Worlds, Cities and Urbanisation

A short history of an idea: From *The Perspective of the World* to world-cities

Cities, modernities and urbanisation

Tehran’s 5 modernities

Los Angeles’ 5 modernities
Cities, modernities and urbanisation

- Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’ and Jane Jacobs’ ‘organised complexity’
- Origins; agglomeration vs. networks?
- Cityness: intercity and intracity relations; social organisation and demand-led growth
- Peter Taylor’s world-city: ‘world’ and ‘city’ in mutually constitutive relations – there are no cities without a world and no world without cities
- Creative city: Peter Taylor’s world-cities – meet Jonathan Israel’s ‘nation-cities’ – meet another intra-urban network level
- Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ again: multiple modernities: Dutch; British; American deliver different (walled; industrial; post-industrial) cities
- The city of historically produced (Dutch; British; American) material forms
- The city today: historically produced contemporary overlapping material-cultures. The city of the neighbourhood; of the ‘industrial’ city of neighbourhoods; of the ‘post-industrial’ polycentric metropole
- Jacob’s ‘creative city’ of overlapping technological spaces and material cultures
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

“Extraordinary cities: Early ‘city-ness’ and the origins of Agriculture and States” (Taylor, 2012)

“Putting cities first”

Jane Jacobs (1969)

Cities are network effects
Early Civilizations

The earliest Civilizations:
(all dates B.C.)
- Sumer: 3200 - 2360
- Egypt: 2850 - 715
- Minoan: 2600 - 1425
- Mesopotamia: 2500 - 1700
- Indus: 2500 - 1800
- Shang: 1525 - 1028
Urban development: rural > urban world

• Urban growth: increase in urban population (migration)

• Urbanisation: change from deconcentrated to concentrated patterns of settlement

• Urbanism: urban culture – a ‘way of life’
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

“Extraordinary cities: Early ‘city-ness’ and the origins of Agriculture and States” (Taylor, 2012)

Agglomeration:
Cities concentrate stuff:
• people
• skills and energy
• knowledge
• wealth
• exponentially increasing numbers of proximate relations between people (a ‘communication theory’ of the growth of social and urban complexity)

Aggromeration within a ‘container’
Cities with walls
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

City-ness’:
the process that generates and sustains cities

Combines intra- and inter-city relations.
• Inter-city relations: networks
• Intra-city relations – the ‘agglomeration’ of proximate relations generating “completely new social worlds of human experience”
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

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Ian Hodder’s excavation of Çatalhöyük:
Increasing internal complexity through economies of new work
• from “domestic modes of production’ (Sahlins, 2004) (households)
• Increasing social organisation (divisions of labour and spaces of exchanges of skills and materials).
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

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Combines intra- and inter-city relations.
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Inter-city relations:
• cities originate in trading networks
• economic specialisation
• unprecedented population sizes
• ‘demand-led’,
• explosive economic expansion
• creation of new work in new urban centres.
Creativity:
Early cities created spiralling demands and the innovative potentials to start fulfilling these.

Taylor characterises these potentials as a "combination of cluster/agglomeration processes within cities and network/connectivity processes between cities".

These processes “create unprecedented communication potentials that make cities the crucibles of new ideas, innovations and inventions”.

Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

Creativity:
However, the notion of ‘communication’ is pitched here at the local:
- relies on bounded territorial clustering
- Taylor has reduced cities themselves to ‘containers’ of ‘agglomeration’.

The active dimension of cities is
- a highly localised attribute of proximate relations,
- glossed as ‘clustering’,
- separated from network conditions as an attribute of ‘immaterial’ knowledge or creativity.
Peter Taylor’s ‘extraordinary cities’

Creativity:
‘Agglomeration’ is way too crude an idea.

Calls for a model better capable of specifying the spatial aspect of 'organised complexity'.

Rather than cities being local bounded repositories of knowledge, skills and social relations, they should themselves be seen as organisations for effecting exchanges across different domains of networked knowledge and practice.

What cities do is organise people and societies in the nexus of local and trans-local exchanges, rather than simply gathering them in dense little clusters.
Articulating ‘modernities’ is a succession of ‘world-city networks’

In the network, ‘world’ and ‘city’ stand in mutually constitutive relations with one another.
Peter Taylor’s ‘world-cities’

Articulating ‘modernities’ is a succession of ‘world-city networks’

In the network, ‘world’ and ‘city’ stand in mutually constitutive relations with one another.

