

‘The planned city sweeps the poor away...’[☆]: Urban planning and 21st century urbanisation

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Abstract

In recent years, attention has been drawn to the fact that now more than half of the world’s population is urbanised, and the bulk of these urban dwellers are living in the global South. Many of these Southern towns and cities are dealing with crises which are compounded by rapid population growth, particularly in peri-urban areas; lack of access to shelter, infrastructure and services by predominantly poor populations; weak local governments and serious environmental issues. There is also a realisation that newer issues of climate change, resource and energy depletion, food insecurity and the current financial crisis will exacerbate present difficult conditions. As ideas that either ‘the market’ or ‘communities’ could solve these urban issues appear increasingly unrealistic, there have been suggestions for a stronger role for governments through reformed instruments of urban planning. However, agencies (such as UN-Habitat) promoting this make the point that in many parts of the world current urban planning systems are actually part of the problem: they serve to promote social and spatial exclusion, are anti-poor, and are doing little to secure environmental sustainability. Urban planning, it is argued, therefore needs fundamental review if it is to play any meaningful role in current urban issues.

This paper explores the idea that urban planning has served to exclude the poor, but that it might be possible to develop new planning approaches and systems which address urban growth and the major environment and resource issues, and which are pro-poor. What is clearly evident is that over the last two to three decades, urban places in both the global North and South have changed significantly: in terms of their economy, society, spatial structure and environments. Yet it appears that planning systems, particularly in the global South, have changed very slowly and some hardly at all, with many approaches and systems reflecting planning ideas from the global North simplistically transferred to Southern contexts through complex processes of colonialism and globalisation. The persistence of older forms of planning in itself requires explanation. The paper briefly reviews newer approaches to urban planning which have emerged in both the global North and South to see the extent to which they might, at the level of principle, offer ideas for pro-poor and sustainable planning. The dangers of further inappropriate ‘borrowing’ of ideas across contexts are stressed. It concludes that there are some important shifts and new ideas, but no ready-made solutions for Southern urban contexts.

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Keywords: Urban planning; Urbanisation; Marginalisation; Informality; Master planning; Global South

[☆] Tibaijuka (2006).

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Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction	153
Chapter 2. Urban settlements in the 21st century: Setting the context for urban planning	156
2.1. Introduction	156
2.2. Globalisation and cities	156
2.2.1. Labour markets and income changes	156
2.2.2. Urban government	157
2.2.3. Civil society	158
2.2.4. Urbanisation	159
2.3. The environmental and natural resource challenge for planning	161
2.4. Urban socio-spatial change	162
2.5. Conclusion	163
Chapter 3. Planning in the global North: Concerns of poverty and sustainability	165
3.1. Introduction	165
3.2. Emergence of urban planning in the global North: Master plans, development control and urban modernism.	165
3.3. Planning shifts in the global North and contemporary approaches	167
3.3.1. Decision-making in planning	167
3.3.2. Forms of spatial planning	168
3.3.3. Planning, environment and sustainability	169
3.3.4. Land management and regulation	170
3.4. Conclusion	171
Chapter 4. Urban planning in the global South.	172
4.1. Introduction	172
4.2. Spread of urban planning ideas to the global South	172
4.3. Urban modernism as an ideal city form	174
4.4. Zoning ordinances and building regulations.	176
4.5. The ‘dark side’ of planning	176
4.6. Conclusion	177
Chapter 5. New planning approaches and ideas in the global South	179
5.1. Introduction	179
5.2. Innovations in the institutional context of planning.	179
5.2.1. Integrated development planning	179
5.2.2. Participatory budgeting	180
5.2.3. UN Urban Management Programme (UMP)	180
5.2.4. Strategic planning.	181
5.3. Regulatory aspects of urban planning	182
5.3.1. State intervention in the land market: The Brazilian Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS)	182
5.3.2. Urban land law and tenure	183
5.3.3. Planning in the peri-urban areas	184
5.3.4. Planning in post-conflict and post-disaster areas.	184
5.4. Conclusion	185
Chapter 6. Conclusion.	186
6.1. Introduction	186
6.2. On the problem of ‘idea borrowing’	186
6.3. Assessment of recent shifts in planning and new planning ideas	188
6.4. Conclusion	189
Acknowledgement.	190
References	190
Biography	193

Chapter 1. Introduction

In recent years, world attention has been drawn to problems of urbanisation and urban settlements in the global South.¹ UN-Habitat has been at the forefront of this campaign, using World Urban Forum meetings, the Habitat Global Report series, and a range of programmes and interventions to highlight urban issues. The World Urban Forum in Vancouver in June 2006 was a particularly important event, as it called for a major shift in global thinking about the future of Southern cities. In the first place, there was recognition that by 2008, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's population will live in cities, and in future years most of all new population growth will be in cities in the global South. A second important insight was that the rate and scale of this growth, coupled with impending issues such as climate change and resource depletion, posed massively serious problems in these towns and cities and required specific intervention if large-scale urban disaster was to be avoided. In a significant shift away from the conventional wisdom that either 'the market' or 'local communities' would ultimately provide corrective mechanisms to urban problems, UN-Habitat identified urban planning as a central tool of governance, through which these major issues of urban development will have to be addressed. In effect, UN-Habitat was suggesting that urban planning should be fundamentally reviewed to see if it was able to play a role in addressing issues in rapidly growing and poor cities.

UN-Habitat Executive Director Anna Tibaijuka, in an address to the 2006 World Planners Congress (held to coincide with the World Urban Forum), gave an indication of the kind of new role which planning was expected to play. She pointed to the 'urbanisation of poverty' as the most important urban issue of the future, as well as the need to address this as part of an environmental sustainability agenda. But she also pointed to planning as a factor which often tends to increase social exclusion in cities, through anti-poor measures and a belief that '...in the planned city ...the poor should at best be hidden or at worst swept away'

¹ Slater (2004) discusses the problem of categorisation of different regions of the world and the implied binaries that are set up through terms such as First World/Third World, West/Non-West, etc., which ignore the extent of 'interpenetrations' which have occurred. The terms 'global South' and 'global North', used here, do not overcome this problem (and in particular beg the question about the place of the East), but do offer a less pejorative reference to different parts of the world.

(Tibaijuka, 2006: 5). She called on planning practitioners to develop a different approach to planning that is pro-poor and inclusive, and that places the creation of livelihoods at the centre of planning efforts.

This paper explores the extent to which the profession and discipline of urban planning² might be capable of taking on the challenge posed in 2006 in Vancouver: that of changing what is currently perceived as its highly negative role in Southern cities, and becoming a mechanism through which 21st century urban issues of poverty, inequality, rapid growth and environment, can be addressed. Significantly, this is happening at a time when additional pressures might reinforce a shift in direction for planning. Lovering (2009: vi) argues that the 2008 global financial crisis has upset the neoliberal model within which planning has been conceptualised and practised for the last couple of decades, to the extent that planning 'as we have known it' is at an end. The focus of planning on 'providing private interests with public resources', he suggests, will have to give way to demands that planning revert to its earlier intentions: '...protecting the needs of ordinary people rather than privileged minorities, the public rather than private interest, the future rather than the present' (Lovering, 2009: 4). This, of course, may not apply to those parts of the world less affected by the economic crisis (India, China), where traditional planning approaches could continue unchallenged.

While the pressure on planning to recall certain of its founding social and environmental goals might therefore be coming from various sources, and with relevance to both global North and South, the focus in this paper will be on that part of the world where the bulk of the global urban population will in future be residing, i.e. the global South. The aims of this paper are to consider, firstly, what are the current dynamics which are shaping urban settlements (particularly in poorer parts of the world), to which a revised view of planning—in a post-neoliberal era—will have to respond; secondly, how it has come about that planning can stand accused of exacerbating poverty in Southern cities (and if this is indeed the case); and thirdly, whether there are innovative approaches to urban planning (in any part of the world) which can be drawn on to inform planning reform in contexts of rapid growth and poverty. It cannot, of course, be assumed that urban planning can 'solve' these 21st century urban issues. Their origins lie in political, economic and

² The focus in this paper is on urban planning, which obviously overlaps with rural, regional and national territorial planning.

environmental processes that are well beyond the scope of even the most efficient and effective planning systems and the most creative of ideas. At the same time, it is argued here that urban planning can potentially play a role (even if a limited one), and at minimum it is important to draw attention to situations where planning is being used to directly exacerbate these problems.

A central argument in this paper will be that planning in many parts of the global South has been strongly informed by planning traditions which emerged in other parts of the world (specifically in Western Europe and the USA) in response to urban conditions very particular to an earlier time and context. The situation within which urban planning operates today is very different to what it was when planning emerged as a profession and function of government during the last century; yet in a surprising number of Southern countries, planning systems have changed little from these early models. This is strange, given the unprecedented nature and scale of change which has been occurring in urban settlements and their governance systems across the globe, and the now widespread recognition of the intractable problems of poverty, inequality and environmental damage which are facing cities (particularly, but not only, Southern cities) on a scale not experienced before. There appears to be a significant ‘mismatch’, therefore, between entrenched urban planning systems and the current and future urban issues which planning should be addressing.

But if the theory and practice of urban planning, which in themselves mean very different things in different parts of the world, are to be dusted off and examined to see if they can play a positive role in rapidly changing urban contexts, then it is important to understand why, on the one hand, there are claims of disillusionment with planning, while on the other, planning systems have been surprisingly robust and persistent. There are, after all, probably few places in the world which do not have a policy and legal planning framework, even if in some cities and towns it is used partially, intermittently and opportunistically. It is significant that ‘modern’ town and regional planning spread from its areas of origin to the rest of the world through vehicles such as colonialism and the ‘development’ agenda. Above all, master planning, as it was known in some parts of the world, became inextricably linked to the notion of urban modernisation. In many parts of both the global North and South a particular set of urban forms and urban layouts, and the legal tools to deliver and enforce these, have become the standard and accepted way of developing cities. For much of the 20th

century and up to the present time, the market, political elites and growing middle-classes supported urban modernism as it delivered profits in land to these groups as well as a quality of life considered desirable. An important consequence of this has been the economic and spatial exclusion of those unable to take advantage of land ownership and development.

Significantly, while forward plans which took the form of ‘old style’ master planning have been subject to a growing critique in parts of the global North, with arguments that they should be replaced with more flexible and inclusive structure, strategic and growth management plans, master planning has persisted to a remarkable degree in many other parts of the world. And even where the nature of the forward plans has changed, the basic principles of the underlying regulatory system, as well as a universal modernist ‘image’ of urban development, tend to remain. Clearly, planning systems can be a ‘two-edged sword’ and can potentially be used as a tool to achieve good, but can just as easily be used in ways which are regressive and oppressive: to promote vested interests and political, class, racial or ethnic domination. In less democratic and less politically stable countries, in particular, master planning has proved to be a useful tool for political and economic elites to gain power and profit and, if necessary, to deal with opponents through the intermittent enforcement of restrictive planning laws. In considering whether or not planning can play the role which certain international agencies would like it to play, the inherently political nature of planning cannot be underestimated.

The paper focuses firstly (Chapter 2) on the changing urban context within which urban planning is expected to operate.³ It reviews the ways in which changes in economic, social and demographic factors are giving rise to new socio-spatial forms and processes in urban settlements, and the implications which these might have for 21st century urban planning. It also considers factors which are becoming of overriding importance to planning: climate change and energy resource deple-

³ In this text I use the term ‘planning’ to refer to intentional, and value-driven, societal efforts to improve the built and natural environment. Planning is also (and not infrequently) initiated by groups other than professional planners and governments (such as non-governmental and community-based organisations, and business), and the ‘planning system’ frequently incorporates these sectors in processes which are inevitably political. Urban planning (as well as planning at other scales) is distinguished from other forms of planning by its concern with ‘space’ and ‘place’. Both planning processes and planning outcomes are included in this definition.

tion. Chapter 3 considers the emergence of urban planning during the last century in Europe and the USA, and its close link to urban modernist ideas. The chapter considers how planning has changed in this part of the world and looks at some of the new approaches which have emerged in recent times. Chapter 4 then turns to planning in the global South. It briefly reviews the ways in which planning ideas spread from their regions of origin to all other parts of the world. Important here are the ways in which older forms of planning, coupled with urban modernist ideas, have proved highly resilient over time. Chapter 4 asks why this should be a problem and

how persistent forms of planning are impacting on the lives of those who live in poor and rapidly growing urban areas. Innovative planning ideas have been emerging in Southern contexts as well, and these may have particular relevance for revised planning. Chapter 5 concludes with a return to the injunctions of Anna Tibaijuka for pro-poor and environmentally sustainable planning in contexts of rapid growth and poverty. This chapter is a critical assessment of the role which planning is playing in the global South and of the potentials which lie in more recent innovative practices and ideas.

Chapter 2. Urban settlements in the 21st century: Setting the context for urban planning

2.1. Introduction

In every part of the world, the urban planning system is strongly shaped and influenced by the context within which it operates. Even though many countries, particularly those of the global South, have formal planning systems modelled on those from other parts of the world, these systems are inserted into particular institutional contexts and their ability to influence land management in cities and towns is circumscribed by a wide range of local, national and international forces. Any consideration of the future of urban planning therefore needs to take place within an understanding of the factors which are shaping the socio-spatial aspects of cities, and the institutional structures which attempt to manage them. It also needs to recognise the significant demographic and environmental challenges which lie ahead and which will have to be factored into planning systems.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly review the changing nature of urban settlements since the latter part of the 20th century and the factors which are driving these changes. This discussion is framed by the understanding that such changes can never be attributed only to wider structural forces, but that these forces articulate in various ways with local histories, cultures and environmental contexts, resulting in highly differentiated patterns of urban development and change across the globe. The focus will be on cities of the global South, but recognising the interconnected nature of cities and regions in all parts of the world. The chapter will first examine the overarching changes which have occurred in the global economy since the 1970s, and then the ways in which these impact on demographic, socio-spatial and institutional change in cities and towns in ways which are relevant to planning. It will also highlight the key environmental issues which are of relevance to planning.

2.2. Globalisation and cities

While there has been a great deal of debate on the meaning of globalisation and the extent to which it represents a break from previous forms of economic organisation, there is reasonable consensus that from the early 1970s there has been a ‘...further strengthening and internationalization of capital using substantial advances in communications and transport technology’ (Marcuse, 2006: 362). This definition recognises the

decisive shift which has occurred in recent decades, as well as the continuities which exist with previous forms of international economic organisation. The 2008 global financial crisis has influenced the trends within this system, but it is not yet clear if and how the form of organisation will be affected.

2.2.1. Labour markets and income changes

New economic processes have had a major impact on urban labour markets, which show a growing polarisation of occupational and income structures (and hence growing income inequality) caused by growth in producer services and decline in manufacturing. Urban labour markets are also increasingly heterogeneous and volatile, and urban residents are disproportionately affected by international economic crises (National Research Council, 2003: 7). Work by Hamnett (1994) has shown that polarisation of urban labour markets is particularly evident in cities which have experienced an influx of low-skilled migrants. While some cities of the global South have benefited from the transnational migration of manufacturing plants, many have also reported processes of de-industrialisation and hence the phenomenon of income polarisation has been experienced more generally. This restructuring appears to be true in the larger ‘global’ cities of the world, but is equally true in smaller urban centres and in those parts of the world, largely in the global South, which have not been subject to significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Phnom Penh, in Cambodia, for example, has undergone dramatic social and spatial restructuring in recent years despite low levels of FDI and little industrial growth (Shatkin, 2006).

Recent writings on the topic of globalisation and cities stress the point that, while there are few parts of the world that have not felt the effects of these processes, nonetheless there is a great deal of diversity in terms of the nature of these impacts, with actual outcomes strongly influenced by pre-existing local conditions and local policies (Shatkin, 2007). The dramatic increases in income inequality which result from changing urban labour market structures are also not inevitable: a number of East Asian cities have been strongly influenced by the actions of ‘developmental states’, which have channelled resources into urban industrial growth and into public sector spending on urban projects and programmes. In these cases, job and income polarisation has been less dramatic. By contrast, in some parts of the world international and national policy interventions have exacerbated the effects of globalisation. For example, many countries which were subjected to International Monetary Fund structural

adjustment policies and the contraction of public sector jobs have been even more severely affected.

