CITY IDENTITY

Drawn from Intrinsic, Inherited and Imported Characteristics

William Solesbury

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

Readers of my two previous books[1] will know of my addiction to cities. I've travelled enthusiastically to cities all over the world: in some I have spent time living and working; to others I have gone briefly on business; most I have visited for a week or more out of interest and for pleasure. My many past city stays and visits run alphabetically from Addis Ababa to Zurich—the footnote lists them all.[*] The photos in the book come from my travels. I am drawn to the popular sights, but mostly I just enjoy observing city life: walking the streets, noting building uses and styles, riding the tram or bus or metro, shopping, eating and drinking in cafes, bars and restaurants, and, above all, noting how the locals go about their daily lives. I suppose that this makes me—to use that rather hackneyed term—a *flaneur*.

But I have another inspiration. This is Italo Calvino's wonderful book *Invisible Cities* in which Marco Polo recounts to Kublai Khan brief descriptions of 55 cities that he claims to have visited in his travels. The book starts:

> "Kublai Khan does not necessarily believe everything Marco Polo says when he describes the cities visited on his expeditions, but the emperor of the Tartars does continue listening to the young Venetian with greater attention and curiosity than he shows any other messenger or explorer of his."[2]

The cities are fictional, indeed mostly fantastical—all later revealed to be derivatives of Venice, Polo's home town. His 55 cities are categorised as

[*] Addis Ababa, Amsterdam, Athens, Bangkok, Beijing, Belgrade, Berlin, Brisbane, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Cape Town, Chicago, Cuzco, Delhi, Guangdong, Hamburg, Hanoi, Havana, Helsinki, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Kolkata, Lima, Lisbon, Los Angeles, Lyon, Macau, Madrid, Marrakesh, Melbourne, Memphis, Mexico City, Moscow, Mumbai, Naples, Nashville, New York, Oakland, Ottawa, Palermo, Paris, Phnom Penh, Prague, Ramallah, Riga, Rome, Saigon / Ho Chi Minh City, Samarkand, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Seattle, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Singapore, Stockholm, St Petersburg, Sydney, Tashkent, Tel Aviv, Thessaloniki, Tokyo, Trieste, Vancouver, Warsaw, Washington, Zurich.

Cities and Memory, Cities and Desire, Cities and Signs, and so on. But in each case, Calvino expresses the essence of the city. It was this book that aroused my interest in the unique identity of cities. And on my own visits to real cities I try to capture their identity in my mind.

This book explores the nature of modern city identities and how they are shaped—that of Addis Ababa, for starters.

CHAPTER ONE

A DAY IN ADDIS ABABA

In late 2018 I decided to visit Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, for the first time. My prior knowledge of Addis (the locals' abbreviated name) and of Ethiopia was scrappy. I had a recollection of reading about Prester John, a mythical King of Ethiopia, as a schoolboy. Also Evelyn Waugh's comic novel *Scoop* about a hapless newspaper reporter sent to cover political events there in the 1930s. Then, the Ark of the Covenant story from the 1981 Spielberg movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. I had read and enjoyed Ryszard Kapuscinski's book *The* Emperor,[1] an account of the feudal and foolish court of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie before his deposition in the 1970s. And, of course, the Ethiopian famine of 1983–1985 and the Live Aid concert. But I had little sense of the identity of Addis itself.

I joined a two-week group tour in northern Ethiopia where the main early-Christian and royal sights are located—extraordinary palaces, churches atop mountains, churches carved below ground, funereal monuments. The tour concluded with a tough three-day cross-country hike, accompanied by bearers and donkeys, passing through villages and with two overnight stays in cold, remote huts—I didn't take my clothes off once! We returned to Addis at the end and I stayed on by myself for a few days.

On my travels I regularly keep a diary. Here is my edited entry for a day spent in Addis.

28 November 2018

While waiting for the morning tram near my hotel, a young man accosts me in perfect English. He asks 'Where are you from?'
'England'
'Ah, The home of football! What team do you support?'
In truth I don't have a favourite team. But I live in London near the Chelsea ground so I say 'Chelsea.'
'Up the Blues!' he declares, the Chelsea fans' slogan, as the tram arrives.

The Addis Light Rail tram is something new in the city, inaugurated in 2015. It has two lines running east–west and north–south, crossing near

Meskel Square. They are frequent, speedy and cheap, very basic in design, and always crowded. A Chinese company built and financed the network—nobody seems to know quite on what terms.

