that globalizing processes are prone towards peace. From this perspective, the expansion of commerce, the spread of democracy and technological advances bring the world closer together and favor cooperation. Other observers argue that the same global structures provoke conflict over trade, enable criminal and terrorist networks and lower the costs of dangerous transactions including flows of weapons. These debates stumble over major issues that can be brought to light by bridging the geoeconomics and geopolitics of globalization, and by extending discussion to the geostrategic sphere. Few scholars have sought to span this gulf. In this lecture, James Mittelman argued that a more comprehensive approach requires us to understand the systemic drivers of global security and insecurity. It also requires historical perspectives that explain current implosions in globalization.
Learning Cities Program Symposium
Melbourne (Australia) May 2009

The Learning Cities research team presented around their current projects:

- Learning for carbon neutral communities - Ralph Horne, Susie Moloney, John Fien, Annette Kroen and Jenny Gidley
- Adaptive learning networks for sustainable procurement – Adela McMurray and Mazhural Islam
- Youth leadership for sustainable consumption – Iris Bergmann and Kate Pears
- Community learning partnerships for sustainability – Robbie Guevara, Annette Gough, Jodi-Anne Smith, Leone Wheeler and John Fien
- Water and social learning - Katelyn Sampson and Iris Bergmann
- School-based education for sustainable development (AISV) – Annette Gough, Michelle Griffith, John Fien
- Community education and community safety (Bushfire community education program): John Gilbert, Helen Goodman, Phil Buckle
- Sustainability education in higher education: Ian Thomas, Sarah Holdsworth, Lynne Bennington, Fiona Wahr and Kathryn Hegarty
- Social inclusion through further and higher education – Leone Wheeler
- Management training for cadres in Shanghai – Lynne Bennington
- Program theory and women's bushfire safety initiatives - Helen Goodman
- Learning for sustainability through visual methods: A case study of public attitudes to factory farming - Iris Bergmann
- Capacity building for Indigenous employment in remote communities - John Fien and Ros Moye
- Design of psychologically based educational tools for climate change mitigation and adaptation - Jodi-Anne Smith.
Cities, Settlements, and the Global South

Melbourne (Australia) June 2009

Speaker: Dr. Anna Kajumulo Tibajjuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT, Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)

If cities are to come to terms with rapid levels of urbanization, they require leaders, managers and institutions capable of adopting innovative and robust approaches to planning, management, governance and financing systems for urban growth. It also requires that there are educational systems and institutions in place which have sustainable urbanization high in their training and research agenda.

Anna Tibajjuka is the first African woman elected by the UN General Assembly as Under-Secretary-General of a United Nations programme. She is currently serving a second, four-year term as Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT. A Tanzanian national born to smallholder banana-coffee farmers in Muleba, Tanzania, she was educated at the Swedish University of Agricultural Science in Uppsala. She has served as a Member of the Commission for Africa established by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair which resulted in the cancellation of multilateral debt for several African countries by the G8 Summit in 2005 at Glen Eagles, Scotland. In July 2005 the Secretary General appointed Mrs. Tibajjuka as his Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe following massive evictions of the poor in urban areas. She is currently a member of the World Health Organization Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, and is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor, co-chaired by the former US Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, and the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto.

The Impact of the War on Terror on Muslims in Melbourne

Melbourne (Australia) June 2009

Speaker: Dr Alperhan Babacan, School of Accounting and Law, RMIT University

This paper looked at the impact of the war on terror on Muslims in Melbourne through discussion of the findings obtained from forty in-depth interviews conducted with members of the Turkish and Arabic speaking communities in 2008. The interviews revealed that media reporting and the Howard government contributed to increased prejudice and racism against Muslims. Many members of the Muslim community who were interviewed reported incidents of verbal abuse, racial harassment and discrimination in the public domain and felt vilified by the mainstream media coverage of the war on terror. There was a strong link between wearing a veil/hijab or other visible markers of ethnicity such as the growing of a beard or one's religion and experiences of racism and prejudice. The report concluded by arguing that religious and racial vilification of Muslims in Melbourne has impacted on them by way of increased distress and insecurity, thereby rendering the community as not belonging in Australia.
Bushfire Research after February 7  
Melbourne (Australia) 8 July 2009  
Co-sponsored with the Centre for Risk and Community Safety, RMIT University  
RMIT’s Centre for Risk and Community Safety organised this bushfire research workshop in cooperation with the Bushfire CRC, AFAC, the National Consultant for Disaster Recovery, the Climate Change Adaptation Research Network on Emergency Management, The Fenner School for Environment and Society at ANU, and the OESC.