One important effect of these economic and policy processes on urban labour markets has been the rapid growth in the ‘informal sector’,⁴ particularly in the global South. The post-2008 financial crisis, which has seen falling economic growth rates in most parts of the world, is undoubtedly contributing further to the growth of informal jobs. In Sao Paulo, between 1989 and 1999, public sector employment shrank from 635,000 to 609,000, and salaried jobs declined from 3.4 to 2.9 million. At the same time the informal labour force increased from 2.4 to 3.7 million, thus growing at 4% per annum (National Research Council, 2003: 334). Al-Sayyad and Roy (2003) argue that these recent economic trends have given rise to ‘an exploding informality’ in cities of the South, which is taking on rather different forms than it has in the past. There appear to be new processes of polarisation within the informal economy, with informal entrepreneurs moving into sectors abandoned by the public and formal private sectors, but many as well swelling the ranks of ‘survivalist’ activities. In effect, informality (in terms of forms of income generation, forms of settlement and housing, and forms of negotiating life in the city) is becoming a dominant mode of behaviour in large parts of the world—in many urban centres it is now the norm and no longer the exception (Al-Sayyad & Roy, 2003; Roy, 2005).

There are strong regional variations here as well. UN-Habitat figures for the late 1990s suggested that informal employment as a percentage of non-agricultural employment was at 72% in Africa, 65% in Asia and 51% in Latin America (Neto, 2007). In Africa, some economies have grown in recent years, but so have informal jobs. In some parts of Africa, economies are now mostly informal, but most of these activities are survival strategies in the realm of trade, providing low and irregular incomes under very poor working conditions. There are cases of micro-enterprises up-scaling and becoming lucrative, but this is not the norm.

Future urban planning, particularly (but not only) in the global South, will therefore be taking place in a context of ongoing inequality and poverty, and with high or very high levels of informal economic activity, a

significant proportion of which is survivalist in form. Currently, much urban development, particularly informal economy and settlement, ignores the planning system, especially when the latter is aimed at its control and eradication. A central effect of planning is often to raise the costs of informality and to shift it spatially, without removing it: poor people cannot, after all, simply disappear. New planning forms will need to acknowledge and work to support informal activity in both economic and residential spheres, if they are to meet the requirement of being pro-poor.

2.2.2. *Urban government*

Formal urban planning systems are typically located within the public sector, with local government usually the most responsible tier.⁵ Within the last three or so decades, and closely linked to processes of globalisation, there have been significant transformations in local government in many parts of the world, making them rather different settings from those within which planning was originally conceived.

The most commonly recognised change in urban administrative and political systems is from ‘government’ to ‘governance’, which in the global North represents a response to the growing complexity of governing in a globalising and multi-scalar context, as well as the involvement of a range of non-state actors in the process of governing. In many parts of the global South, however, urban administration remains highly centralised and state-led. While this shift to governance is usually cast as a positive one, there is now an emerging argument that it may have its drawbacks: Bulkeley and Kern (2006) indicate that it may be insufficiently effective to deal with local climate protection policy, and Swyngedouw (2005) argues that forms of governance-beyond-the-state can be regarded as Janus-faced when the democratic character of the local sphere is eroded by the encroachment of market forces that set the ‘rules of the game’. The latter has been a feature of many cities in the global South, showing a selective adoption of governance ideas.

In the global South, the concept of governance has been strongly promoted as a policy measure, along with decentralisation and democratisation, driven largely by multi-lateral institutions, such as the World Bank and UN agencies. Despite this pressure, actual decentralisation, local democratisation and shared governance have been uneven processes in the global

⁴ The term ‘informal sector’ suggests an unsatisfactory division of the economy between formal and informal activities. The two ‘sectors’ are acknowledged to be highly integrated and interdependent and the term ‘informal sector’ is used here for convenience.

⁵ Although in many parts of the world urban planning is still carried out, in practice, by national government agencies.

South and in many parts changes have been limited. Limited capacity, resources and data at the local level have further hindered decentralisation. During the 1980s, a mainly economic perspective dominated policy prescriptions, with World Bank-IMF sponsored structural adjustment programmes providing the framework for public sector change across the global South. The principal ideas were privatisation, deregulation and decentralisation. By the end of the 1980s, however, key World Bank officials had accepted that *good governance* was the key issue and, by 1997, the shift was firmly entrenched when the Bank's World Development Report emphasised the importance of strong and effective institutions, rather than rolling back the state, as in the past.

From the late 1990s, 'good governance' has become the mantra for development in the South and planning has been supported to the extent that it promoted this ideal. The term has come to mean different things, however. The World Bank, for example, has been associated with a mainly administrative and managerialist interpretation of good governance, whilst agencies such as the UNDP have emphasised democratic practice and human and civil rights. In the global South, as elsewhere, there is a tension between the participative and technocratic dimensions of new approaches to governance, as well as between participative and representative democracy. The 'participatory budgeting' processes in Latin American cities have demonstrated this well.

These shifts have had profound implications for urban planning, which has often been cast as a relic of the old welfare state model and as an obstacle to economic development and market freedom. In a context in which the power of governments to direct urban development has diminished with the retreat of Keynesian economics, and in which the new central actors in urban development are real estate investors and developers, whose activities are often linked to economic boosterism, planning has found itself to be unpopular and marginalised. It has also found itself at the heart of contradictory pressures on local government to promote urban economic competitiveness on the one hand, while on the other dealing with the fall-out from globalisation in the form of growing social exclusion, poverty, unemployment and rapid population growth, often in a context of unfunded mandates and severe local government capacity constraints (Beall, 2002). The post-2008 financial crisis, a loss of faith in unregulated markets, and a possibly stronger role for governments (Lovering, 2009) may revive support for state-led planning yet again.

The past shift, from planners as the sole agents responsible for managing land and urban development (under a Keynesian mandate) to a situation in which they are just one of a range of players in shaping the city, often left planners confused as to their roles and responsibilities. In addition, urban planning at local government level also had to face challenges from new shifts in the scale of urban decision-making. As the wider economic role of urban centres and their governments came adrift from their geographically bounded administrative role, so decision-making about urban futures has re-scaled and introduced ideas of multi-level and collaborative governance (Brenner, 1999). The idea of urban decision-making framed by the concept of 'city-regions'⁶ has become more common, putting further new demands on urban planners.

Generally, traditional urban planning has been reliant on the existence of stable, effective and accountable local government, as well as a strong civil society, in order to play a positive role. While only certain regions in the global North may achieve these qualities, in relative terms large parts of the global South do not (Devas, 2001). Under such conditions, traditional urban planning will continue to be ineffective, or alternatively will be used in opportunistic ways (such as for the eviction of the poor as part of land-grabs) by those with political and economic power.

2.2.3. *Civil society*

Communities have been increasingly unwilling to passively accept the decisions of politicians and technocrats that impact on their living environments. In turn, planners have come to recognise that planning implementation is more likely to be effective if it can secure 'community support', or at least passive agreement. The notion of public participation in planning has developed considerably over time, with a plethora of methods and techniques put forward to 'deliver consensus'. However, the possibility that planning can be conducted in a participatory way is largely conditioned by broader state-civil society relations and the extent to which democracy is accepted and upheld. This is highly uneven across the globe, and in some countries is not part of the planning system at all. Even where participatory planning is accepted, and where civil society can be drawn into planning

⁶ Noting that this idea has a long pedigree in planning, and particularly in the work of Geddes, Mumford, Abercrombie and the Regional Planning Association.

processes, it is recognised that global economic and social change has in turn impacted on civil society in different ways, and has often made the ideal of participatory planning far harder to achieve. Certainly, the assumption by some planning theorists of a stable and relatively homogenous civil society with a common worldview, able to debate planning alternatives and reach sustained consensus, has been challenged more generally and particularly in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa (Watson, 2002, 2006).

In cities in both the global North and South, societal divisions have been increasing partly because of growing income and employment inequalities, which have intersected with ethnicity and identity in various ways, and possibly as well due to international migration streams and the growth of ethnic minority groups in cities. Thus assumptions in the 1960s that cultural minorities would eventually assimilate gave way in the 1990s to the acceptance (in the planning literature at least) of multiculturalism (Sandercock, 1998) in cities and ideas about ways in which planners could engage with cultural difference.

Across the globe, the nature and strength of civil society is highly uneven. What is often identified as a broad trend towards national democratic political systems cannot always be equated with strong civil society. ‘Older political logics’ do not simply disappear because authoritarian regimes have been challenged. From a wide-ranging review of the literature on social movements in developing countries, Walton (1998) finds evidence to support such conclusions. Despite the growth of social movements and moves to democratisation, he suggests that participation is still mediated more typically by patron–client relations, rather than by popular activism. In the context of parts of Africa, De Boeck (1996: 93) makes the point that understood dichotomies such as state/society or legal/illegal no longer capture reality. In an ‘increasingly “exotic”, complex and chaotic world that seems to announce the end of social life and the societal fabric as most of us know it’, the state is but one (often weaker) locus of authority, along with traditional chiefs, warlords and mafias. Definitions of legal and illegal constantly shift, depending on which groups are exerting power at the time.

Even in contexts that are less ‘chaotic’ than these, researchers point to the extent to which urban crime and violence have brought about a decline in social cohesion and an increase in conflict and insecurity (National Research Council, 2003). Growth in violent crime, often supported by increasingly organised and well-networked drug and arms syndicates and fuelled by

growing poverty and inequality, have eroded the possibilities of building social capital in poorer communities. Causal factors are clearly complex: writing in the context of Brazil, Holston (2009) suggests that the process of democratisation itself has destabilised society in specific ways that have entailed particular forms of violence and crime. Conducting participatory planning in situations such as these can be extremely difficult.

Finally, there has been a tendency in the planning literature to assume a one-dimensional view of civil society and the role it might play in planning initiatives. The ideal of strong community-based organisations, willing to meet late into the night debating planning ideas, may be achievable in certain parts of the world, but civil society does not always lend itself to this kind of activity. In Africa, the Middle East and much of Asia, Bayat (2004: 85) argues, ‘...social networks which extend beyond kinship and ethnicity remain largely casual, unstructured and paternalistic’. Resistance tends to take the form here of ‘quiet encroachment’, rather than forming community organisations (although there can be spectacular exceptions, and in India the NGO sector is active but often middle-class based). In many parts of the world as well, Davis (2004) argues, civil society is being inspired more by popular religious movements (Islamist, and Christian or Pentecostal) than by organised demands for better infrastructure or shelter, given that efforts to secure the latter have so often failed.

2.2.4. *Urbanisation*

Cities and towns in all parts of the world are very different places to what they were when planning first emerged as a profession—over a hundred years ago. And while the 20th century as a whole was a time of major urban transformation, the last few decades, coinciding with the global restructuring of economy and society, have seen new and particular impacts on urban growth and change. Two important points have been debated in the literature on cities and globalisation: firstly, which cities have been affected, and secondly, how important global processes themselves have been.

Marcuse (2006: 366) argues that every urban centre in the world is impacted in some way by processes of globalisation, but these forces are not the dominant determining factor shaping all cities and explaining all new patterns, and that globalisation does not affect all parts of any city equally. Rather the nature of cities and towns is affected by a combination of broader global, national and regional processes, which have interacted in very specific ways with local urban histories, policies

and struggles. It is common, moreover, that globalisation acts to intensify already existing patterns and trends, rather than imposing entirely new urban forms. For example, the racial divisions put in place in South African cities under apartheid have been exacerbated in the post-democracy period as the country has opened up to the global economy, although now taking the form of class rather than racial divides (Turok & Watson, 2001): the outcome is that South African towns and cities are now more spatially divided and fragmented than they have ever been.

An important point emerging from this debate is that the negative effects of globalisation on urban space are not entirely inevitable, and that, given strong state policies and planning at both national and local level, these effects can be countered. In a comparison of the impacts of globalisation on cities under market-centred and state-centred political systems, Hill and Kim (2006) show that neither Tokyo nor Seoul conforms to the world city model: there are relatively smaller income disparities, less socio-spatial polarisation, and the maintenance of a domestic manufacturing sector in both the Asian cities, largely due to the nature of state intervention and the particular national developmental models followed in these countries.

In most parts of the world, however, either for ideological reasons or for lack of capacity, governments have done little to mediate the effects of globalisation on their economies and cities. Devas (2001) notes that none of the nine Southern cities in his study had a clear poverty policy. Hence planners have been faced with rapidly changing urban conditions, the sources of which lie well beyond their control. Two aspects of change have been important here: rapid urban growth and urban socio-spatial change. But while these two areas of change have to a greater or lesser degree affected most urban places, the nature of these impacts has been highly varied.

In relation to rapid growth, the 2003 UN-Habitat report: *The challenge of the slums*, as well as the World Urban Forum of 2006, played an important role in drawing attention to what has been termed a global demographic transition. While the period 1950–1975 saw population growth more or less evenly divided between the urban and rural areas of the world, the period since has seen the balance tipped dramatically in favour of urban growth. In 2008, for the first time in history, more than half of the world's population lived in cities, and by 2050 this will be 70%. Significantly, however, the bulk of this growth will be taking place in the global South and East. Currently, 73% of the world's population lives in 'developing' regions and by 2050

this figure could have risen to 83%. A rapidly growing proportion of this population will be urban: in 1950, 18% of the population of poor countries lived in cities and towns, but by 2050 this will have risen to 67%.⁷

This transition is presenting urban management and planning with issues which have never been faced before. Urban growth will be rapid, less so in Latin America, which is already highly urbanised, but very much so in Africa and Asia, which are currently less urbanised. Further, certain cities will attain sizes which have not been experienced before: new megacities of over eight million and hypercities of over 20 million are predicted. The bulk of new urban growth, however, is predicted to occur in smaller settlements⁸ of 100,000–250,000, which have absorbed much of the rural labour-power made redundant by post-1979 market reforms (Davis, 2004) and the continuing adverse terms of world trade in the agricultural sector. While megacities present management problems of their own, it is the smaller cities which suffer particularly from a lack of planning and services to cope with growth.

Compounding all of the above, this rapid urban growth is taking place in those parts of the world where governments are least prepared to provide urban infrastructure, and urban residents are least able to pay for such services or cope with natural disasters. It is these parts of the world where the highest levels of poverty and unemployment are to be found. The inevitable result has been the rapid growth of urban informal settlements and deteriorated shelter conditions. The 2003 UN-Habitat Report claimed that 32% of the world's urban population (924 million people in 2001) live in such areas on extremely low incomes, and are directly affected by both environmental disasters and social crises. The fact that some of the most densely settled poorer parts of the world are also in coastal zones and will thus be subject to sea-level rise with climate change, adds a further dimension to this.

The issue of urbanising poverty is particularly severe in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, given that the bulk of urbanisation is taking place under different global economic conditions to those that prevailed in Latin America and even in much of Asia. Here urbanisation is occurring for the most part in the absence of industrialisation and under much lower rates of economic growth: in effect urbanisation has been

⁷ Figures from United Nations (2008), Table 2.1.

⁸ This is not the case everywhere. Beauchemin and Bocquier (2004) show that secondary towns in West Africa are hardly growing, as people migrate to larger settlements.

decoupled from industrialisation. Urban growth rates are also more rapid here than elsewhere (1990–2000: Africa 4.1%; Asia 3.3%; Latin America 2.3%).⁹ But they are due primarily to natural increase rather than rural–urban migration: 75% of urban growth is from this source, compared to 50% in Asia in the 1980s (Beauchemin & Bocquier, 2004). The inevitable consequences have been that urban poverty and unemployment are extreme, living conditions are particularly bad, and survival is supported predominantly by the informal sector, which tends in many parts to be survivalist rather than entrepreneurial.

Intensified economic competition, Simone (2000) suggests, means that economic and political processes of all kinds become open for negotiation and informalisation. Networks with the state become particularly valuable, both in negotiating preferential access to resources and in avoiding control and regulation, with the result that, increasingly, ‘.public institutions are seen not as public but the domain of specific interest groups, and indeed they become sites for private accumulation and advantage’ (Simone, 2000: 7). The relationship between state and citizens, and between formal and informal actors, thus becomes under-codified and under-regulated, dependent on complex processes of alliance-making and deal-breaking, and particularly resistant to reconfiguring through policy instruments and external interventions.

A significant feature of urbanisation in Africa and Asia is the strong urban–rural ties which still exist, and which keep many people in motion between urban and rural bases. Research in Africa shows that this strategy of spatially ‘stretching the household’ (Spiegel, Watson, & Wilkinson, 1996) functions as an economic and social safety-net, allowing access to constantly shifting economic opportunities, as well as maintaining kinship and other networks. One implication of this phenomenon is that conceptualising cities and towns as self-contained entities which can be planned and managed accordingly becomes obviously questionable; another is that the commitment of people to particular urban locales (and what happens in them) becomes more tenuous. As Simone (1999) suggests, connections between social and physical space become progressively disjointed, and frameworks for identity formation and networks are spread across regions and nations, rather than being rooted in specific locations.

2.3. *The environmental and natural resource challenge for planning*

The 1987 Brundtland Commission and its report (*Our common future*), which called for ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’, placed the issue of sustainable development at the core of urban policy and planning concerns. The concept of sustainable development in turn gave rise to the ‘green agenda’ in planning and the subsequent development of governance methodologies such as Agenda 21.