Now in Meskel Square I go to visit the Addis Ababa Museum, which, rather scruffily, records the history of the city through old photos, documents and artefacts. Next door is the more modern Red Terror Martyrs' Memorial Museum, which presents Ethiopia's dark decade of communist rule in the 1970s and 1980s. Emperor Haile Selassie was dethroned in 1974, and later executed, by a group of army and police officers known as the Derg (meaning literally 'Committee'). Ethiopia became a 'People's Democratic Republic', pursuing communist economic and social policies—in reality a vicious dictatorship, akin to the rule of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia also in the 1970s. This regime was overthrown in 1991—when communist regimes elsewhere in the world were also collapsing—by a liberation movement that has ruled Ethiopia since. The museum's displays are chilling.

After an hour in the museum, back in Meskel Square there are now hundreds of people, mostly young and wearing jeans and white T-shirts, streaming towards the nearby stadium. On their T-shirts is an image of clutched hands, the words 'Ethiopia & Eritrea', and the slogan 'One Love'. What they seem to be celebrating is a peace deal, recently concluded by the young, new Prime Minister, Ably Ahmed, between Ethiopia and neighbouring Eritrea, which had been in an intermittent border war for two decades. [Ahmed subsequently received the 2019 Nobel Peace Prize.] *I later learn that "One Love", shown on the T-shirts, is the title of a Bob Marley song. Its opening lines are:*

'One love, one heart,
Let's get together and feel alright.'

Bob Marley, the Jamaican-born singer who lived from 1945–1981, was a pan-Africanist and Rastafarian, much celebrated in Ethiopia. Rastafarians believe that Emperor Haile Selassie, crowned in 1930 and known as the Lion of Judah, was a living God and that Ethiopia is their homeland. The Emperor encouraged them to emigrate, but there were not many takers.

I set off walking up Churchill Avenue, one of the city's main boulevards. A man steps alongside me, trying to persuade me to visit an Ethiopian Jazz concert that he claims to be arranging that evening. I shake him off. Along the avenue, in what is now central Addis, there is a mix of old and new, low- and high-rise buildings for government, commerce and some upmarket hotels. There seems to be a building boom here. One oddity is the prevalence

of eucalyptus wood, rather than steel, scaffolding rising up to quite great heights. Along the road, the pavements are unkempt, and the traffic is thick with many cars and lorries, commonly Toyotas. Also taxis and minibuses. No tuk-tuks, though they are popular elsewhere in Ethiopia—maybe banned in the city? A security guard for a ministry building chases me away from taking a photo.

At the top I turn left in search of the Tomoca Coffee House, strongly recommended in my guide book. It's small, just a room really with high counters but no seats, clearly geared for a quick turnover. It's busy with smart-looking young people—students and office workers, at a guess. Coffee is being roasted on the premises and the aroma is wonderful. Addis is full of coffee and pastry shops, all independent; no Starbucks or Costas here. The local style of coffee to drink is black, thick and strong, well-sugared, to my mind quite like Turkish coffee. But all modern coffee styles are available and I get my favourite flat white.

Piazza, at the top of Churchill Avenue, was once the city's smartest shopping district but now seems rather rundown. Its name and its townscape are Italianate. It's now essentially Addis's 'old town'. A few buildings have recently been restored as hotels and restaurants. The Italian colonialist regime, which ruled Ethiopia briefly from 1935–1941, removed an old street market from here to create a 'European' shopping district. A new market district, now called Mercato, was established a little way to the west. Often claimed to be the largest market in Africa, it extends over more than a square kilometre. Today little of it is open air, rather a jumble of shacks housing several thousand small businesses, offering every conceivable product, local and imported, or service. I look for a suitable souvenir of my visit to Addis, without success. Anyway, it's time for lunch, my opportunity to try the local dish called injera. It's a large, sour-tasting flat pancake made from the fermented tef grain that is unique to Ethiopia, topped with spicy meat or vegetable stew portions; you eat it with your hands. Today is a church-deemed fasting day so I only get vegetables. To be honest, I don't much care for the dish. though it was cheap: 100 Ethiopian birr, about 3.5 US dollars.