Growing Through Knowing Workshop 2009  
Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) RMIT University Vietnam, July 2009  
Economic investment and growth are proceeding at a rapid rate in Vietnam with a corresponding strong demand for the expansion of urban infrastructure. Cities such as Ho Chi Minh City are expanding quickly with many new developments emerging. In view of anticipated effects of changed climate in this region as well as altered environments due to the developments themselves, there is urgent need for critical assessment on the long term effects of these developments in order to inform the community, developers and government authorities as extensive future developments are planned and constructed.

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, US Geo-Strategy, and the Global Context  
Melbourne (Australia) August 2009  
Speaker: Professor Ibrahim G Aoudé, Professor of Ethnic Studies, University of Hawai‘i—Manoa  
Professor Aoudé spoke on the continuity of U.S. strategic imperatives from the Bush II years to the present and the continuing relevance of the military strategic goal, “full spectrum dominance” to US imperial global strategy. Ibrahim G Aoudé is Professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawai‘i—Manoa. He is the Editor of Arab Studies Quarterly and has published on Middle East politics, Arab diasporic identities, and Hawaiian political economy and social movements. Professor Aoudé’s research interests also include social movements, civil liberties, labor, housing and political economic development.
The privatization of urban water services in Accra, Ghana offers an exceptional case study for critically interrogating the reconfiguration of public goods in international relations. The talk described Ghana’s journey into water privatization, emphasising the interests of the actors involved and the problems incurred by the citizens of Accra as a result of the privatization. At first glance, Ghana’s experience appears to reflect the all-too-familiar story of the relentless pursuit of market-based solutions by international donor agencies, and local elites. However, there is a broader connection with attempts to rethink the meaning and substance of public goods. This effort to redefine what public goods are represents the gradual mainstreaming of human security within the imaginary of global governance. With the help of the case of Accra, Dr Weber shows the limitations of this mainstreaming, its problematic implications, and its political and ideological bias. Dr Weber also offered broader insights relevant to the analysis of the political economy of urban development in aid-recipient contexts, as well as recommendations regarding methodological and conceptual issues connected with more comprehensive mappings of the relationship between global governance and urbanization.

Art & Globalization: Urban Future and Aesthetic Relations Symposium
Melbourne (Australia) August 2009
Art, Knowledge and Globalization Research Cluster, RMIT School of Art
Keynote Speaker: Dr Kevin Murray, Adjunct Professor, School of Art RMIT University
Living up to those below: A new ethics of north-south collaboration

Art & Globalization: Urban Futures and Aesthetic Relations considers the ways processes of globalization are transforming the cultural experiences and productions in contemporary urban spaces. The overall concern is to identify and map how cultural production, including art, contributes to the re-imagining of identity and place through art-events, artefacts and attitudes. This re-casts our understanding of cities: the ways knowledge of urban spaces might be formed, framed and transferred through art and other forms of cultural production; and the means by which knowledge is mediated to construct meaning and value for inhabitants of urban spaces. The symposium seeks to locate the sites of “codified” and “tacit” knowledge of civic space, place and identity and analyse how such sites can be read to invigorate a re-imagining—and greater understanding—of urban landscapes in the context of global economies.
Justice Ecologism in an Age of Global Warming
Melbourne (Australia) September 2009
Speaker: Dr James Goodman, Senior Lecturer, Social and Political Change Group, University of Technology Sydney

Justice globalization emerged to prominence in 2001 with the World Social Forum. It has offered powerful responses to market globalization, grounding alternatives as well as refusals. With the intensification of global warming the question of climate justice is increasingly subsuming issues of global justice. Climate justice offers a distinct trajectory, with its own dilemmas and potentials. Dr Goodman addressed these differences along six axes: scope, discourse, space, strategy, temporality and agency. He argued that climate justice is a totalizing concern, scientifically measurable, that creates new leverage for late industrialisers, requires a proactive strategy, within a limited temporal horizon, embedded within an all-encompassing and radically challenging epistemology. Climate justice addresses some limitations of global justice, whilst creating problems of its own. Emerging dynamics of climate justice are pre-figuring paradigmatic transition, forcing broad-scale transformations in political contestation.

Sustainable Urban Poor and Low-Income Housing in Vietnam
Melbourne (Australia) October 2009
Speaker: Le Vu Cuong, Researcher, Vietnam Green Building Council

In this seminar, visiting researcher Le Vu Cuong from Vietnam, presented his research on sustainable urban poor and low-income housing conducted during his visit at RMIT University. Cuong is recipient of the Australian Government’s prestigious Endeavour Executive Award for this study visit.