Throughout the 1990s, planning grappled with the problem of integrating the issue of sustainable development into planning agendas, and in many parts of the world this has still not been satisfactorily achieved: planning and environmental management often operate in different government silos and with different policy and legal frameworks. Increasingly, as well, there are conflicts between the ‘green agenda’ (environmental concerns), the ‘brown agenda’ (urban development) and the ‘red agenda’ (issues of environmental justice). Planning potentially stands at the intersection of these conflicts (Allen & You, 2002).

The most important environmental issue now is climate change. The authoritative Stern report (Treasury, 2006: vi) on the economics of climate change concludes that it will:

...affect the basic elements of life for people around the world—access to water, food production, health and the environment. Hundreds of millions of people could suffer hunger, water shortages and coastal flooding as the world warms.

Moreover, it will be the poorest countries and people who are most vulnerable to this threat and who will suffer the earliest and the most. This has important implications for the work of urban planning: steering settlement away from flood-prone coastal and riverine areas and those subject to mud-slides; protecting forest, agricultural and wilderness areas and promoting new ones; and developing and enforcing local climate protection measures.

A second major environmental concern is oil depletion. The global use of oil as an energy source has both promoted and permitted urbanisation, and its easy availability has allowed the emergence of low density and sprawling urban forms—suburbia—dependent on vehicle transport. Beyond this, however, the entire global economy rests on the possibility of moving both people and goods quickly, cheaply and over long

⁹ Figures from Roberts (2006).

distances. An oil-based economy and climate change are linked: vehicle and aircraft emissions contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and hence global temperature rise.

While there has been much debate about the issue of ‘peak oil’, some current positions predict that this will be reached in 2010,¹⁰ and it is unlikely that we will be able to replace it with an equivalent form of energy. As energy costs begin to rise with dwindling supplies, the impacts on cities, on urban life more generally, and on the economy, will be profound. Responding to a post-oil era in the form of public-transport and pedestrian-based movement systems, more compact and integrated cities, and more localised food and production systems (reducing the ecological footprint of cities), present new imperatives for planning.

While climate change and oil depletion will fundamentally change the nature of life on this planet, the current nature and scale of urbanisation and city growth are also causing a multitude of environmental impacts which are of central concern to planning. The report to UN-Habitat on ‘Current issues and trends in urban safety’ (Pelling, 2005) provides a comprehensive review of these threats and impacts. Pelling makes the point that cities are inherently risk-prone, due to the concentrated nature of settlement and the interdependent nature of the human and infrastructural systems that make them up. Cities cause negative environmental impacts, through consumption of natural assets (trees for fuel, ground water, sand and gravel) and the overexploitation of natural services (water systems and air as sinks for sewerage or industrial waste), and they modify the environment and generate new hazards, including deforestation and slope instability within and surrounding cities, encouraging landslides and flash flooding. Inevitably, it is poorer and more vulnerable groups, in poorer regions of the world, which feel the effects of these processes: for example in Manila, informal settlements at risk to coastal flooding make up 35% of the population; in Bogota, 60% of the population live on steep slopes subject to landslides; and in Calcutta, 66% of the population live in squatter settlements at risk from flooding and cyclones (Pelling, 2005; UN-Habitat, 2007).

2.4. Urban socio-spatial change

The issue of how global economic change in the last few decades has impacted on socio-spatial change in

towns and cities has received much attention, along with the qualification that both local and broader processes have shaped these changes. In essence, however, planners and urban managers have found themselves confronted with new spatial forms and processes, the drivers of which often lie outside the control of local government and urban planning.

The nature of spatial change in cities has been captured well in Healey’s (2000) conceptualisation of a shift from ‘uniplex’ to ‘multiplex’ cities. She describes a shift from cities as relatively self-contained and focused on a central node or CBD (central business district), with radial transport systems feeding coherent community neighbourhoods, to ‘multiplex’ cities: this emphasises the dynamic and relational nature of cities, the complex interactions between cities and their inhabitants and their regional and global settings, and the emergence of multi-nodal, mixed use places where movement patterns and economic linkages are complex and multi-directional. Movement patterns have become far more complex and extended, and administrative boundaries of urban areas far less meaningful in terms of defining the spatial extent of social and economic relations. The term ‘megalopolis’ has been used to describe multi-city, multi-centred urban regions with a high proportion of low density residential areas and complex networks of economic specialisation to facilitate the production and consumption of sophisticated products and services (Knox & Pinch, 2000).

Socio-spatial change seems to have taken place primarily in the direction of the fragmentation, separation and specialisation of functions and uses in cities, with labour market polarisation (and hence income inequality) reflected in major differences between wealthier and poorer areas. Marcuse (2006) contrasts up-market gentrified and suburban areas with tenement zones, ethnic enclaves and ghettos; and areas built for the advanced service and production sector, and for luxury retail and entertainment, with older areas of declining industry, sweatshops and informal businesses. While these spatial categories are not new, Marcuse suggests that the degree of difference between them is. These trends represent the playing out of ‘market forces’ in cities, and the logic of real estate and land speculation, but are also a response to local policies which have attempted to position cities globally and attract new investment. ‘Competitive city’ approaches to urban policy aim to attract global investment, tourists and a residential elite through up-market property developments, waterfronts, convention centres and the commodification of culture and heritage (Kipfer & Keil, 2002). However, such policies have also had to suppress

¹⁰ www.peakoil.net.

and contain the fall-out from profit-driven development: surveillance of public spaces, policing and crime-prevention efforts, immigration control, and problems of social and spatial exclusion. Work by [Caldiera \(2000\)](#) in Brazil shows how fear has increased urban fragmentation, as middle and upper income households segregate themselves into ‘gated’ and high-security residential complexes.

These policies and trends have increased social and spatial divisions in cities in wealthier regions, but these divides are to be found (often more sharply) in cities in poorer regions as well. Analysing spatial change in Accra (Ghana) and in Mumbai (India), [Grant and Nijman \(2006\)](#) show how in each city three separate CBDs have emerged, for local, national and global businesses, each differentially linked to the global economy. In Cape Town in South Africa, apartheid had created major socio-spatial divisions between wealthy white residential and commercial areas and poor African and coloured townships and informal settlements. In the post-apartheid years, even while local plans and policies aimed to create integrated and equitable urban areas, private investment in the service sector and in up-market real estate avoided the poorer areas ([Turok & Watson, 2001](#)). Local municipal efforts to turn Cape Town into a ‘world class city’ reinforced these trends through investment in waterfront and conference centre developments in the historically wealthier parts of the city, and as a result Cape Town today remains highly divided, socially and spatially.

In many poorer cities, spatial forms are being driven by private-sector property developments and increased rental markets, in response to which low-income households are being pushed further out and into marginal locations (on India see [Dupont, 2007](#); [Roy, 2009](#)). In some parts of the world, new urban (*ruralopolitan*) forms are emerging as the countryside itself begins to urbanise, as in vast stretches of rural India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China, Indonesia, Egypt, Rwanda and many other poorer countries (see [Qadeer, 2004](#)). As well, large cities spread out and incorporate nearby towns leading to continuous belts of settlement (such as the shanty-town corridor from Abidjan to Ibadan, containing 70 million people and making up the urban agglomeration of Lagos—see [Davis, 2004](#)), and as the poor seek a foothold in the urban areas primarily on the urban edge. It is these sprawling urban peripheries, almost entirely unserved and unregulated, that make up the bulk of informal settlement, and it is in these areas that the most urban growth is taking place. These kinds of areas are very costly to plan and service in the conventional way, given the form of settlement,

and even if that capacity did exist, few could afford to pay for such services. In fact, the attractiveness of these kinds of locations for poor households is that they can avoid the costs associated with formal and regulated systems of urban land and service delivery. Because of this, however, it is in these areas that environmental issues are particularly critical, both in terms of the natural hazards to which these settlements are exposed, and the environmental damage that they cause. [Roy’s \(2009\)](#) point is that (in Indian cities and more widely) these urban forms do not simply indicate the failure of traditional master plans to be implemented. Rather, planning facilitates and promotes inequality and exclusion through criminalising certain forms of informality (such as informal settlements) and sanctioning others (developer and middle-class driven property development and speculation). Both may be in violation of the plan, but those who have access to state power will prevail.

2.5. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to argue that urban settlements are currently faced with a range of urban socio-spatial and environmental issues and trends which are relatively new, in the sense that most have only emerged in the last 20–30 years. Institutionalised urban planning systems and practices, on the other hand, tend to change very slowly and there is frequently a major time lag between the emergence of issues and the ability of governments and civil society to respond to them (whether through planning or other mechanisms). Processes of global economic change have worsened income inequality and poverty in many cities, giving rise to growing job and residential informality and resulting tensions between imperatives of survival and of administration and regulation. This, together with continued high urbanisation rates, now predominantly in cities of the South, has meant a growing concentration of poor people in cities and increased competition for land. This growth and concentration is occurring, moreover, in contexts where local government capacity is weak, where corruption and clientelism in the planning system is frequent, and the ability to manage growth and deliver services equitably is lacking. Weak and fragmented civil societies are unable to compensate for this.

Rapid urban growth and forces of economic change have given rise to new urban forms, socio-spatial fragmentation and divides in cities, and tensions in government between the drive for global positioning in cities and the demands to address socio-spatial exclusion. In many Southern cities, the phenomenon

of informal, peri-urban areas is now a dominant one, and these, along with spreading rural densification, prove particularly resistant to planning and servicing. These forms of urban growth, moreover, are susceptible to environmental hazards and at the same time contribute to the worsening environmental crisis. Few places are in a position to cope well with the impacts of impending climate change or oil depletion.

Hence, the context within which urban planning is expected to function (in all parts of the world, but

particularly in cities in the global South) is very different from that which characterised the emergence of formal planning systems in the early 20th century. A significant ‘mismatch’ has emerged, between the traditional role of planning as a means of land use control within defined administrative boundaries, and the nature, complexity and spatial ‘reach’ of the activities which use urban land. Planning systems which lack wider support are also more easily used for corrupt and opportunistic purposes.

Chapter 3. Planning in the global North: Concerns of poverty and sustainability

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly review the extent to which urban planning in the global North has addressed the issues raised in the introductory chapter: poverty, environment and urbanisation. While not all of these issues are high on Northern planning agendas (although they certainly should be), the reason for considering them here is that planning in that part of the world holds both potentials and dangers for planning in Southern countries. There is always the potential that positive planning approaches in one part of the world will be of use in another (if differences in context are correctly understood). Certainly, the use of planning to address climate change impacts is currently receiving a great deal of attention in the North, and given the urgency and global nature of this issue, ideas should be shared as widely as possible. Planning ideas and approaches in the global North have also had a negative effect on Southern contexts in the past and will probably continue to do so. There is a long history (as Chapter 4 will suggest) of imposition of Northern planning ideas on Southern countries, as well as borrowing and sharing of ideas with the intentions of promoting concepts of urban improvement or just profit. Chapter 4 will argue that this flow of planning ideas and practices (and, of course, their articulation with local interests) has often resulted in the kind of planning systems and approaches which now stand accused of being anti-poor and unsustainable.

This chapter will argue that early 20th century approaches to urban planning in the global North had little concern for poverty¹¹ and sustainability, and were aimed at dealing with urbanisation in very particular ways. Yet it was these approaches that had a significant impact on planning in the global South. While many of these older approaches have persisted in the South, in the North there has been extensive reform (as well as continuity). The latter part of this chapter will consider these revisions and innovations.

3.2. Emergence of urban planning in the global North: Master plans, development control and urban modernism

Modern town planning¹² emerged in the industrialising world in the latter part of the 19th century as a very direct response to concerns of rapid urbanisation, unhealthy and polluted living conditions for the poor, vanishing open green space, and threatened political upheaval as a result. The concerns themselves were not very different from those facing city managers and planners in Southern cities today. What is significant is the early forms of response to these issues, the spread of these ideas to other contexts, and the ways in which they have been operationalised for purposes often far removed from their original intentions.

‘Visions’ of a better urban future put forward by particular individuals (the ‘founding fathers’ of planning) in the UK, in Europe and in the USA in the late 19th century were to shape the objectives and forms of planning, which in turn showed remarkable resilience through the 20th century. These visions can in turn be traced to intellectual movements of the post-Enlightenment period. Huxley (2006), drawing on Foucault’s concept of governmentality, shows how notions of ‘governable spaces’ were used to construct the idea of a causal relationship between spaces, environments, and the conduct and deportment of bodies. Concerns to deal with populations which were chaotic and uncontrolled, which suffered from various forms of medical and moral decay, or were in need of social and spiritual development, gave rise to constructions of ‘truths’ (governmental rationalities) about how these could be achieved through towns planned in particular ways. Huxley (2006) uses the examples of plans for the Model Town of Victoria (James Silk Buckingham in 1849)—a forerunner of Howard’s Garden City, descriptions of the model town of *Hygeia* (Richardson, 1876), and Patrick Geddes’ ideas at the end of the 19th century—which drew on discourses of ‘creative evolution’ to develop his profoundly influential ideas about settlements and ‘place’—as examples of these spatial rationalities.

Broadly, there was an ambition to produce urban populations which would lead ordered and disciplined

¹¹ This was not necessarily always the case, as in early regionalism and the example of the Tennessee Valley Authority project.

¹² Urban planning itself has a much longer history and has occurred in many different parts of the world. Intervention in cities which can be described as physical design also took place through the 17th and 18th centuries. But it is generally accepted that what is known as ‘modern’ town planning has its roots in Enlightenment philosophies, and in the industrial revolution in advanced capitalist countries.

lives in healthy environments, and which would develop and improve, both physically and spiritually. Some of these urban visions sought to constrain urbanisation or to divert it to new locations away from the larger cities. Ways of achieving these aims were strongly influenced by the time and place within which they were formulated. Hence, early British town planning was responding to radical and utopian socialist ideas of the time and a nostalgic longing for the village life of medieval England. One of the most influential planning forms of the time, Ebenezer Howard's Garden City, represented an attempt to recreate this village life through bringing 'green' back into towns made up of winding roads and separate cottage residences, through strict separation of land uses, and through controlling the size and growth of the town. The objectives here were two-fold: social—the re-creation of a traditional way of life, which was essentially anti-urban but was seen as preferable to the 'chaos' of the industrial city; and aesthetic—bringing the beauty of the countryside into the towns, in the interests of both physical and spiritual health (Hall, 1988; Taylor, 1998).

In other countries where the idea of planning emerged to counter the 'horrors' of the industrial city, different normative visions prevailed. In France, the ideas of architect Le Corbusier in the 1920s and 1930s established the ideal of the 'modernist' city,¹³ which came to be highly influential internationally and still shapes planning in many parts of the world (e.g. new cities in China). Le Corbusier, notes Hall (1988), held that society should be highly regulated and controlled, and this was to be achieved through an ideal city form, which was neat, ordered and efficient. Slums, narrow streets and mixed use areas should be demolished and replaced with efficient transportation corridors, residences in the form of tower blocks with open space 'flowing' between them, and land uses separated into mono-functional zones.

In the United States, early 20th century visions of the ideal city were different again. Architect Frank Lloyd Wright's counter to the problems of industrialising New York took the form of low-density, dispersed cities with each family on its own small farm, but using the modern technologies of the time (such as the car) to access other urban functions. Other elements of American urban idealism were drawn from Europe: Le Corbusian modernism inspired skyscraper development and the

City Beautiful Movement drew on the boulevards and promenades of the great European capitals. The political agenda underlying these ideas should not be lost: for the middle classes '...the planner's first aim was to eliminate the breeding places of disease, moral depravity, discontent and socialism' (Hall, 1988: 176).

These urban visions, over time, shaped particular planning systems and practices in Western Europe and the USA. Taylor (1998) points to the post-war view of planning in the UK as an exercise in the physical planning and design of human settlements. While it responded to social, economic and political matters, and was assumed to be able to positively influence them—in line with early urban reformers—it was essentially seen as a technical activity, exercised by government. Its reformist ambitions were captured in abstract maps, also termed master, blueprint¹⁴ or layout plans. These showed a detailed view of the built form of a city (an ideal end-state), which would be attained once the regulatory mechanisms introduced into government had ensured that the population and its activities had been distributed in the proper way. While planning was seen as a technical activity, its reformist origins helped to portray it as a normative task, driven by particular values, which embodied the ideal living environment and which, it was held (by planners), reflected the 'public good'.

The primary legal tool through which master plans were implemented was the development control system or zoning scheme, which originated in Germany and spread across the USA and Europe in the early part of the 20th century. In the USA, it was declared a general police power in 1926, and by 1929, 754 communities had adopted zoning ordinances (Hall, 1988). In the UK, the important 1932 Town and Country Planning Act carried forward ideas of master planning ('layout planning' was the term generally used in the UK) and development control, and provided a model for much colonial planning. These ideas were also reflected in European planning of the time, where, Taylor (1998) argues, the concept of detailed land use zoning and master plans has been even more resilient.