I devote the afternoon to the more conventional cultural sights north of Piazza. There is St George's cathedral of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church: St George is the patron saint of Ethiopia—as of Portugal, Georgia, England and other countries—and the story of his slaying the dragon and rescuing the maiden is as well known to Ethiopian children as it is to English children. I also see the National Museum of Ethiopia with the famous 3.5 million-year-old ancient skeleton whose discovery in 1974 by archaeologists proved that homo sapiens walked the earth 2.5 million years earlier than

formerly believed. It is popularly known as 'Lucy' because, it is claimed, its discoverers were listening to The Beatles' "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" at the time. Here also are: the Institute of Ethiopian Studies in a former palace of Emperor Haile Selassie; the Trinity Cathedral where Selassie and his wife Menen were ceremonially reinterred in 2000; and Africa Hall which accommodates the United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa.

Time now to think of supper. To get back to the hotel the choice is between a minibus or a taxi. The minibuses run on a network of fixed routes every few minutes and stop anywhere on request but, especially at peak times, getting on and off involves much pushing and shoving. A taxi seems simpler and, by international standards, cheap. The blue taxis are unmetered, usually owned by the driver, and the fare must be negotiated. Yellow taxis, usually owned by companies, are metered and, with regulated charges, usually cheaper. I bag a yellow taxi, but the driver claims that the meter is broken, so I must agree the fare.

Round about my hotel, in the south-west Bole Road area which lies on the way out to the airport, new restaurants, bars and clubs have sprung up. Italian cuisine seems the best option. The hotel receptionist recommends a local bar where I have an excellent tuna pizza and a local beer. The bar is crowded, mostly with young men, many of them engrossed by the TV. I look closely at what is showing: it's Love Island*, a British reality TV series in which good-looking, scantily dressed young men and women are taken to a sunny Mediterranean resort, accommodated together in a large villa, and expected to make out as couples. Though voting to select a winning couple was not an option for the audience here, they were vociferous in their preferences.*

I leave for London tonight. The newish Bole International Airport is very close in to the city. The flight is at 1.50am. A hotel car gets me to the airport for check-in at midnight. I've never before been at an airport at that time. But here it seems quite normal—its shops, bars and cafes all busy for night-time arrivals and departures. The usual routines of ticket desk, bag drop, security check and passport inspection follow. The terminal mainly accommodates Ethiopian Airlines, which has connections through Africa and beyond to 75 other cities as well as internally in Ethiopia. But the airport is quite under-capacity for its traffic of 10 million passenger annually. An expansion is under construction.

An overnight, relatively sleepless flight to London. I catch up on movies I've missed while away. Goodbye to Addis.

So, what can we make of Addis Ababa as a city of the modern world? The 2019 Bradt guidebook to Ethiopia observes:

> "Addis Ababa possesses a genuine sense of place lacking in those many other African capitals that were designed to be misplaced pockets of Western urbanity in otherwise underdeveloped nations. Indeed, perhaps the highest praise one can direct at chaotic, contradictory and compelling Addis Ababa is this: it *does* feel exactly as the Ethiopian capital *should* feel–emphatically and unmistakably a modern 21st century city, but also singularly and unequivocally Ethiopian."[2]

This seems to me to be a pointer. The identity of Addis is to be understood in terms of its economy, its politics past and present, its demography, its cityscape, its culture, how life is lived there here and now, and its connections to the rest of Ethiopia, Africa and the wider world. Is it the mix of such characteristics that shapes a city's identity?

CHAPTER TWO

THE IDENTITY OF CITIES

In recent decades city tourism has boomed. It now attracts a major share of the 1.4 billion people in the world who the World Travel Organisation estimated were tourists in 2018. These tourists come mainly from the wealthier countries of the global North, but increasingly tourists from Japan, Russia, China, South Korea, India and the Middle East have joined the annual flows. Greater disposable wealth is the main driver of the growth of tourism, but more leisure time is a factor too. That foreign places feature so much in the media—in films and on TV, on the internet, in newspapers and magazines—has also raised awareness of them as somewhere to visit. And businesses for the transport, accommodation and entertainment of tourists have emerged, both in the home countries of tourists themselves and in their destinations. Tourism has ceased to be an elite activity.