Networks internalise and relate:
• ‘worlds’
• ‘cities’
• (and other things)

There are no cities without a world and no world without cities
Dutch modernity
Peter Taylor’s ‘world-cities’

meets Jonathan Israel’s ‘nation-cities’

Creative city:
- not a “combination of agglomeration processes within cities and network processes between cities” …
- … but, an intersection of world and nation ‘levels’ of network processes in world and nation networks of cities …

… that ‘create unprecedented communication potentials that make cosmopolitan cities the crucibles of new ideas, innovations and inventions’

across this intersection flows money, people, knowledge, technologies etc.
Peter Taylor’s ‘world-cities’

meets Jonathan Israel’s ‘nation-cities’

meets another intra-urban network level

Creative city:
• not a “combination of agglomeration processes within cities and network processes between cities” …
• … but, an intersection of world and nation and city ‘levels’ of network processes between different networks of cities …

… that ‘create unprecedented communication potentials that make cosmopolitan cities the crucibles of new ideas, innovations and inventions’
Peter Taylor’s ‘world-cities’

meets Jonathan Israel’s ‘nation-cities’

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Creative city:
‘Complexity’ of the intersection – achieved through the ‘simplicity’ of the levels.
Peter Taylor’s ‘world-cities’

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meets another intra-urban network level

Levels:
• technology: spatial (network ‘grids’)
• infrastructure: ‘those systems without which contemporary societies cannot function’

“To live within the multiple, interlocking infrastructures of modern societies is to know one’s place in gigantic systems that both enable and constrain us” (Edwards 2003)
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Levels:
- technology: spatial (network ‘grids’)
- infrastructure: ‘those systems without which contemporary societies cannot function’
- material-cultural ‘worlds’

“To live within the multiple, interlocking infrastructures of modern societies is to know one’s place in gigantic systems that both enable and constrain us” (Edwards 2003)
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ again

Spatialising and temporalising modernity – the spaces and times of three prime modernities

Multiple modernities

Discrete cases, distinct ‘modern worlds’

3 prime modernities:

• 17-18th Century Dutch-mercantile modernity,
• 18-19th Century British-industrial modernity
• 20th Century USA- consumer modernity.
After the Dutch modernity …

… another ‘British’ modernity
After the Dutch modernity ...

... another ‘British’ modernity
After the Dutch modernity ...

... another ‘British’ modernity
After the Dutch modernity …

… and then another ‘American’ modernity

Highway infrastructures 1930
After the Dutch modernity …

… and then another ‘American’ modernity.
After the Dutch modernity …

… and then another ‘American’ modernity

Highway infrastructures 1985
After the Dutch modernity …

… and then another ‘American’ modernity
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ as ‘spatial fix’

A first-modernity intra-urban grid (spatial fix of the pre-industrial city – a pedestrian grid of streets and blocks)
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ as ‘spatial fix’

A first-modernity intra-urban grid (spatial fix of the pre-industrial city – a pedestrian grid of streets and blocks)

meets a new network grid (spatial fix of the industrial city – a public-transport grid of main streets)
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ as ‘spatial fix’

A first-modernity intra-urban grid (spatial fix of the pre-industrial city – a pedestrian grid of streets and blocks)

meets a new network grid (spatial fix of the industrial city – a public-transport grid of main streets)

meets a new network grid (spatial fix of the post-industrial city – a motorcar grid of highways)
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ as ‘movement culture’

The historical production of pedestrian, public transport and motorcar ‘modality environments’ …

… linked to the persistence of local centrality?
Peter Taylor’s ‘modernities’ as ‘movement culture’

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… linked to the persistence of local centrality?

Contemporary urban space: an historical production of ‘modality environments’

• a contemporary (historically produced) pedestrian culture
• meets a contemporary (historically produced) urban (public transportation) culture
• meets a contemporary (historically produced) metropolitan (motor car) culture
Jacobs’ creative city?

From an ‘agglomeration’ of proximate relations to Multivalency (the meeting of multiple ‘worlds’)

A multiplicity of infrastructures supporting modern economies, cultures and societies.

These infrastructures do not simply exist in a pre-existing ‘container’ or absolute space.

They are themselves spaces, incorporated in ‘systems’ of geographical ‘levels’.

proximate relations = creativity
Jacobs’ creative city?

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