Land use zoning usually carried with it a particular view of urban form (in keeping with the visions of the early planners), and was enthusiastically adopted by urban middle and commercial classes, who were able to use it as a way of maintaining property prices and

¹³ The Charter of Athens, initiated in 1928 and later strongly influenced by Le Corbusier, was an important document (by 1944) in terms of establishing modernist urban principles.

¹⁴ The term 'blue-print' is borrowed from architecture and refers to the final and fully detailed design that an architect would produce for a building.

preventing the invasion of ‘less desirable’, lower income residents, ethnic minorities and traders. At the time it was noted that the supposed ‘public good’ objective of planning had been turned into a tool by the wealthy to protect their property values and to exclude the poor. A highly significant aspect of zoning through control of land rights, however, is that it is based on a particular model of land tenure: the private ownership of land. It was this requirement which impacted most significantly on those parts of the world where private ownership was not an indigenous form of land tenure.

In considering the wider impact of planning’s development in Europe and the USA, the form of plans (detailed, static master plans or comprehensive plans), their method of production (technocratic, top-down) and their legal tools (primarily zoning) comprise one part of the picture. Particularly important as well were the physical/spatial urban and architectural forms which these plans carried with them, and the ideal of a ‘good city’ which they represented. Clearly apparent in these urban forms are the (often intertwined) visions of the ‘founding fathers’ of planning, and the normative values which inspired them: aesthetics (order, harmony, formality and symmetry); efficiency (functional specialisation of areas and movement, and free flow of traffic); and modernisation (slum removal, vertical building, connectivity, open space).

Modernist urban projects carried with them the spatial logics of the earlier urban reform period and assumptions that these particular urban forms could create ordered, healthy and efficient societies, able to carry forward the modern age. They reveal an intertwining of a faith in (British) pre-industrial and village-based urban forms, with a radical new Le Corbusian vision of the city as a ‘machine for living’, and a largely US-inspired ambition of each family on their own piece of land: a possible forerunner of suburbia. These visions also varied in terms of their attitudes to urban life: from a highly urban-centred vision of a future modern world in Le Corbusier’s ideas, to an almost anti-urban stance in the American ideas, and to something in between—the town in the country—in the British Garden Cities idea. Through the 20th century, in almost every part of the world, these ideas combined in various ways to shape new towns and urban renewal projects which emphasised open green space, vertical building, free-flowing traffic routes, super-blocks, peripheral suburbs and a strict separation of land uses.

In relation to the concerns which originally inspired planning intervention, urbanisation was seen to be a

process that should be contained, diverted (to new locations) or accommodated, but in highly regulated urban areas and forms. Attitudes to large cities in the global North were ambivalent throughout much of the 20th century (Gilbert, 1976; Richardson, 1976), and planning for rapid urban growth was not a central planning issue. Urban poverty, certainly present in Northern cities, was addressed through the planning system by attempts to remove its visual evidence: urban renewal and slum clearance programmes, and relocation of the poor to new housing projects and estates. Informal economic activity was confined to the occasional street-market. Environment was considered in narrow and instrumental terms: the creation of open green space (parks and parkways) for human recreation, aesthetic pleasure and health.

3.3. Planning shifts in the global North and contemporary approaches

Planning practice and theory in the global North shifted significantly post-1950s, although there were strong continuities as well. This section briefly identifies the most important new aspects of planning in this part of the world, as these ideas and practices in planning could potentially yield principles and insights which are of relevance beyond this region. Innovation has taken place in the following areas: planning processes and decision-making (shifts towards more participatory, democratic and integrated processes, involving wider groupings within and beyond the state); forms of spatial planning (towards strategic planning at a range of scales); linking planning and environment (new concerns of environmental sustainability, climate change and resource depletion); and some new directions in land use management. There are, as well, overlaps and tensions between these new directions.

3.3.1. Decision-making in planning

In the field of planning theory this has been the dominant (although not exclusive) area of interest, at least since the late 1960s. In much of the global North there is now acceptance in principle that planning processes should be transparent, participatory and inclusive. Interestingly, the issue of participation in planning and development has also been a central issue of theoretical and practical debate in the global South, but primarily in a different set of literatures: that of development theory. Unfortunately there has been little connection between planning and development theories in these debates.

Planning theorists (e.g. Healey, 1997) have argued that ‘collaborative planning’, implying a sharing of knowledge and cooperation between stakeholders or partners, should result in better plans and policies which are better implemented.¹⁵ In practice, of course, the extent to which this actually happens is highly uneven and there has been tension between social democracy and market capitalism in many of these regions, and between centralisation of decision-making (particularly around environmental matters) and more decentralised and inclusive processes.

Democratising decision-making in planning should open up avenues for poor urban dwellers and other marginalised groups (women, the aged) to counter plans and policies which increase their disadvantage, and to promote pro-poor planning ideas. An important pre-condition for this to occur is a strong democratic political system which encourages public debate, and political representatives who promote such ideas. But the extent to which this occurs in the global North is highly uneven and complex. In the UK, the new 2004 planning legislation (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) aimed to ‘put community engagement at the heart of planning practice’ (Brownhill & Carpenter, 2007: 621). However, what now seems to be in place is not, Brownhill and Carpenter (2007) argue, a new form of open and participatory governance, but rather an uneasy coexistence of different modes of governance, which may be in tension with each other. These tensions, they suggest, are between the aims of national target setting and local flexibility, between constructing categories of the public and the complexity of social diversity, and between hierarchical modes of governance and more open participatory forms. Greater transparency in relation to these conflicts, as well as a deeper understanding of how and why groups participate, will be required.

A further aspect of decision-making, which has gained attention in the global North, and which in many ways is a pre-condition for addressing the central planning issues discussed here, is the integration of sectoral ideas and actions in institutional settings. Recent new UK planning legislation (the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004) has tried to turn the local government system into a developmental, rather than just control-oriented, one. It aims to:

...put planning at the centre of the spatial development process, not just as a regulator of land and property uses, but as a proactive and strategic coordinator of all policy and actions that influence spatial development; and to do this in the interests of more sustainable development (Nadin, 2007: 43).

There is also recognition that achieving environmental sustainability will require sectoral interests to work together and cut across traditional disciplinary and professional boundaries. While these are important developments, the values which drive planning work have not been made explicit: the direction of development seems to be left largely to the ‘community’ and the market, and quite how social inclusion and responses to impending environmental and resource crises will be managed, is not clear.

3.3.2. *Forms of spatial planning*

There have been important shifts in the global North away from comprehensive master plans and towards strategic spatial plans. Potentially they meet the requirements in this part of the world for a form of urban planning which is responsive to strong civil society (and business) demands for involvement in government and planning (the governance issue); can co-ordinate and integrate economic, infrastructural and social policies in space in the interests of a city’s global economic positioning; can be used to address resource protection and environmental issues, as well as on heritage and ‘quality of place’ issues; and are implementation-focused. This approach to planning could be situated within a wider discourse of city visioning and City Development Strategies (CDSs) with origins in the global North, but which has since spread to many other parts of the world, particularly through the efforts of the World Bank-linked organisation—Cities Alliance. Strategic spatial plans are often an element within a CDS.

Strategic spatial plans are ‘directive’, long range plans, which consist of frameworks and principles and broad spatial ideas rather than detailed spatial plans (although they may set the framework for detailed local plans and projects). They do not address every part of a city—being strategic means focusing only on those aspects or areas that are important to overall plan objectives, which in Western Europe are usually sustainable development and spatial quality (Albrechts, 2001). Strategic spatial planning addresses many of the problems of old-style master planning, although much will depend on the actual ethics and values which the plan promotes (whether or not it promotes and enforces

¹⁵ There is an extensive literature in this field, which will not be dealt with here.

sustainable, inclusive cities), the extent to which the long-term vision is shared by all (and not simply dominant groups or individuals), the extent to which a stable and enduring consensus on the plan can be achieved, and the assumptions about the role and nature of space and spatial planning within the plans (Healey, 2004).

Usually the strategic plan will provide guidance for urban projects (state- or partnership-led), which in the context of Europe are often ‘brownfield’ urban regeneration projects and/or infrastructural (particularly transport or communications) projects. There have been criticisms that, at least in the UK, this project-driven approach has allowed the revival of the master plan, but now in the form of market-led rather than state-led plans, with the architect and developer primarily in charge (Giddings & Hopwood, 2006). A variant of strategic spatial planning considered successful is the ‘Barcelona model’. Here a city-wide strategic plan promoted a ‘compact’ urban form, and provided a framework for a set of local urban projects which had a strong urban design component. However, some have seen this approach to strategic planning as largely corporate planning around economic development goals (the global positioning of Barcelona) with certain social and environmental objectives attached (Marshall, 2000). Commentators on the approach (Borja & Castells, 1997) argue for a closer connection between strategic spatial plans (which replace master plans) and large-scale, multifunctional, urban projects. But there is doubt that this will deal with the problem of elite capture of these processes, and hence fear that it may worsen urban inequalities. This is almost inevitable under a prevailing neoliberal ideology in Europe and very likely in developing countries, with their more unequal and volatile political processes. It has been argued that the linking of these plans and projects to a strong, progressive urban politics is the only way to counter this danger (Marshall, 2000).

3.3.3. *Planning, environment and sustainability*

Concerns with environmental sustainability and, more recently, climate change and resource depletion, have been a fundamental source of new ideas and approaches in urban planning. Importantly, there has been a shift from viewing nature in cities as simply ‘green’ open space, to a greater appreciation of the interrelationships between natural resources and human impacts at the city scale (the ‘urban metabolism’ and ‘ecological footprint’ concepts) and to an understanding of the impact of cities on climate and resources globally. From the late 1990s, the notion of sustainable

development required that environmental issues were addressed at the same time as economic and social issues, and urban planning was viewed as having a central role to play in achieving this.

From the 1970s, new urban forms were promoted which responded to environmental concerns (Breheny, 1992) as well as to a desire to plan urban areas with a greater sense of place and identity. At the city-wide scale, the ‘compact city’ approach (Jenks & Burgess, 2000) argued for medium to high built densities, enabling efficient public transport and thresholds to support concentrations of economic activity, services and facilities. Mixed use environments and good public open spaces are important, particularly as places for small and informal businesses. Urban containment policies are common, often implemented through the demarcation of a growth boundary or urban edge, which will protect natural resources beyond the urban area and encourage densification inside it. Aspects of this approach—particularly public transport, mixed use areas and spaces for informal businesses—are supportive of the urban poor (in that they can reduce transport costs and support job creation). Urban edges, on the other hand, are likely to limit the supply of urban land and could raise land prices for the poor. They are also difficult to implement where there are extended peripheries of informal settlement around urban centres, and under these circumstances they can serve to marginalise the poor.

More recent developments of these ideas have explored how they can be guided by spatial planning which focuses on city-wide infrastructure (rather than, as previously, the production of master plans which assumed that infrastructure investments would follow planned settlement) (Todes, 2009). The trend towards the privatisation of urban infrastructure in situations where local authorities have been unable to meet demand, has further promoted the fragmentation and sprawl of urban areas, and has emphasised the need for planning to focus on ways to influence these larger elements of urban infrastructure (transport and wastewater being the main ones).¹⁶ The approach is to have an urban infrastructure plan at the heart of a strategic spatial plan, with the form of infrastructure encouraging more compact and public transport-based urban development.

The New Urbanism approach, or Smart Growth (or ‘urban villages’ in the UK), reflects many of the spatial principles of the compact city and the sustainable city

¹⁶ See Angel (2008) on transport infrastructure in peri-urban areas.

approaches, but at the scale of the local neighbourhood. This position (Grant, 2006) promotes local areas with fine-grained mixed use, mixed housing types, compact form, an attractive public realm, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, defined centres and edges and varying transport options. Facilities (such as health, libraries, retail and government services) cluster around key public transport facilities and intersections to maximise convenience. These spatial forms have been strongly promoted in the USA, and have been implemented in the form of neighbourhoods such as Celebration Town and Seaside. While the planning objectives of this approach are sound, there is a danger that in practice they can become elite enclaves which exclude a mix of incomes and cultures.

More recently, addressing climate change has become the most important environmental issue. The important role which cities play in influencing this change has raised hopes that urban planning can be a mechanism for changing urban impacts.¹⁷ International agreements and targets have proved to be major drivers of local action, but increasingly local initiatives are a source of innovation, with shifts to governance regimes reflecting a role for groupings beyond the state. Cities themselves are also increasingly involved in transnational and subnational networks¹⁸ representing a form of environmental governance (Bulkeley & Bestill, 2005).

Planning has woken up late to the issue, and much input to date has come from sector specialists and environment professions. Most urban plans do not explicitly address the issue of adaptation to climate change (Bestill & Bulkeley, 2007), and many local measures are voluntary and not yet implemented. The main planning innovations in this area are probably still to come. However, many of the ideas about environmentally sustainable urban forms from the post-1980s period ('compact city' ideas and new urbanism) do fit with the climate change agenda, and there is agreement that changing urban form in these directions can be a major factor in promoting climate mitigation. Often, however, the problem lies at the level of the zoning or land use management schemes, and building regulations, which are less easy to change, particularly where private property interests are threatened.

¹⁷ See UN-Habitat statement that urban planning had become increasingly important in managing climate change because well planned cities provide a better foundation for sustainable development than unplanned cities (7/5/07, Bonn) www.unhabitat.org accessed 15 May 2009.

¹⁸ For example, the Large Cities Climate Leadership Group, Climate Alliance, and ICLEI.

3.3.4. Land management and regulation

In many parts of the global North there have been shifts away from older rigid zoning schemes and newer, more flexible measures have been introduced, which could potentially be used to address issues of rapid urban growth, poverty and environment. As with the innovations in other aspects of planning, they cannot be considered out of context, and their success may well be dependent on locally specific institutional, political, economic and cultural factors. Private property ownership and market-driven land processes, as well as local governments with good management capacity, are the usual pre-conditions for these innovations.

In the USA there has been a strong trend towards CICs (common interest communities) or CIDs (common interest developments), such that in the 50 largest cities over half of all new housing is built in this form (Ben-Joseph, 2005). These are developer-built residential developments under collective ownership and governance. They also allow for a de facto deregulation of municipal sub-division and zoning regulations and the use of different and more flexible designs and layouts. Ben-Joseph (2005) notes that in the USA these developments are not always 'gated villages' (72% do not have security systems), are no longer the preserve just of the wealthy, and respond to group needs for privacy and identity. Counter-arguments (Davis, 1990) point to the way in which this form of development spatially fragments cities and erodes public space and social integration.

Other shifts away from the standard zoning approach are to be found in approaches such as Performance Zoning (regulating the impacts of development, such as noise, visual intrusion, etc., rather than the use itself); development managed through design-based codes, as is often the case in new urbanist developments and transit-oriented developments; and incentives and disincentives in development rights (developers may be required to make contributions to public space or facilities in return for more favourable development rights; development and building requirements may be relaxed in order to attract economic development to particular areas; development rights can be transferred from one site in the city to another: TDR or Transfer of Development Rights).

Land readjustment is a specifically Japanese contribution to innovative regulatory planning (Friedmann, 2005a: 186; Sorensen, 2002). Used in urban fringe areas, it is a method of pooling ownership of all land in a project area, installing urban facilities, and then

dividing the land into urban plots. In Japan, landowners must contribute a portion of their land for public use or to be sold for public revenue.

There is also a growing interest in developing land laws which can capture rising urban land values (via property and capital gains taxes) by governments for redistributive purposes (Smolka & Amborski, 2000). ‘Value capture’ is not only seen as an effective way to link directive planning and land use regulations, but it also serves to control land use, finance urban infrastructure and generate additional revenue at the local level. One positive outcome of urbanisation and urban growth is that it increases urban land values, and this potential needs to be socially harvested rather than only benefiting the private sector.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter has considered the extent to which new planning approaches and ideas in the global North

might have addressed the issues which will, in future years, be facing the bulk of the global urban population: rapid urbanisation, poverty and environment. Environment (and particularly responding to climate change) has become a dominant urban issue in the global North, yet planning ideas have not progressed far beyond the compact city and new urbanism ideas of the late 1980s. Shifts in planning towards more participatory and community-based approaches, attempts to integrate planning decision-making with other functional policy arenas, and more strategic, flexible and implementation-oriented plans, are potentially important in dealing with rapid urban growth and marginalisation. More innovative forms of land use management show that there are ways to move beyond rigid zoning schemes and building codes in ways which can allow for higher dwelling densities and mixed uses. The final chapter will return to these ideas and consider the extent to which they may be useful in addressing major urban issues in the global South.