It is in this context that cities have become attractive tourist destinations. Air travel has brought the farthest-flung city within 36 hours of home, which is attractive for a two-week vacation. And those cities nearer home can offer a weekend visit. Tourists are not just visiting cities like Venice or St Petersburg or New Orleans, renowned for their historic, essentially Western, authenticity, for, perhaps surprisingly, the city in the world most visited today by international travellers is Bangkok; it is followed in the top ten by Paris, London, Dubai, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, New York, Istanbul, Tokyo and Antalya. All had more than 10 million overnight visitor stays in 2019. And the next 10 most visited cities hold even more surprises: Seoul, Osaka, Mecca, Phuket, Pattaya, Milan, Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Bali and Hong Kong.[1] Some of these are actually major resorts in tourist regions, like Antalya on the Turkish Mediterranean coast, Phuket and Pattaya among Thailand's beaches and islands, Bali in Indonesia, and Palma de Mallorca in Spain's Balearic Isles. Mecca is the world's major destination for Muslim pilgrims. But most of the top 20 are large, multipurpose, modern cities.

What makes these and other cities so attractive to the modern tourist? In *The Book of Cities*, Philip Dodd and Ben Donald provide pen portraits with photographs of "250 important and intriguing cities, a celebration of their diversity, energies and culture."[2] Here are extracts from what they have to

say about some of the cities in the above tourist Top 20: Paris, Dubai, Kuala Lumpur, New York and Tokyo.

> "The great beauty of Paris is that it remains so fantastically and uncompromisingly Parisian. Shrugging its shoulders with a disdainful moue and an alert 'bof!', the city has accepted but essentially ignored the arrival of other cultures. When the first McDonald's opened, the names of the burgers had to be changed (remember John Travolta's "Royale with cheese" rap in *Pulp Fiction*); even the most global of brands has to toe the Parisian line. Paris is enduringly homogenous. Baron Haussmann's 19th-century street plan—the imprint for so many subsequent city designs—held together by the arrow-straight Champs-Elysées, is essentially intact, despite the best efforts of revolutionaries, occupiers, liberators and the évènements of 1968…The city's centre (the agglomération beyond the périphérique is as infinite a sprawl as in most cities) is compact and wonderfully walkable…Best of all, that walk should be à deux. It didn't really need Cole Porter to tell us that Paris is for lovers, or Robert Doisneau to capture that kiss on camera. Paris has been romancing for centuries…."[3]

> "Few cities have devoted themselves to promoting the restorative powers of retail and leisure therapy with such gusto as Dubai. Just in case anyone had missed the point, the city even hosts a Shoppers' Festival every winter. The 'shop till you drop' mentality which the city purveys is deliberate, a hard-headed business decision to build up an alternative stream of revenue for the emirate once the oil reserves run out—in 10, 15, maybe 20 years. Dubai has always been a merchant port: a century ago it was trading in precious metals, pearls and spices to supplement the income from fishing. The ruling Al Maktoum family have simply taken all that to an extravagant new dimension. To draw in the visitors, Dubai is hardly lacking in other natural resources. At the eastern end of the Gulf, on its southern shore, the city sits next to warm turquoise waters; its beaches are safe, clean and sandy. Add to that mix the lure of high-class golf and tennis tournaments, a horse race that is synonymous with wealth (the Dubai World Cup), fishing charters, sandboarding, water skiing and 4x4 desert excursions, and the tourist-friendly appeal of the city becomes self-evident. And of all its futuristic hotels, the 1000 feet (305 metre) sci-fi sail of the Burj Al-Arab, soaring up on its own islet, is a startling vision of opulence and post-modernism—it brands itself the world's first seven-star hotel."[4]

> "The city's name is, frankly, uninspiring. Kuala Lumpur is a Malay phrase for 'muddy confluence', hardly a glowing description. At the meeting of two sludgy rivers…there was little to get excited about in the early days when a handful of shacks made up the mining community created in the 1850s by Chinese tin prospectors. Yet, despite these unpromising origins, Kuala Lumpur has grown up full of confidence, and ready to take on all comers. Witness the Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur's instant icon, two slender,

tapering steeples, linked by a skyway halfway up…which, at their topping off in 1968, snatched, with a certain amount of impudence, the 'tallest building in the world' title from Chicago's Sears Tower…Likewise, the city underwrote the Malaysian Grand Prix…it hosted the 1998 Commonwealth Games. And its abbreviation, KL, grants it membership of that select club of cities who need only a few initials for recognition—LA, BA, NYC, DC—high company indeed… Together with an ethnic mix of Malay, Chinese and Indian, Kuala Lumpur's blend of old and new is the glue that holds the city together, like the coconut milk which coagulates the sticky rice, *nasi lemak*—along with satay sauce, the staple of every KL street stall."[5]