Urban poor and low-income housing is a highly visible dimension of poverty and it represents a persistent issue in Vietnam. It is related to various social, political and environmental aspects, requiring exploration to develop sustainable approaches for addressing it. This research focused on four main themes: 1) urban planning, infrastructure, and construction of housing; 2) housing policy; 3) economic and social problems; 4) environment, health, and climate change. It investigated the key concepts for urban poor housing development within a sustainable urban development context.

Meeting the increasing demand for urban housing within a rapid urban development process will be crucial for the improvement of living conditions in the transforming megacities of Vietnam. The research promotes the sustainable development of housing and settlements in HCMC and Hanoi. It aims at the formulation of integrative housing strategies that balance urban growth with environmental and climate change impact. The research focuses on housing strategies for low-income groups as well as increasing resilience to climate change in a developing country context through mitigation and adaptation measures.
Telling the Story of Melbourne’s Cultural Precincts
- a project with the City of Melbourne

Melbourne (Australia) October 2009

Speaker: Dr Peter Phipps, School of Global Studies, Social Science and Planning and the Globalism Research Centre, RMIT University

Global Cities Institute researchers in the Globalization and Culture and Community Sustainability programs are working on a research project for the City of Melbourne concerned with three inner city cultural precincts in Lonsdale, Lygon and Little Bourke streets. The project explores policy settings around cultural precincts here and internationally, conducts research on the cultural history of these precincts, and makes specific policy and implementation recommendations. The project is a nice example of theoretical questions around cultural identity and community in conditions of globalization offering insights in applied cultural policy. We have been advised that the policy recommendations in the final report will be considered closely by the State Government in framing statewide cultural precincts policy.

Pathways to Reconciliation Summit

Amman (Jordan) 14–17 December 2009, Conference

In December 2009, Global Reconciliation organized a major summit in Jordan, drawing together representatives of organizations from thirty-seven countries to discuss alternative pathways to peace. Reconciliation is one of its fundamental themes of the Global Cities Institute. In partnership with Monash University in the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, RMIT was foundational in establishing Global Reconciliation, an international organization concerned with grassroots interchange. Forums have been held in Melbourne, Sarajevo, London and Delhi. The 2009 Global Reconciliation Summit in Amman extended this work and was hosted by HRH Prince Hassan of Jordan and the Regional Centre for Health and Security. The Summit was framed by the premise that reconciliation is a complex process that requires more than apologies and mutual recognition, more than state-organized forums for truth-telling. Reconciliation needs to be built from the ground up, and supported from the top down, by practice that includes but goes beyond dialogue. While most theory and practice focuses on nationally-based ‘Truth and Reconciliation’ Commissions, the Summit set the conditions for going much further. A communiqué issued at the end of the Summit suggested that a broader practice of reconciliation, should also involve mutual local projects that bring estranged and suspicious peoples together to do something that is socially beneficial across the boundaries of their pain and enmity. This kind of process will not occur either spontaneously or through politician’s road maps. It will require some form of institutionalization. If that institutionalization simply mirrors a national Truth and Reconciliation forum across the different levels of the local and the global it will probably fail, but there many other models to explore. Projects in Israel-Palestine, Sri Lanka, and Papua New Guinea were discussed among many others, and became the basis for work across 2010.
### 8. Postgraduate Students

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<td>Matthew Kwan</td>
<td>Stephen Waters</td>
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<td>Georgina Luckock</td>
<td>Megan Nethercote</td>
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<td>Mansi Mansi</td>
<td>Tintin Wulia</td>
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<td>Marietta Martinovic</td>
<td>Gregoria Yudarwati</td>
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<td>Dorothy McMahon</td>
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<td>Trevor McMahon</td>
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Amman, Jordan, 2009. In December we held a Reconciliation Summit attended by delegates from thirty-seven countries.
The Tower of Babel is one of the most enduring and ambiguous images amongst the various images that relate to cities. References to Babel occur in the Bible, the Torah and the Qur’an, the books of three of the world’s global religions. The story refers to the dispersal of the world’s languages occasioned, at least in the Christian and Judaic traditions, as God’s response to their hubris in attempting to build a city that reaches the heavens. Other traditions from South America have similar stories, including one about Montezuma who escaped a great flood, and attempted to build a house reaching to heaven, which the Great Spirit destroyed with thunderbolts. Given this ambiguity of aspiration, hubris and globalized pluralism, this image became the basis for thinking about how to represent graphically the concerns of the Global Cities Institute (see the front cover and imprint page).