Chapter 4. Urban planning in the global South

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to return to the suggestion that the planned city sweeps the poor away. It is of course impossible to offer evidence-based conclusions on this: the planning system is just one of a range of complex and interlinked factors in Southern urban areas which influence poverty and unsustainable development, and it is unlikely that planning is the dominant factor. The extent to which planning has played a positive or negative role also undoubtedly varies greatly across the global South, and it would be wrong to attempt to generalise about the impact of planning (Friedmann, 2005a). Nonetheless, there is a significant volume of literature which argues that urban planning in many parts of the global South fails to address the primary urban issues of the 21st century and, further, that in some regions it is directly implicated in worsening poverty and the environment. There have been two aspects to these arguments. The first has been that planning in the global South has been largely shaped by planning ideas from the global North, and imposed or borrowed ideas are ill-suited to Southern contexts. The second set of arguments focuses on how these planning systems articulate with ‘local’ political, economic and cultural factors and are ‘abused’ or ‘misused’ in the process. This chapter reviews the arguments from these two positions.

4.2. Spread of urban planning ideas to the global South

In many parts of the world, planning systems are in place which have been imposed or borrowed from elsewhere. In some cases, these ‘foreign’ ideas have not changed significantly since the time they were imported. Planning systems and urban forms are inevitably based on particular assumptions about the time and place for which they were designed, but these assumptions often do not hold in other parts of the world and thus these systems and ideas are often inappropriate (and now often dated) in the context to which they have been transplanted. Frequently, as well, these imported ideas have been drawn on for reasons of political, ethnic or racial domination and exclusion, rather than in the interests of good planning.

At the risk of some generalisation, it could be said that master planning and urban modernism spread to

almost every part of the capitalist world in the first part of the 20th century.¹⁹ Master planning also spread to those parts of the world under socialism at the time, but was accompanied in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries by a different urban vision: ‘socialist realism’ (Strobel, 2003). In the latter part of the 20th century, master planning and urban modernism have persisted in many parts of the world and particularly in the global South.

There are different ways of understanding the spread of planning ideas. Ward (2002) offers a typology of the transfer of planning ideas, along dimensions of authoritarianism, contestation and consensus (in short: imposition); and synthesis, selection, and uncritical reception (borrowing). He argues that the nature of the power relationship between exporting and importing country is a major determining factor, with colonialism and conquest giving rise to the imposition of foreign planning systems, while a more equal relationship between countries sees planning ideas transported through other means: travelling planning consultants, politicians or other influential people, or scholarly articles and books. This process of diffusion was never smooth or simple: the ideas themselves were often varied and contested, and they articulated in different ways with the contexts to which they were imported.

Tait and Jensen (2007: 107) respond to the increasingly frequent transfer across the globe of urban development models which ‘...do not reflect the spatial complexities of the places in which they are “applied” and are often seen to fail’. They argue that to understand this process requires an understanding of the relationships between representations of space and the material practices which create space, and they use actor-network theory to explain this ‘translation’ of ideas from one context to another. As opposed to the concept of diffusion (which suggests that the ‘idea’ itself is responsible for its movement), they focus on the range of actors and actions which move ideas. Translation is not just a linguistic process, they suggest, but one which can alter the idea itself and the social and natural world associated with it. Actors, actions and the intermediaries (which in actor-network theory can be texts, technical objects, embodied practices and money) through which translation occurs, must all be taken into account. In the context of trying to understand

¹⁹ Although it is necessary to recognise the counter-culture of development planning, as initiated by Otto Koenigsberger in both India and Africa, indicating that there were practitioners who were dubious about how much the conventional wisdom would achieve.

travelling planning ideas, the authors suggest that ideas are ‘...articulated within discourses that represent particular notions of space and place, and which carry certain rationalities and normative assumptions about social life in the sites of the materialization of these ideas’ (Tait & Jensen, 2007: 114). This framework opens up a fertile area for researching the long history and many instances of travelling planning ideas. It also leaves open the possibility that translation is not always a simple act of domination (of one part of the world by another), and that complex patterns of collusion and interaction accompany the process; moreover, the outcomes cannot be pre-judged. The section below, however, does no more than briefly review the geographical spread of imported ideas.

Colonialism was a very direct vehicle for the spatial translation of planning systems, particularly in those parts of the world under colonial rule when planning was ascendant. In these contexts, planning of urban settlements was frequently bound up with the ‘modernising and civilising’ mission of colonial authorities, but also with the control of urbanisation processes and of the urbanising population. On the African continent, this diffusion occurred mainly through British, German, French and Portuguese influence, using their home-grown instruments of master planning, zoning, building regulations and the urban models of the time—garden cities, neighbourhood units and Radburn layouts, and later urban modernism. Most colonial and later post-colonial governments also initiated a process of land commodification within the liberal tradition of private property rights, with the state maintaining control over the full exercise of these rights, including aspects falling under planning and zoning ordinances.

Significantly, however, imported planning systems were not applied equally to all sectors of the urban population. For example, towns in Cameroon (Njoh, 2003) and in other colonised territories in Sub-Saharan Africa (Njoh, 1999), were usually zoned into ‘low-density residential areas’ for Europeans (these areas had privately owned large plots, were well serviced and were subject to European-style layouts and building codes); ‘medium-density residential areas’ for African civil servants (with modest services, some private ownership, and the enforcement of building standards); and ‘high-density residential areas’ (for the indigenous population, who were mostly involved in the informal sector), with little public infrastructure, and few or no building controls. Spatially the low-density European areas were set at a distance from the African and Asian areas, ostensibly for health reasons.

Many African countries still have planning legislation based on British or European planning laws from the 1930s or 1940s, which has been revised only marginally. Post-colonial governments tended to reinforce and entrench colonial spatial plans and land management tools, sometimes in even more rigid form than colonial governments (Njoh, 2003). Enforcing freehold title for land and doing away with indigenous and communal forms of tenure was a necessary basis for state land management, but also a source of state revenue and often a political tool to reward supporters. Frequently, post-colonial political elites who promoted these tenure reforms were strongly supported in this by former colonial governments, foreign experts and international policy agencies: in 1950 the UN passed a resolution on land reform, contending that informal and customary land tenures inhibited economic growth. In Cameroon, for example, 1974 legislation required people to apply for a land certificate for private land ownership. Yet the procedures were complex and expensive and seldom took less than seven years to complete. Few people applied, yet in 1989 the certificate became the only recognised proof of land ownership and all other customary or informal rights to land were nullified (Njoh, 2003). Controls over land were also extended to housing in the post-colonial period. Accompanying the master plans were (and mostly still are) zoning ordinances, which stipulated building standards and materials for housing, as well as tenure requirements. Without an official building permit, an approved building plan and land title, a house in Cameroon is regarded as informal (Njoh, 2003: 142). Yet securing these is a long and expensive process, which most poor people cannot understand or afford. Inevitably, the bulk of housing in African cities is classed as informal.

Important and capital cities in Africa have often been the subject of grand master planning under colonial rule, sometimes involving prominent international planners or architects. Remarkably, in many cases, these plans remain relatively unchanged and some are still in force. The guiding ‘vision’ in these plans has been that of urban modernism, based on assumptions that it has always been simply a matter of time before African countries ‘catch up’ economically and culturally with the West, producing cities governed by strong, stable municipalities and occupied by households who are car-owning, formally employed, relatively well-off, and with urban lifestyles similar to those of European or American urbanites. As Chapter 1 has indicated, nothing could be further from reality.

Planning in the sub-continent of India has had strong parallels with the African experience, given the common factor of British colonial rule. Limited health and safety measures at the start of the 20th century gave way to master planning and zoning ordinances, introduced under British rule but persisting in post-colonial times. Ansari (2004) notes that some 2,000 Indian cities now have master plans, all displaying the problems which caused countries such as the UK to shift away from this approach, and yet the main task of municipal planning departments is to produce more such plans. A well-documented master plan imposition was that for Chandigarh, produced by Le Corbusier, which demonstrated ‘...a preoccupation with visual forms, symbolism, imagery and aesthetics rather than the basic problems of the Indian population’ (Hall, 1988: 214).

In Latin American cities as well, past colonial links played a role in transferring European planning ideas to this part of the world, but more general intellectual exchange reinforced this. Thus, Buenos Aires developed strong links with French planners, architects and city administrators, and French experts were hired to prepare local plans. The 1925 master plan and zoning scheme was prepared by French architects, and the 1937 plan by Le Corbusier (Novick, 2003). The Brazilian capital of Brasilia was planned by a local architect (1960) who was also a local pioneer of the modern architectural movement and strongly influenced by Le Corbusier. Master planning has been used widely in Latin America, as elsewhere, and it is only recently that there have been shifts away from this or attempts to use master plans in different ways.

In a different pattern again, cities in East and South-east Asia (with the exception of Singapore and Hong Kong) have largely done without institutionalised planning systems (Logan, 2001). Local governments in these countries have been weak and cities have been shaped by national economic development policies and rampant market forces. National governments have invested in large productive urban infrastructure projects (e.g. airports and freeways) but have made almost no effort to attend to welfare needs or environmental issues, or to rationalise spatial development and land release. However, a number of countries in this part of the world bear the imprint of earlier planning transplants. Professionals following American City Beautiful ideas drew up plans for the redevelopment of Manila very early in the 20th century, and the hill-town of Baguio was planned as a miniature Washington. Shanghai plans also drew on Washington, as did other larger Chinese cities (Freestone, 2007).

Japan, during the same period, used Western planning ideas very selectively and adapted them to local needs, but experimented directly with imposed master planning and Western urban forms in what were then its own colonies of Taiwan, Korea, China and Manchuria (Hein, 2003).

In other parts of the world again, institutionalised urban planning came much later, but followed familiar patterns when it did. Planning was virtually absent from China under Mao, but was formally rehabilitated with the City Planning Act of 1989, which set up a comprehensive urban planning system based on the production of master plans to guide the growth of China’s burgeoning new cities (Friedmann, 2005a,b). Some of these master plans appear to have drawn on certain of the more recent lessons from Western spatial planning—they are concerned with implementation as well as plans and with aspects of cities beyond the physical. The urban forms which accompany them, largely urban modernism, also incorporate (in some cases) new ideas about sustainable environments.

The next sections consider how urban modernism, master planning and land regulations disadvantage the poor.

4.3. *Urban modernism as an ideal city form*

It is not inevitable that master planning should be used to impose the modernist city ideal (as the Eastern Bloc countries demonstrated with ‘socialist realism’, as many European cities have demonstrated with compact, low rise urbanist forms, and as towns planned in the ‘new urbanism’ style show now), but there has been a strong tendency for this to occur, and in some countries (e.g. Chinese cities) it is happening currently. In many parts of the world, urban modernism has been associated with being modern, with development, and with ‘catching up with the West’, and has thus been attractive to governments and elites who wish to be viewed in this way. The aggressive promotion of these forms by developers, consultants and international agencies has also played an important role.

In brief, urban modernism involves all or some of the following urban characteristics:²⁰

- Prioritisation of the aesthetic appearance of cities: modern cities are spacious, uncluttered, efficient, ordered, green, offer grand views—particularly of

²⁰ The previous chapter noted that in the global North, where these ideas emerged in the early 20th century, there has been some movement away from these urban forms.

state and civic buildings—are clean, and do not contain poor people or informal activities.

- High-rise buildings, with low plot coverage and large setbacks, releasing large amounts of open ‘green’ space between them, following the ‘superblock’ concept.
- Dominance of free-flowing vehicular movement routes (rather than rail), organisation of traffic into a hierarchy of routes, and separation of pedestrian routes from vehicle routes. High car ownership is assumed.
- Routes, particularly higher order ones, are wide, with large road reserves and setbacks (for future expansion); there are limited intersections with lower order routes, and limited or no vehicle access to functions located along them.
- Separation of land use functions (using zoning regulations) into areas for residence, community facilities, commerce, retail and industry. Shopping occurs in malls surrounded by parking. It is assumed that most people travel from home to work, shops, etc. by car.
- Spatial organisation of these different functional areas into separate ‘cells’, taking access off higher order movement routes, and often surrounded by ‘buffers’ of open green space.
- Different residential densities for different income groups, often organised into ‘neighbourhood units’. For wealthier families—low densities, usually organised as one house per plot, with full infrastructural services provided.

The most obvious problem with urban modernism is that it fails to accommodate the way of life of the majority of inhabitants in rapidly growing, and largely poor and informal cities, and thus directly contributes to social and spatial marginalisation. One kind of response, as in Brasilia²¹ and Chandigarh, has been that an informal city has been excluded from the formal city, and has simply grown up beside and beyond it. In other cities the informal has occupied the formal city: informal traders operate from the sidewalks and medians of grand boulevards; informal shelters occupy the green open spaces between tower blocks; in Dar es Salaam the main road reserves have been turned into huge linear markets; in Cairo the poor have occupied

rooftops and cemeteries; and in Lagos the freeways carry traders, pedestrians, bus-stops and so on. Both these kinds of ‘occupations’ are problematic. In many cities, modernisation projects involved the demolition of mixed-use, older, historic areas that were well suited to the accommodation of a largely poor and relatively immobile population. These projects displaced small traders and working class households, usually to unfavourable peripheral locations; but, as importantly, they represented a permanent reallocation of highly accessible and desirable urban land from small traders and manufacturers to large-scale, formal ones, and to government. Where attempts to reoccupy these desirable areas by informal traders and settlers have occurred, their presence is sometimes tolerated, sometimes depends on complex systems of bribes and corrupt deals, and is sometimes met with official force and eviction. This hardly provides a good business environment for small entrepreneurs.

Other aspects of urban modernist planning reinforce spatial and social exclusion, and inequality. Cities planned on the assumption that the majority of residents will own and travel by car become highly unequal. The modernist city is usually spread out, due to low built density developments and green buffers or wedges. Low-income households, which have usually been displaced to cheaper land on the urban periphery, thus find themselves trapped in peripheral settlements or having to pay high transport costs if they want to travel to public facilities or economic opportunities. The separation of land uses into zoned monofunctional areas further generates large volumes of movement (as people must move from one to the other to meet daily needs), and, if residential zoning is enforced, leads to major economic disadvantage for poorer people, who commonly use their dwelling as an economic unit as well. The modernist city provides few good trading places for informal sector operators, which today make up the bulk of economic actors in cities of the South. Street traders are usually viewed as undesirable in the planned parts of Southern cities, particularly around shopping malls, and are strictly controlled or excluded. Yet these are the most profitable locations for street traders, as they offer access to the purchasing power of a higher income market.

Those who have promoted the compact city idea and new urbanism (see previous chapter) have also presented arguments that urban modernism is environmentally unsustainable. These urban forms generate large amounts of vehicle movement, which is usually car-based. Pedestrian movement is difficult and not encouraged. Low densities increase the cost of

²¹ *Favelas* were specifically excluded from Brasilia and provision made for the poor in satellite towns which would be out of sight. Social segregation was thus planned from the outset. Thus ‘...modernity is in effect cruelty’ (Williams, 2007).

infrastructure and encourage urban sprawl, which can erode natural resources on the urban edge. New ideas about urban form, it is suggested, are both more supportive of poor people and more environmentally sustainable.

4.4. Zoning ordinances and building regulations

These aspects of planning also impact on the poor, and in a study of nine cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Devas (2001) found that most had planning and building standards which were unsuited to lower income earners. Zoning contains simultaneously an urban welfare ideal and restrictive conditions with hierarchical principles, both of which establish inter- and intra-class (and sometimes racial and ethnic) differences. It therefore includes some and excludes others. The application of zoning schemes and land use regulations to residential areas under master planning has required people to comply with particular forms of land tenure, building regulations, building forms and construction materials, usually embodying European building technologies and imported materials (the kinds of materials used for informal dwellings being prohibited), and requirements for setbacks, minimum plot sizes, coverage, on-site parking, etc. In many colonial cities, zoning ordinances were imported verbatim from the colonising power with little subsequent change. Complying with these requirements imposes significant costs and is usually complex and time-consuming.

Njoh (2003: 143) describes how the process of applying for a building permit in the town of Kumba in Cameroon (used as a typical example) involves five different government departments and a list of documents, including a site plan, block plan, quantity surveyor's report, town planning permission, and proof of land ownership. The application process rarely takes less than a year to complete. The purpose of regulations to promote health and safety and ensure access (important for fire and ambulance services at least) is supportable. However, in the case of Kumba, 72% of the population survives in the informal sector (Njoh, 2003) and, therefore, on precarious and unpredictable incomes. The possibility that people living in such circumstances could comply with a zoning ordinance designed for relatively wealthy European towns is extremely unlikely. There are two possible outcomes here. One is that the system is strongly enforced and people who cannot afford to comply with the zoning requirements are excluded to areas where they can evade detection—which would

usually be an illegal informal settlement, probably in the peri-urban areas. Alternatively, the municipality may not have the capacity to enforce the ordinance, in which case it will be ignored as simply unachievable. A common pattern in many cities is that there are core areas of economic and governmental significance, which are protected and regulated, and the rest, which are not.