"And New York does not disappoint: New York delivers. It also polarises opinion quite swiftly. Although the first sight of New York City may figure high on the recognition scale, the first 24 hours of exposure can leave you totally exhilarated or bruised, bothered and bewildered. The brusqueness and energy of native New Yorkers is no front; their honesty can be brutal, but is more often than not refreshing. Following the World Trade Center attacks of 11 September 2001, the raw strength of New York and its determination to rise above the tragedy swamped the city in a wave of sympathy that it had never experienced before, and may never again enjoy. With its skyline forever altered—a skyline that was the most famous in the world—its psyche may also have changed for good. But New York is not just Manhattan. The other boroughs—Brooklyn with its brownstones, Queen's (once the centre of the film industry until Hollywood won out), Staten Island and the much maligned Bronx—are part of the incredible variety of New York."[6]

"And so, just as first-timers in New York City find themselves in what seem like remarkably familiar surroundings, much of Tokyo (the heavily photographed Ginza Yon-Chome pedestrian crossing, for example) taps into a similarly deep-rooted pre-memory. But although the neon, the sardine-like metro trains and the shoebox houses crammed cheek by jowl are all expected, the cleanliness of Tokyo's streets is a shock, and a realisation that, at one level, there is an obedience to rules and regulations and civic duty that underpinned Japan's economic miracle. For the city's dodgy underbelly, you have to peek into the loner's bars and hostess clubs, past the *yakusa* 'security consultants.' Tokyo has no obvious centre. Each area has a strong personality, and rather than being some quaint quarter is usually city-sized in its own right. So Ginza is shopping heaven, West Shinjuku the corporate headquarters, East Shinjuku where the workers of West Shinjuku look for fun at night. In Shibuya the teenagers follow the latest fads and fashions of the latest idol, or *idoru*. Their older brothers and sisters head to the all-night music clubs of Roppongi."[7]

As a visitor to these cities you will recognise these accounts. Very successfully—as evident in these extracts and indeed in all their book's 250 pen portraits—Dodd and Donald capture each city's *genius loci*. This

concept of *genius loci* has a long history. In its Latin origin it referred to the religious, protective spirit of a place. Later, it expressed the context that new landscape designs should respect: "consult the genius of the place in all" advised 18th-century Alexander Pope. And that applied to architecture too. Today, according to my OED, shorn of its spirituality it expresses the "prevailing character or atmosphere of a place." That is, in modern terms, its identity.

It is this identity that attracts the tourists to a city, not just to visit galleries and museums, to drink in cool bars or dine in exotic restaurants, but to experience something of what it is like to live in that city, even its inconveniences as much as its charms. It is the city's identity that the city's tourism agency—and most cities now have one—and the local travel businesses energetically feature in their promotions to lure the visitors. They use it—in a modern term— to brand their city, using words, images, metaphors and stories. This identity is the product of a unique mixture of a city's characteristics: drawn from one or more of history and geography, its economy, social structures and processes, public behaviour, cuisine, dress, politics and governance, artistic images and accounts, demography, buildings and transport, culture and consumption. And among these characteristics there will be both fact and fiction, what is familiar or strange, either comforting or challenging.

Above all it is the interweaving of these characteristics that creates identity. Back in 2004 the geographer Doreen Massey observed that:

> "There is a widespread argument these days that [personal] identities are 'relational'. That, for instance, we do not have our beings and then go out and interact, but that to a disputed but nonetheless significant extent our beings, our identities are constituted in and through those engagements, those practices of interaction. Identities are forged in and through relations (which includes non-relations, absences and hiatuses). In consequence they are not rooted or static, but mutable ongoing productions."[8]

She continued:

> "This is an argument which has had its precise parallel in the reconceptualisation of spatial identities. An understanding of the locational nature of space has been accompanied by arguments about the relational construction of the identity of place. If space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations, if we make space through interactions at all levels, from the (so-called) local to the (so-called) global then those spatial identities such as places, regions, nations, and the local and global, must be forged in this relational way too, as internally complex, essentially unboundable in any absolute sense, and inevitably historically changing."[8]