In terms of the first alternative, inappropriate and 'first world' zoning ordinances are instrumental in creating informal settlement and peri-urban sprawl, which have highly negative impacts, on the people who have to live under such conditions, on city functioning and on the environment. In effect, people have to step outside the law in order to secure land and shelter, due to the elitist nature of urban land laws (Fernandes, 2003). It could be argued, therefore, that city governments themselves are producing social and spatial exclusion as a result of the inappropriate laws and regulations which they adopt.

In the second alternative, where the capacity for enforcement in regulated areas does not exist, there may as well be no controls at all, which puts such areas on the same footing as an illegal informal settlement, again with potentially negative social, health and environmental impacts. Under such circumstances, the poor and vulnerable, particularly women, have no recourse at all to the law and are open to exploitation and abuse. A more likely scenario, however, is one of partial reinforcement, which in turn opens the door to bribes and corruption (Devas, 2001) in various forms, a process which inevitably favours those with resources. If urban regulations were supportive rather than exclusive, more achievable by poor people, and developed in consultation with communities, it may also be easier to achieve compliance and hence basic health and safety levels, and social protection of the vulnerable.

4.5. The 'dark side' of planning

There is a growing literature which suggests that the negative impacts of urban modernism and planning regulations on the poor are not just a result of wrongly appropriated, misunderstood or inefficient planning systems, but may in some cases be due to corrupt manipulation or use of the system for political domination. In these cases, it is of course abuse of the planning system rather than the planning system itself which is at fault.

Yiftachel and Yacobi (2003: 217–218) argue that in ethnocratic states, such as Israel, the withholding of

planning services is a deliberate tactic of political exclusion:

... a common planning response is allowing, condoning and even facilitating urban informality. Whole communities are thus left out of the planning process, or overlooked by the content of urban policies. Typically, such populations are mentioned as ‘a problem’, but their undocumented, unlawful or even fugitive existence, allows most authorities to ignore them as having full ‘planning rights’ to the city. In other words, policy-makers define urban informality as a method of indirectly containing the ‘ungovernable’. The tactic is avoidance and distant containment; but the result is the condemnation of large communities to unserved, deprived and stigmatized urban fringes. Here lies a main feature of the urban informality as a planning strategy: it allows the urban elites to represent urban government as open, civil and democratic, while at the same time, denying urban residents and workers basic rights and services.

A related example of this failure by the state to ‘see’ certain populations is in China, where ‘floating’ or temporary populations are excluded from official population statistics and have no rights to the city (Friedmann, 2005a). Whereas the master plan for the city of Shenzhen provides for four million people, in fact the city contained seven million in the 2000 census, with the floating population expected to return to rural towns.

Planning legislation and master planning has also been used (opportunistically) time and time again across the globe as a justification for evictions and land grabs. The recent COHRE Report (COHRE, 2006: 59) records 4.2 million people in all parts of the world evicted from their homes between 2003 and 2006; in China an estimated 3.7 million people have been evicted in the last decade to make way for new cities, including 400,000 in Beijing to make way for the 2008 Olympics. Most frequently the argument used is that shelters or occupations of buildings are illegal in terms of planning law and therefore people can be forcibly removed. As frequently, the real motive behind these lies elsewhere: in objectives of political, ethnic, racial or class domination and control, or the pursuit of profit.

In Africa, a particularly high profile eviction occurred in Zimbabwe in 2005 under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1976 (Chapter 29:12), which authorises the state to demolish structures and evict people. Operation Murambatsvina (also termed ‘Restore Order,

Cleanup, and Drive out the Rubbish’) targeted vendors’ structures, informal businesses and homes labelled as illegal by the government. Conservative estimates were that 700,000 people were evicted from their homes and 2.3 million people were affected in other ways. No compensation was paid or alternative homes offered (Berrisford & Kihato, 2006).

In Nigeria, large-scale forced evictions are justified in terms of urban development plans, the beautification of cities, privatisation, and ‘cleaning up’ criminals (COHRE, 2006). A noteworthy planning-related eviction process is currently taking place as part of the implementation of the 1979 master plan for Abuja, where extensive informal settlements house a growing indigenous population, as well as people employed in Abuja but unable to find housing. By 2006, 800,000 people had been evicted from land that was ‘zoned for other purposes under the Master Plan’, and in some cases this land has been allocated to private developers. Evicted non-indigenes have been offered access to 500 m² plots at some distance from the city, but this requires a payment of US \$2,612 and the building of a house based on certain planning standards within two years, or rights to the plot are lost (COHRE, 2006).

Writing on the failure of planning in Indian cities, Roy (2009) argues that informality should not just be associated with the poor, but that India’s planning regime itself has been informalised. One aspect of this informality is the ambiguous and ever-changing nature of what is legal and what is illegal. For example, although most of Delhi violates some or other planning law, parts of it are designated illegal and due for demolition, and other parts are declared legal and are protected and formalised. The wealthy (and politically powerful) fall into the latter category. A second aspect of this informality of the planning regime occurs through the withholding of regulation from certain parts of the city (in particular, the peri-urban areas), which allows the state considerable ‘territorial flexibility’ to alter land use and acquire land for urban and industrial development. The state, argues Roy (2009: 81), actively uses informality as an instrument of authority and accumulation. Planning therefore cannot ‘solve’ the crisis of urbanisation, as it is deeply implicated in the production of this crisis.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter has considered the impacts of master planning, given that it has persisted in many parts of the world, and particularly in the global South. Criticisms which have been levelled at this form of planning are

that the urban forms which it has usually promoted (urban modernism) are entirely in conflict with urban populations which are largely poor and survive in the informal sector. Urban modernism thus frequently contributes to poverty and marginalisation in urban areas, and, moreover, it promotes environmentally unsustainable urban environments. Further, the static, end-state form of master plans is completely at odds with cities, which are growing and changing, in largely unpredictable ways, probably faster now than at any other time in history. Master plans usually have the ability to control but not to promote: the forward plans may present grand visions, but the land use regulations which accompany them are often not suitable mechanisms for implementing them. Finally, master planning emphasises the product of planning but not the process, hence there may be little local buy-in and plans are unlikely to be institutionally embedded.

The land use regulations which accompany master plans usually demand standards of construction and

forms of land use which are unachievable and inappropriate for the poor in cities, which make up the bulk of urban populations in the global South. Hence, high levels of illegality (of buildings and land use) in many cities are a direct result of inappropriate planning and zoning standards, not of criminally minded citizens. Such standards are directly responsible for spatial and social marginalisation. These zoning ordinances, which require high standards, are difficult to enforce where governments lack capacity, often leaving people with no controls or protection at all. And finally, master plans and zoning are being used in many parts of the world as an excuse for forced evictions, political control, and collusion with private-sector-driven urban development projects, all usually at the expense of the poor and minority groups. For all these reasons, it is understandable that older but persistent approaches to planning are now in question, and stand accused of being 'anti-poor'.

Chapter 5. New planning approaches and ideas in the global South

5.1. Introduction

Chapter 4 argued that in many parts of the global South, planning systems are based on models adopted from Northern contexts which have persisted over the last decades, despite the fact that cities have changed significantly. For many urban areas, therefore, there is now a considerable gap between the main urban issues of the 21st century and the extent to which planners and planning systems might be able to respond to these problems. However, in some parts of the global South planning innovation has taken place. In some cases this has happened as a result of programmes introduced by Northern-based development agencies; in other cases they may be responses to trends and innovations in Northern regions (Chapter 3); some new approaches appear to be responses to particular issues in Southern cities. There can of course be no guarantee that new and apparently positive planning innovations will not also be misappropriated and abused for political and economic gain (in any part of the world).

This chapter reviews the main planning innovations in regions of the global South, as well as any assessments of their implementation. Chapter 6 will draw on these ideas, as well as those from the global North, to return to UN-Habitat's call for major planning shifts to address urbanisation, poverty and environment. It is not easy to classify these new ideas and approaches. The first cluster addresses aspects of the institutional context of planning; and the second looks at some innovations in the regulatory and legal aspects of planning.

5.2. Innovations in the institutional context of planning

These ideas deal with the broader (local government) context in which planning occurs, and consider how to better integrate planning institutionally and make it more responsive to civil society.

5.2.1. Integrated development planning

The need to make local government developmental, and to better link line function departments (including planning) through strategic action plans, is a concern worldwide. South Africa, since democracy in 1994, has moved to introduce a form of urban management and planning in municipalities which is intended to integrate the actions of line function departments and the

different spheres of government,²² including spatial planning, and links these to budgeting and to implementation. The process is termed 'Integrated Development Planning' (IDP), and is backed up by national legislation. Although the IDP has a peculiarly South African genealogy, it was also shaped within the emergent international discourse on governance, planning and urban management (Parnell & Pieterse, 2002), and there appear to be elements in common with the new UK approach to urban management and planning, although it was introduced ahead of this process. A significant difference with the new UK planning system, however, is that in terms of the IDP the co-ordinating and integrating mechanism is the budget and not the spatial plan. There also appear to be elements in common with the idea of City Development Strategies (Cities Alliance), although South African cities tend to be adopting both CDSs as long-term urban visions and shorter-term (five years) IDPs.

The IDP is a medium-term municipal plan linked to a five-year political cycle, although aspects of the plan, including the vision (sometimes in the form of a CDS) and the spatial development framework, have a longer-term horizon. The IDP manager's office in each municipality is charged with the task of needs assessment, vision development, and aligning the plans and projects of each line function department to the vision. The urban planning system consists of Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and a still unreformed land use management system. The SDF has the weaker role of spatially co-ordinating these sectoral plans, as in the UK, rather than spatial goals feeding into these other plans (Vigar & Healey, 1999). Spatially 'harmonised' projects are then supposed to direct the budget.

Over time the managerialist and technocratic dimensions of policy-making and planning have come to dominate, and participation remains only rhetorically important. Despite the emphasis given to good governance, the everyday reality in many municipalities is of patronage in appointments and tendering, institutional conflict, poor delivery records, and financial crisis. Many municipalities, particularly those outside the metropolitan areas, do not have the capacity to fulfill their basic functions (Harrison, Todes, & Watson, 2008).

There is a general consensus that the idea of IDPs is positive, and certainly an advance on previous forms of

²² South Africa has three autonomous 'spheres' rather than 'tiers' of government.

urban management. There is an important recognition that it will take a long time for municipalities to get accustomed to this very different way of operating, and that efforts must be sustained. So far (eight years in to the experiment) there are modest successes (Harrison, Todes & Watson, 2008) but still many problems. Line function departments, including planning departments, still operate in isolation from each other, with the IDP attempting to integrate the products of these functions but not their processes. Integration is therefore not yet institutionally embedded. The capital budget in many places is still shaped by the relative power of these departments and by the politicians of the day, rather than by the norms of sustainability and equity. There are very few linkages between the SDFs and the land use management system—in many places the latter dates from apartheid days, while the SDFs are new. There is therefore a disjuncture between the zoning ordinances, many of which promote urban modernism and social exclusion, and the SDFs, which try and promote a different urban form, but lack the tools to do so. There is still no consensus at national level about how the land use management system should operate and, in the vacuum, individual provinces and cities have been attempting their own partial reforms. Participation has come to be seen as ‘professional participation’—involving different departments and levels of government rather than citizens and stakeholders. In many cities the latter takes very limited forms of participation, such as presenting the results of the IDP for public comment.

The IDP has good intentions, not yet realised, but it may still be too early to pass final judgement. What is clear to date is that it is a complex and sophisticated system and many municipalities, and particularly the politicians, lack the capacity or motivation to understand and fully implement it. Given that South Africa is a relatively well-resourced and governed Southern country, this should provide a cautionary note regarding simplistic borrowing of the approach in less well-resourced regions.

5.2.2. Participatory budgeting

A range of innovative approaches to participation in planning and development has been tried out at the local scale (‘Community action planning’; ‘Participatory urban appraisal’) in the global South, but at the city scale one of the best known is ‘Participatory budgeting’ (PB), which first occurred in Porto Alegre in Brazil and has since been attempted in many other parts of the world. By 2006 it had been introduced in over 1,000 municipalities in Latin America and (in an unusual case of reverse borrowing) in over 100 Western European

cities (Sintomer, Herzberg, & Röcke, 2008). Details vary from city to city (Cabannes, 2004): in some cases citizens individually participate and vote on the municipal budget in thematic ‘assemblies’ and in neighbourhood and district meetings; in other cases decision-making is carried out through delegates and leaders of local organisations. Municipal Councils are ultimately responsible for deciding on the budget, with on average about 20% of the overall budget being decided by PB. In some cities PB has been regulated and institutionalised, but only in Peru does it have constitutional and legal foundations. Without this, PB is reliant on the willingness of the mayor to introduce it.

The relationship between PB and urban planning is not a simple one. PB is usually a short-term exercise, as opposed to long-term strategic and development planning. PB decisions are also usually focused on the community or local scale, compared to the city-wide issues which planning needs to consider. Cabannes (2004) describes how the two processes can interrelate. In some Latin American cities PB takes place within the framework provided by the longer-term strategic plan. Here the members of the Council of the Participatory Budget are also representatives of the Council of the Urban Master Plan. In other cities PB precedes the formulation of the strategic spatial plan and is intended to inform it. There has been no explicit discussion of how PB might inform the incorporation of environmental issues and climate change into longer-term planning, but it would require the trade-off between shorter-term and local priorities and longer-term and possible city-wide climate mitigation and adaptation actions.

Research shows that PB is not a simple solution which can be imposed anywhere and is not a technical process that can be detached from local political culture: an important feature of recent participatory approaches is that they are converging with concerns about democracy and citizenship. The main preconditions for PB are: grassroots democracy through open local assemblies; social justice through a formula that allocates a larger share of resources to the most disadvantaged districts; and citizen control through an ongoing PB Council that monitors implementation. Nonetheless, it has been argued that PB has increased access by marginalised groups to governmental processes, and in highly unequal societies it does offer one avenue for the exercise of urban rights (Souza, 2001).

5.2.3. UN Urban Management Programme (UMP)

Regarded as one of the largest global urban programmes, it was started in 1986 by the Urban

Development Unit of the World Bank in partnership with UNCHS (United Nations Centre for Human Settlements) and funded by UNDP (United Nations Development Programme). It functioned as a tripartite collaboration between UN-Habitat, UNDP and the World Bank. The programme has been involved in 120 cities in 57 countries, with the overall mission of promoting socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements and adequate shelter for all, and with the objective of reducing urban poverty and social exclusion. The Cities Alliance organisation also emerged from this grouping.²³ In 2006 UN-Habitat disengaged from the programme and transferred the work to local anchor institutions (UN-Habitat, 2005).

In common with other recent and innovative ideas in planning, and particularly with the ‘urban management’ approach, it attempted to shift the concept of planning and development to the whole of local government, rather than belonging to one department; it attempted to promote participatory processes in local government decision-making (the city consultation), to promote strategic thinking in planning, and to tie local government plans to implementation through action plans and budgets. The more recent City Development Strategy (CDS), promoted particularly by Cities Alliance, encourages local governments to produce inter-sectoral and long-range visions and plans for cities. One of the longest and deepest involvements of the UMP has been with Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

Comments on the success rate of this programme have been mixed. While some argue that it has made a major difference in terms of how local governments see their role, and the role of planning, others have been more critical. One of the originators of the programme (Michael Cohen, former Chief of the Urban Development Division of the World Bank) concluded that it had not had a major impact on the process of urbanisation in developing countries (UN-Habitat, 2005: 5). Co-ordinator of the programme, Dinesh Mehta, noted that the city consultations had aimed to change the way local government did business, but this did not always happen. Ambitious plans often had no investment follow-up to make sure that they happened (UN-Habitat, 2005: 6). The weakness of municipal finance systems, a pre-requisite for implementation, has been a major stumbling block.

Werna (1995) notes that persistent urban problems should not be seen as due to the failure of the UMP, but rather due to the ongoing globalisation of the economy, which has weakened nation states and increased income inequalities and poverty. Decentralisation in this context has placed a major burden on local government without the necessary powers and finance, and this makes urban management very difficult. Also pointing to broader obstacles, Rakodi (2003) draws attention to the problematic assumption that liberal democracies can work in all parts of the South, and that expectations of what local governments will do may be misplaced. Few local governments, she argues, are prepared to actually take steps to achieve equity and inclusiveness. Linked to this is the likelihood that stakeholders in UMP processes will promote their own specific and immediate interests, with less concern for longer-term or city-scale issues, and particularly less tangible issues such as climate change.

But more basic problems were evident, certainly in the Tanzanian cases. The UMP appeared to be successfully changing one part of the planning system—‘forward’ planning—but left untouched the regulatory tools (the land use management system)—which form an important part of plan implementation. The inherited land regulation systems were therefore able to continue to entrench the inequalities which were inherent in them. In effect, the UMP was setting up a parallel planning system, requiring developers first to apply to the local stakeholder committee for application approval in terms of the strategic plan, and then to submit it to the usual development control department (Halla, 2002). While the real power lies with those administering the land regulations, there appears to be little advantage to developers to follow both processes, and little chance of a strategic plan being implemented. As Nnkyia (2006) notes, there was no clear evidence to suggest that the Dar es Salaam UMP process had been fully institutionalised.

5.2.4. *Strategic planning*

A number of Southern countries have adopted strategic planning (to replace master planning), probably as a direct borrowing from strategic planning ideas in the global North, or introduced it as part of larger agency-driven programmes. In some cases these strategic plans are part of broader institutional plans, such as the Spatial Development Frameworks, which are part of South Africa’s Integrated Development Plans, or the spatial plans, which are part of the Urban Management Programme.

²³ Local Agenda 21 processes, which emerged from 1992 Earth Summit Agreements, followed a similar direction to the Urban Management Programme, and were later linked to the Habitat urban agenda (see Allen and You, 2002).

A number of Latin American cities adopted the strategic urban planning approach in the late 1990s, and Steinberg (2005) documents and evaluates the more successful or advanced cases of Cordoba, La Paz, Trujillo and Havana. It is still relatively new in Latin American countries, with many attempts seemingly ‘borrowed’ from the European experience as a result of the involvement of the city of Barcelona, IHS in Rotterdam and other think-tank agencies. Steinberg (2005) notes the danger that a new strategic planning process adopted by a city administration can be dropped when a new political party or mayor comes into power, because to continue it might be seen as giving credibility to a political opposition (this was the case in Cordoba, Bogota and Santiago). The fact that a plan can be dropped, however, also suggests that neither business nor civil society see it as sufficiently valuable to demand its continuation. The Bolivian approach, of introducing a national law (Law of the Municipalities 1999) requiring all municipalities to draw up an urban plan based on the strategic-participatory method, is one way of dealing with this, but does not prevent the content of the plan changing with administrations.

Steinberg (2005) concludes that success depends on political will, participation, technical capacity and the institutionalisation of plan management. The social and political processes of debating and agreeing on a plan are as important as the plan itself. The very different approach required by strategic planning inevitably counters opposition: from politicians and officials who use closed processes of decision-making and budgeting to insert their own projects and further their own political interests, and from planners who have to abandon their comfortable role as the ‘grand classical planner’ and become more of a communicator and facilitator. Also significant is the fact that the particular urban form which appears to have accompanied strategic planning in these cities (large transformational projects) has raised tensions, in Bogota at least, between a focus on these projects versus a focus on basic services and accommodating informality. Undoubtedly, these competing demands reflect different economic and political interests, which may not be easy to reconcile in participation processes.

5.3. Regulatory aspects of urban planning

The regulatory aspect of planning systems has often been resistant to change, particularly in places where private ownership of property is protected, and where the land use management system allocates legal rights of development. For this reason it has been much easier

to reform the directive or forward aspect of the planning system than the land use management aspect. The latter tends to lag behind the former, making implementation of the spatial plan very difficult. The extension of the regulatory system to new informal areas in rapidly growing cities has also been a cause for concern. While new areas of a city should benefit from the protection and regulation of a planning system, the form of regulation usually imposes costs and constraints on informal areas, to the extent that livelihoods are eroded and shelters may be destroyed. Some of the more innovative approaches to land use management have occurred in places where the state has been able to intervene radically in the property market to promote pro-poor policies; where new forms of tenure and land use management have tried to bridge the gap between conventional ‘modernist’ systems and traditional systems; and in situations which, due to conflict or disaster, have required new low-key and flexible land management systems to be introduced.

5.3.1. State intervention in the land market: The Brazilian Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS)

Brazil has moved further than most countries in terms of making the urban crisis a national priority. The Movement for Urban Reform was successful in the 1980s in including two principles in the chapter on Urban Policy in the 1988 Constitution, aiming at democratising access to the city: the social function of property, and popular participation in the definition and administration of urban policies. With a shift in government to the left, the Ministry of Cities was established in 2001 to oversee this process. The term ‘urban reform’ has come to mean not just the reshaping of space, but rather structural social reform, including a spatial dimension, ‘...the purpose of which is the reform of the institutions regulating power and the production of space’ (Souza, 2003: 192). However, the planning tools of master plans and urban regulation were left in place, giving a challenge to progressive planners to use these in new ways. ‘New’ master plans are seen as different to the old ones, in that they are bottom-up and participatory, oriented towards social justice and aiming to counter the effects of land speculation. Souza (2003: 194) states that while conventional urban planning strives to achieve an ideal city, from which illegality and informality are banned, new urban planning deals with the existing city, to develop tools to tackle these problems in a just and democratic way.

One important new tool has been the Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS), first attempted in Belo

Horizonte and Recife in the 1980s and in many *favelas* since. The principle behind the ZEIS is that in Brazil land ownership is a condition for access to many other rights (justice, credit, real estate financing) and that the right of all to land is the basis for the extension of citizenship, and hence securing the right to the city. The ZEIS is a legal instrument for land management, which can be applied to areas with a ‘public interest’: existing *favelas* and vacant public land, to both regularise land access and protect against downraiding and speculation which would dispossess the poor. As such, these zones are created with the aim of interfering in the zoning of cities, by incorporating territories that previously had been outside the established norms (Lago, 2007).

The ZEIS are seen as a powerful instrument for controlling and ordering the use of urban land and interfering in the dynamics of the real estate market. The ZEIS promote social housing through the protection of areas from speculation, they depreciate the potential market value of vacant public land by fixing its use for social housing, they set maximum standards of plot sizes and prohibit land assembly, and they regulate the owner’s right to gain income from this land. Thus, the Urban Squatters’ Right (Usucapião Urbano) gives rights to land for housing which has been occupied for over five years, in plots of not more than 250 m² (Lago, 2007).

Debates about the ZEIS continue. Lago (2007) questions whether they are creating second class urban citizens, and whether it is possible to find coexistence between equality and difference in cities, where difference can be an expression of inferiority for the poor. Essentially the ZEIS allow ‘insertion’ into the city, but not ‘integration’ into society, as this would mean acknowledgement of the poor as socially equal and as holders of the same land rights as the wealthy. This could only occur if the mechanisms for protection of the poor could be used to control speculation in the city as a whole.

5.3.2. *Urban land law and tenure*

This paper argues that the nature of a country’s urban land law²⁴ is the most critical aspect of urban planning.

²⁴ Key issues are: the balance of development rights between property-owner/occupier and the state; the rights of third parties in relation to proposed development; the conditions under which the state can take property and/or development rights away from property-owners/occupiers; the obligations of the state to consult/involve the public in the making of plans which (a) establish spatial policy and/or (b) indicate the allocation or disposition of development rights and/or (c) indicate the means to implementation.

As ‘forward’ plans of various kinds are sidelined by new administrations or fashions, and as participatory agreements run into conflict, it is the urban land law which inevitably persists and which is the slowest and hardest to change, usually because it allocates rights (to more powerful groups in society or to the state) which are long-lasting and strongly defended. Fernandes (2003) has argued that the promotion of urban change in fact depends on comprehensive reform of the legal order affecting the regulation of property rights and the overall process of urban land development, policy making and management. Yet least attention has been paid to this aspect of urban planning in the various reforms and innovations discussed above. With the growing stresses on urban environments from market forces, increasing inequalities, environmental disasters, climate change and oil depletion, urban land laws and planning remain the central tool which can potentially be used to address these issues.

An important obstacle to revising land law is the dominant assumption (from classic liberal legalism) that freehold is the highest and best form of property ownership, and land use management systems and infrastructure provision are invariably tied to this form of tenure. This has allowed land to be regarded as a commodity, rather than performing a social function, with consequent speculation contributing to social exclusion. Given the fact that between 25% and 70% of the urban population in cities of the South live in irregular settlements (Durand-Lasserve & Royston, 2002), and that the delivery and administration of formally titled land (requiring a full cadastre and registration system and the technical requirements of mapping, surveying, registration and conveyancing), is well beyond the capacity of many local governments, there has been a call for alternative approaches to land regularisation and tenure.²⁵

In many parts of the world the land system is fashioned on imported European models and is based on assumptions from earlier times about the appearance of cities and the role of the state in their management. Indigenous tenure systems have often been far more successful in delivering land and shelter for the urban poor, yet they are regarded as undesirable and requiring replacement. Research on ‘informal’ land delivery systems in five African countries (see Rakodi, 2006a) used, as a starting hypothesis, the understanding that these systems are successful due to their practical

²⁵ See *International Development Planning Review* 28(2), 2006, for the results of research in Africa which has considered this question.

attributes and social legitimacy. Moreover, where urban property markets have come under pressure from rapid development, traditional social institutions have adjusted to accommodate these processes (although as pressures increase they are also likely to break down). State–society relations around land transactions sometimes conform to formal rules and laws, but sometimes adopt informal ways of operating. Interactions can therefore have variable outcomes: in some cases the state can enforce compliance (through eviction or demolition) and in other cases it can change to accommodate informality. The research concludes (Rakodi, 2006b) that new land management and tenure systems are required, which draw on both current informal land processes and formal state processes.

In similar vein, Mitlin (2008) argues that both the state and low-income citizens address the task of delivering urban land and services, but follow different political and social processes, favouring different interests and outcomes. The concept of ‘co-production’ refers to the joint production of land and services by citizens and the state, with elements of the process shared. Both sides have to play a role, she suggests, in situations where the state does not have the capacity to deliver or regulate on its own, and low-income citizens cannot rely on their own resources or systems either. Successful examples of co-production, however, all indicate the importance of grassroots organisations maintaining a degree of autonomy in the delivery process. Their objective is to change relations with the state, and the way in which the state works, as well as to secure land and service delivery. Mitlin’s (2008: 356) important addition to this conceptual framework is that the operation of power cannot be ignored. Processes of co-production strengthen collective consciousness and provide an arena within which to challenge particular modes of governmentality. Civil society comes to occupy spaces of governmentality in its own right and thus shifts policies and practices in directions which are more accommodating of the urban poor.

5.3.3. *Planning in the peri-urban areas*

The bulk of rapid urban growth in Southern cities is taking place in the peri-urban areas, as poor urban dwellers look for a foothold in the cities and towns where land is more easily available, where they can escape the costs and threats of urban land regulations, and where there is a possibility of combining urban and rural livelihoods. The peri-urban interface is therefore highly mixed in terms of uses and also highly dynamic and unstable. But these are also the areas that are most difficult to plan and service (due to jurisdictional

problems, mixed tenure systems and the scattered and fragmented nature of settlement) and are areas where the cost-recovery approach to public or formal private sector infrastructure provision cannot work. Often these areas exist in an administrative no-man’s-land, outside of municipal boundaries. At the same time, these are areas where the threats to, and by, the natural environment are greatest. Ideas about how to plan in areas such as these may, therefore, contain useful ideas relevant for sprawling and largely informal cities.

Allen (2003) argues that while peri-urban areas present some of the most intractable problems for urban planning, most planning systems operate with an urban–rural dichotomy which entirely ignores areas such as these. She suggests that it is not possible to extrapolate the planning approaches and tools applied in either urban or rural areas to the peri-urban interface: they require different planning approaches specific to these conditions. Drawing on long-term, team research, she argues for a combination of methods usually associated with urban, rural and regional planning. Allen (2003) argues for a strategic environmental planning and management approach, working incrementally from sub-regional to community levels to manage their articulation at different stages of the process. At the community level, other work (Kyessi, 2005) has shown the value of an incremental approach to service provision using community-based and informal service providers, managed by local committees and with technical advice from city administrations. Ideas focusing on alternative land delivery systems (Section 5.3.2) are also of particular importance in interface areas.

5.3.4. *Planning in post-conflict and post-disaster areas*

Urban planning appears to have a new role to play in re-establishing law and order (and usually a functioning market) in post-conflict societies. These situations are often instructive, as old systems may need to be swept away and new approaches can be tested. Significantly, however, post-conflict situations often have much in common with prevailing conditions in many Southern cities, particularly peri-urban and semi-urban areas, where there is no clear authority and no established public functions or systems. Planning principles in post-conflict situations might, therefore, have wider applicability.

From the 1960s to the 1980s the standard approach to relief in war-torn and post-conflict/disaster areas was a linear one: relief—reconstruction—development (Van Horen, 2002). More recent positions argue for linking

relief to development (USAID) and introducing development-oriented emergency aid (GTZ). The UN-Habitat (2006) urban *dialogues* approach looks to spatial planning to help reintegrate displaced communities back into cities. In Somalia this implied three levels of action: a spatial structure plan, strategic projects and enabling conditions for development. The role of the spatial structure plan was to provide an integrative framework, so that shorter-term actions could contribute to longer-term goals of development. Strategic projects happened immediately, in parallel with the longer-term plan, to make a visible difference on the ground and to provide a way of integrating sectoral aid and actions. Enabling conditions required assistance to local government, infrastructure delivery and reviewing the legal framework to ensure rights for the poor.

The issue of land rights is a crucial one in these situations, as this may have been a core reason for conflict and there are often competing or overlapping claims to land post-conflict. Augustinus and Barry (2004) argue that the establishment of a land management system post-conflict is urgent, as it can help create social and economic stability, forestall land grabs, deal with returning displaced persons, and help restore the functions of government. But they argue that the conventional (technical) approach to establishing this system, and the form of land rights delivered, are both highly problematic. In a post-conflict situation the cadastral system needs to be put in place, usually in advance of national land and planning policy and urban plans (which take much longer to develop), although these systems should provide the broader goals which inform the cadastral system. Also land claims may require lengthy conflict resolution and restitution processes before they can be finalised.

It is therefore important, argue Augustinus and Barry (2004), that the process of defining the cadastre is designed to cope with a highly fluid and changing situation, as well as one where claims to land are largely informal. This means that the first step is to adjudicate local land claims through community-based processes. Then, instead of moving directly to a (Torrens) titling programme, to rather retain a deeds system, as the deed is an affirmation of land rights but does not constitute them, as a title does. Deeds provide evidence of rights in land which can be later rebutted by other evidence, which is crucial for restitution processes.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed innovative planning initiatives and ideas in the global South. In some cases, these represent applications of ideas tried in the global North, but other ideas and approaches are responses to particular conditions in Southern cities. In an unusual case of ‘reverse borrowing’, participatory budgeting (although wider than urban planning) was initiated in Latin America and has been adopted by a number of European cities. Responding to rapid urbanisation and attempts to develop pro-poor urban policies and strategies have been the primary areas of focus; how to incorporate the issues of environmental sustainability and climate change has received far less attention. The long-standing tension between the ‘green’ and ‘brown’ agendas in Southern cities still appears to be unresolved.

The chapter has drawn attention to the fact that innovative ideas have tended to focus on how to change the directive aspect of planning systems, and reforms introduced by international development agencies have tended to focus on this aspect of planning. As the Urban Management Programme demonstrated, it was possible to do this, but it left untouched the regulatory aspect of planning systems, which is far more difficult to reform. The danger has been that reformed directive planning approaches function as an additional parallel system to existing systems, are not institutionally embedded, and are easily dropped when administrations or political parties change. This indicates the importance of new approaches which encompass both the directive and regulatory aspects of planning systems, the linkage between these systems, and the institutional embedding of new ideas into the particular local culture of planning and governance.

Of particular interest, therefore, are new approaches which attempt to change the land use management system in directions which can address rapid urbanisation and poverty. In practice, this has occurred where normal market forces have been suspended, or constrained: through state intervention in the case of the ZEIS; or where disasters or conflict have required emergency responses. Research into practice has also highlighted ways in which formal and informal systems of land and service delivery can work together to produce new and hybrid approaches more appropriate to the complexities of rapidly growing and poor urban areas.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this concluding chapter is to return to the call for new forms of urban planning which can address issues of urbanisation, poverty and sustainability, particularly in that part of the world where the bulk of future urban growth will be concentrating (the global South), and to consider, given the current trends and patterns in these urban areas, whether there are indications as to what these new approaches to planning might be. Chapters 3 and 5 have reviewed innovative aspects of urban planning in the global North and South, respectively, to see what might be gleaned from these initiatives or ideas. A central conclusion in this paper is that planning in many urban areas in the global South adheres to older and outdated approaches (in particular, master planning and urban modernist built forms) and that a significant gap has opened up between the current realities and future challenges of 21st century towns and cities, and the nature and use of prevailing planning systems. The current global financial crisis is undoubtedly exacerbating this. Understanding new and innovative ideas is important, but the point has also been made that the reason for this ‘gap’ is very often not due to a lack of understanding or capacity, but because the planning system can be used for reasons of political advantage, social exclusion, and profit, and there are therefore vested interests in maintaining the status quo.

This paper has examined some of the newer and more innovative approaches to planning in both the global North and South, but *not* in order to promote the simplistic ‘borrowing’ of ‘best practice’ ideas from one part of the world to another. In fact a central argument in this paper is that many (perhaps most) of the inappropriate and exclusionary planning systems in place in the global South have been imposed or borrowed from very different contexts, usually (although not always) from the global North. If planning systems are in need of change, then it is important that this mistake is not repeated. New ideas from various parts of the world are reviewed here to see if they can yield principles (not models) which are more generally useful.

This chapter firstly considers further the question of ‘borrowing’ of ideas from one part of the world to another. It then draws on both existing and innovative forms of planning to highlight the directions in which planning systems might need to go, if they are to be of relevance to issues of urbanisation, poverty and environment (including climate change). It is also

obvious that planning systems and planning professionals on their own can make very little difference to these issues without certain broader conditions being in place. The aim here is not to attempt to present ‘solutions’ to Tibaijuka’s (2006) call for a new approach to planning in the global South, but rather to build on the assessment of current and new approaches to indicate a way forward for this task. The point has also been made (above) that with regard to one of the most important urban planning issues—responding to climate change—work in the field has only just begun.

6.2. On the problem of ‘idea borrowing’

A central argument in this paper has been that the dominance of universalist perspectives on planning (master planning, urban modernism, etc.), which have nonetheless been shaped by the particular worldviews and geographical regions from within which they have originated, have impoverished and limited planning thinking and practice, and have left it open to accusations of irrelevance and of directly worsening urban poverty. These perspectives have shaped a dominant and persistent planning rationality, which in turn sets standards of ‘normality’ regarding ‘proper’ living environments, the ‘proper’ conduct of citizens, acceptable ways of reaching consensus, notions of the public good, and so on. This concept of normality is, however, directly at odds with the reality of socio-spatial dynamics and practices in cities and regions which have been increasingly subjected to particular global economic forces. These practices, which find expression in informality, in ‘dis-orderliness’, in ‘violations’ of rules and regulations, come about as people step outside of the law in order to provide themselves with shelter and income. In doing so, they render themselves even more vulnerable to political and criminal threat than they might otherwise have been.

This international transfer of urban models is not something of the past. Despite the frequency with which imported models fail to achieve the success which their proponents claim for them, processes of globalisation facilitate an increasing scale and pace of ‘best practice’ dissemination and application (Tait & Jensen, 2007). These authors argue that the particular representations of space contained in the international translation of planning and urban models help to understand how they come to be regarded as potentially universal ideas. The essentialist, Euclidean, view of space, based on the assumption of space as abstract (as independent of the objects that inhabit it), and as having a determining effect on objects (spatial determinism), allows spatial

ideas to be seen as the same, regardless of location. Actors concerned to promote the translation of an idea from one part of the world to another need to argue that origin and destination locations are similar, or that their difference does not matter. A different, relational, concept of space (space as dynamically created out of the relations between objects), acknowledges the uniqueness of location and hence ‘place’. This position views space as a social construct, with meanings which are likely to be diverse and contested. Developing spatial strategies is therefore likely to be the outcome of inherently political processes (Tait & Jensen, 2007: 115). In assessing how these two very different concepts of space have been used in recent European strategic spatial planning exercises, Healey (2004: 64–65) sees a relational understanding as important for capturing the real, material experiences of people and firms. If planning ‘rules’ do not acknowledge these, she suggests, there will be a constant struggle between rules and the demands and needs of people, leading to a decline in legitimacy of the planning system. A relational understanding of space is also a more accurate way of understanding current urban and regional dynamics, leading to more effective ways of promoting local capacities and values.

There is, therefore, no simple alternative approach to planning or any urban model which can be ‘parachuted in’ to replace existing approaches, wherever they may be problematic, or to address new urban issues. The position taken here is that planning practice is inevitably ‘situated’, taking place in contexts with very particular and distinct socio-spatial, economic and environmental characteristics. It may be that actors in ‘recipient’ environments change new ideas and hybridise them so that they are usually different from their original form (Tait & Jensen, 2007). But unless, in Southern cities, planning approaches and practices are deeply embedded in local institutional structures and cultures, and are closely aligned to the tactics and strategies of survival of poor urban populations, there is little chance that they will make a positive difference. It will, anyway, be extremely difficult to change existing planning systems, and in particular the land rights and mechanisms which underpin them, as these usually support powerful economic and political interests. So grafting on new institutional processes of forward planning, or setting up ad hoc bodies (such as tribunals) as a parallel to problematic development control systems, is unlikely to change the status quo.

One way of thinking about the problem of planning as anti-poor, is to see the relationship between the

requirements implied in planning and land use management systems, and the human requirements of survival and ‘making do’ under conditions of poverty and inequality, as a ‘conflict of rationalities’ (Watson, 2003, 2009). The forms and processes of land use, buildings, activities and conduct required to meet conventional master planning and urban modernist environments, are simply incompatible with the fragile, fluid, improvised and temporary practices (including informal and ‘illegal’ shelters, acquisition of water, energy, income generation, mobilisation of networks) needed to survive in poor environments (see Simone, 2004).²⁶ This is not to suggest that this conflict arises from some kind of simple misunderstanding: it has its roots in global and local economic and political processes which are exploitative and which entrench inequality.

If planning is to shift in the direction of becoming pro-poor and inclusive, a far better understanding will be needed about the nature of this ‘interface’ between institutionalised systems of land management and development and the survival strategies of the poor. Some of this understanding is beginning to surface in research on formal and informal forms of land tenure and land management in Africa, and on practices of ‘co-production’ (see Section 5.3.2). It is at the ‘interface’ between what may sometimes be formal and informal systems, or at other times public and private sectors, that ‘conflicts of rationality’ arise—between politicised technical and managerial efforts to direct human conduct towards particular ends, and the messy and complex reality of human efforts to survive and thrive. Conflicts and divisions around economy, identity, race, religion, etc. shape this reality. Significantly, the notion of interface does not set up a questionable binary between a will to order and something that escapes it (Osborne & Rose, 1999). Rather, it is a site of struggle in which engagement can take on diverse, unpredictable and hybridised forms, having sometimes negative and sometimes positive outcomes. It is at this site of struggle (the interface), which is also highly contextually specific, that the most interesting possibilities for understanding and learning arise. Effective new ideas about planning are most likely to arise from research and reflective practice at this interface.

Important to an understanding of unpredictable outcomes of engagement, is the view of planning as a ‘rationality of government’, offering the possibility both

²⁶ It is acknowledged that this is just one potential driver of change in planning. Others are new environmental and resource challenges, and new spatial and built forms of economic development in cities.

to achieve societal reform, on the one hand, and to control and shape society to particular political and economic ends, on the other. There has, therefore, always been the potential for planning to be used by political and economic elites to create and protect property values, and to spatially marginalise those who might threaten them. Colonial, ethnocentric and racist states have used planning far more explicitly to achieve segregation and control in urban areas. Planning and power have therefore always been closely interlinked and this relationship helps to explain much of what has, and still does, happen in the name of planning.

6.3. *Assessment of recent shifts in planning and new planning ideas*

This section will review the newer shifts in planning which have taken place in various parts of the world (Chapters 3 and 5), to consider, firstly, whether there are trends towards planning becoming more responsive to issues of rapid urban growth, urban poverty and environmental sustainability; and secondly, whether there are principles arising from these trends that might be more generally applicable. With regard to the latter, the point has been made strongly here that planning is always contextually determined and that the most viable innovations in any place will probably be found through an understanding of how people and institutions in any locale are positively dealing with urban issues. But principles underlying approaches which appear to be having a positive impact might be useful in other cities and regions, particularly where there are contextual similarities. In any transfer of ideas, the question always needs to be asked: what are the assumptions (about society, politics, economy, environment) which underlie this approach and do they hold elsewhere?²⁷

Decentralising and democratising the planning process (and government more generally) have been seen as measures which could allow poorer urban dwellers to influence planning to be more pro-poor, particularly where they are linked to broader processes of democracy and citizenship. Frequently, this fails to happen due to a number of factors: elite capture of processes; failure to translate the outcomes of communicative processes into policies, plans and actions; and weak and divided civil societies. Participatory budgeting (which influences planning, but is a much wider process) appears to address many of the limitations of

conventional public participation exercises and as an idea has spread rapidly in Latin America and even in parts of the global North. At the level of principle, the scale and nature of citizen involvement and linking this to resources is a significant advance on previous practices, and in many parts of the global South it would represent an unprecedented innovation. However, many attempts to follow the first Porto Alegre success have served to show that it was dependent on a relatively unique set of institutional and political circumstances, which are not easily replicated.

A further process-related set of innovations in planning has attempted to make it more developmental, integrated (with other line function departments), and strategic. Strategic spatial planning has strong Northern origins, but is influencing Southern planning practices as well; Integrated Development Planning (containing spatial development frameworks) has been in place in South Africa for some 10 years; and the UN-Habitat Urban Management Programme attempted to shift Southern local governments towards more sustainable, developmental and implementation-oriented plans. In principle, these represent positive shifts away from control-oriented and comprehensive master planning, and would potentially allow planning to become more responsive to rapidly growing and poor urban conditions, and to address issues of environment. However, all have left the regulatory and land use management aspect of planning untouched, and it is this aspect of planning which impacts on socio-spatial marginalisation and exclusion. It is these laws and requirements which raise the cost of urban land development and impose particular lifestyle and income requirements which the poor cannot meet. They also usually represent not only restrictions but also rights to the use of land in particular ways, and changing them is likely to be resisted by those who have a vested interest in occupying or developing areas planned in this way.

The idea of the ZEIS in Brazilian cities has been one of the few innovations which have attempted to intervene in both urban land markets and the regulatory aspects of planning to facilitate informal upgrade. In principle, states which are prepared to intervene strongly in urban areas in order to implement pro-poor policies and sustainable development are to be welcomed; all too often, however, they intervene for less supportable reasons. Both pro-poor urban plans and climate change actions will require strong and decisive state intervention (with other partners) to make a difference, given the nature and scale of urban crises.

Ideas on how to shift regulatory, land use management and tenure systems to become more flexible, more

²⁷ Watson (2002) asks these questions in relation to the use of certain normative planning theories in Africa.

‘minimalist’, more directly linked to performance aspects rather than land use aspects (which in turn is more closely aligned with a relational concept of space), and which incorporate positive aspects of ‘everyday’ forms of land use, are crucial if planning is going to play a role in relation to rapid growth and poverty. It will be equally important to find ways in which the land use management system can be used to support climate change measures, bearing in mind that these actions are *less* likely to be flexible and minimalist. Rather than a blanket approach to land use management, these systems need to be able to combine flexibility and inclusion, where it is needed, and at the same time retain the ability to take firm and long-term action in relation to environmental concerns.

The trend towards CICs and CIDs, especially in the USA, seems unlikely to address the problems of Southern cities, other than that it might allow wealthier groups to remove themselves from the poor service levels and administration common in these urban areas. The principle of value capture, however, which has been implemented in both Northern and Southern cities, seems to have good potential to allow city governments²⁸ to benefit from private sector-driven urban projects. There is an assumption that funds from this source can be equitably and transparently raised and redistributed by local governments, and some kind of partnership oversight would need to be in place to ensure that this occurs.

Finally, those approaches which have focused on developing new urban forms (compact city ideas with infrastructure-led spatial plans, and new urbanism) yield important spatial principles, which address issues of environment and climate change, and provide alternatives to urban modernist spatial and urban forms. These in turn could produce urban environments more favourable for the poor. Their implementation is, however, based on certain assumptions relating to the institutional and socio-spatial context within which they might occur. Firstly, they assume strong and well-capacitated systems of local government and planning. One highly successful implementation of the ‘sustainable city’ idea in the global South (Curitiba, Brazil) has shown the importance of strong local leadership and a commitment to planning (Irazábal, 2005). Secondly, they assume the availability of resources to implement large-scale urban infrastructure projects: in many poorer cities the lack of resources has forced a reliance on private-sector investment (sometimes in the form of

partnerships) which can skew these projects towards servicing of the wealthier parts of cities. Thirdly, compact city ideas and growth boundaries assume the ability to clearly define an urban edge to hold this boundary: this is difficult in cases where there is an extended informal urban periphery (Bebbington & Bebbington, 2001). These spatial ideas hold considerable potential, at the level of principle, for addressing issues of rapid urbanisation, poverty and environmental sustainability. However, their application and implementation in Southern cities requires further work.

6.4. Conclusion

The new ‘hope’ referred to in the Introduction to this paper, that urban planning can be a central tool to address urban issues in the global South, holds both potentials and dangers. On the one hand, the renewed attention to urban planning could give impetus to a necessary review and reform of these systems and to a search for new planning ideas; on the other hand, there could be a misplaced faith in planning to address issues the root causes of which lie in broader institutional, political, socio-economic and environmental forces. The danger here is that in the near future, if little or no progress has been made on addressing urban issues, planning will again be sidelined in favour of some new perspective on urban development: perhaps some revived form of neoliberalism. It is therefore important not to lose sight of the fact that good and effective planning can only really occur in a context where there exist: a political system where the poor can make their voice heard; a city government with some capacity to deliver; and an appropriate regulatory framework (Devas, 2001). Capacity to deliver is also dependent on a reasonably functioning economy and a sufficient flow of resources to implementing bodies. In the absence of these, the effectiveness of any urban management approaches will be diminished.

This paper has reviewed some of the main innovations in urban planning in both the global North and South, to assess the extent to which new ideas are emerging which address the issues of rapid urban growth, poverty and environmental sustainability, and to consider the extent to which these ideas might have relevance beyond the regions from which they have emerged. It has concluded that a range of innovations has emerged, which could certainly shift traditional master planning and urban modernist forms (still the dominant approach in many parts of the global South) in the direction of addressing the main issues of 21st century Southern cities. However, the implementation

²⁸ In countries where urban land values are market driven.

of these ideas is often highly dependent on the particular contexts from which they have arisen, and careful thought would need to be given to how the useful principles in these ideas could find expression in very different contexts. The review of the international spread of planning ideas here has shown that simplistic transference of planning models (often facilitated by the particular theoretical concept of space which underlies them) can have highly negative impacts where they are based on assumptions about context which do not hold everywhere.

A further important insight from past attempts to introduce new planning ideas is that it may well be possible to shift institutions towards adopting new decision-making processes (city development strategies, strategic planning processes, etc.), but these are often introduced as a parallel system to existing and entrenched processes, thus opening up various routes for decisions which can be used opportunistically. These new processes also usually leave untouched the regulatory system governing access to, and use of, land (this is often the most difficult aspect to change), thus making the implementation of new planning ideas ‘on the ground’ very difficult. Alignment between the directive aspects of planning and the regulatory aspects is essential. Moreover, the adoption of these new processes often depends on support from particular urban coalitions, and once these shift or are replaced then the processes themselves and the plans associated with them can disappear as well (as in some of the strategic planning processes in Latin America).

The review of newer planning approaches has also indicated that there are no well developed answers to the question of whether urban planning can become pro-poor and support rapid urban growth and environmental sustainability. The point has been made that thinking about the connection between urban planning and climate change has only just begun (although there is a longer and useful track record in the global North of ideas on more sustainable urban forms). The question of how urban planning can address informality (both jobs and shelter) is also poorly developed (leaving aside the important point that planning systems in some parts of the world are well adapted to using informal processes themselves and selectively responding to urban informality in opportunistic ways). Given that Southern cities have significant components of informality, the issue of how to develop new urban planning processes and laws which bridge the gap between the different ‘rationalities’ of formal and informal systems in cities, is an important one. Research on tenure systems in Africa is pointing in the right direction here, but

requires considerable development in relation to other aspects of planning. In particular, the growth area of peri-urbanism requires new ideas, not only on the issues of land and planning, but on the full range of service and infrastructure delivery.

Finally, the role of urban planning with regard to the formal economy is an important counterpart to the issues of both environment and informality. Unless the planning system can be seen to be providing an efficient and useful service for the private sector (directing infrastructure to where it is needed, delivering commercial land speedily), it will always be subjected to attempts to bypass, subvert or corrupt it. The other side of this coin, however, is that the planning system must be firm enough to deal with the externalities of private development (a current problem for many East Asian cities) and to extract public financial gain (betterment, value capture, exaction, development taxes) where it is due. More of a challenge will be shifting towns and cities away from urban goals and visions that have to do with aesthetics, global positioning, and ambitions of local elites to replicate American or European lifestyles, to the far more demanding objectives of achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable cities.

Acknowledgement

The paper is drawn from original work completed by the author under contract with UN-Habitat for the Global Report on Human Settlements 2009.

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