You get her point about relational identity by just imagining the characteristics of a familiar city street somewhere in the world. It will have a carriageway for vehicles, on which cars, vans, lorries, motor bikes, buses, taxis, maybe tuk-tuks and rickshaws will run; bicycles too, unless there is a separate cycle route. At the side, on a raised sidewalk or maybe just on a dusty strip, people will be on foot, some with wheelchairs or pushchairs or trollies. All will be going about their daily lives: getting to work or school, delivering goods, hailing transport, having chance encounters, attending appointments, going into shops, cafes or restaurants, speaking on their mobile phones. Some may be resting, even sleeping, in the street. At work in the street there may be policemen, refuse collectors, goods deliverers or taxi drivers; as well there may be people offering services as hairdressers, clothes and shoe repairers, and fast-food sellers. People in the street will be young and old, male and female. Some will have different styles of dress, speak various languages, look different from each other in terms of skin colour or hair style or with tattoos. Some of the street's buildings and spaces may be young in age, but some will have been constructed years, decades or even centuries ago, with materials and in styles no longer in use. And there may be history too behind some of the activities that present-day people are engaged in, as with using shops and businesses long established in that locality, sometimes proudly advertising their antiquity: 'established since 1895.' The goods they sell may also have been around for some years: like Marmite since 1902, Persil since 1907, 7UP since 1927. The street is not isolated, because buses, maybe metros or trams, and taxis will be running to and from other parts of the city; shops and stalls will be selling imported foods and other goods; TV screens and radios in shops and bars may well be carrying news of events from around the world. There might even be planes overhead, carrying passengers and goods from beyond the city, coming in to land at a nearby airport.

Some of these relational characteristics are clearly rooted in the present-day reality of the street: its layout, its traffic, its residents and businesses, their activities and behaviour. But there are also likely to be historic connections evident here: in the buildings from past eras, in the longevity of some of the businesses, even of some of the goods and services on offer, in the personal histories of locals, especially recent immigrants. And there are connections with places beyond the street: in transport, in clothing fashions, in imported goods for sale, in the fast food on offer, in visitors, in awareness through the media of national and international events. In these ways the street exhibits evidence of the present, of the past and of other places. The characteristics that shape the street's identity are then diverse, relational and embedded in both time and space.

This is true too of a city's identity. From this perspective reconsider Addis Ababa. Today three million people live in Addis, in a city spread across 200 square kilometres. As a capital city it has a diverse economy including trade and commerce; manufacturing; public administration for the national parliament and ministries, and also the city council; health, education and social care; media; and transport and communication, both within the city and connecting it to the wider world. Tourism is expanding in Ethiopia, the airport brings visitors in, the city has hotels and restaurants in a full range of qualities and prices. Here too is the hub of the Ethiopian coffee trade, exporting $1 billion worth of the crop annually, over half the country's national exports. It is claimed that coffee originated here: the popular myth is that a goatherd noticed his flock consuming the red berries of the Arabica plant and becoming hyperactive, so he decided to try them for himself. Addis is also often called the diplomatic capital of Africa, hosting HQs for both the African Union and the United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa. All these sectors offer both manual and mental labour, some work is regular, much irregular. Unemployment is officially stated to be just below 20% but is probably higher in reality. It is a lively city. Young people populate the city-centre streets. Mobile phones are in use everywhere. There is evidently a growing middle class of professionals and managers. People are mostly skinny—remember that lots of the world's marathon runners come from this part of Africa. The city has a rich selection of cafes, restaurants and bars. Literacy is high: over 90% for men, about 80% for women. But much of the population lives in poor quality shack housing, which is subject to official clearance policies that relocate them to new high rises on the city periphery, while sometimes redeveloping their sites for upmarket apartments.

But inheritances from its past are apparent in today's Addis too. It is a relatively modern city, founded in 1887 when Emperor Menelik II relocated his palace and Ethiopia's capital here. Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, established since the 4th century, is a potent influence on city life: 75% of the population are adherents, the rest are mostly Catholics, Protestants or Muslims. Apart from weekly church going, the Church decrees around 200 fasting days a year when eating meat is forbidden. Ethiopia was never colonised in the European countries' 19th-century 'Scramble for Africa'. But the Italians, who ruled neighbouring Eritrea as a colony, had long coveted Ethiopia and seized it in 1935 to form part of their African Empire. Then in 1941, when Mussolini had thrown in his lot with Hitler in World War 2 and thereby become an enemy, the Italians were chased out by a British force and Emperor Haile Selassie was restored to his throne. But Italian influence persists; indeed, some Italian civilians stayed on after 1941.

Today, pizza and pasta are on offer in many restaurants, at all price ranges, and are also commonly eaten at home by Addis families. The city's central district is still called Piazza and the main market Mercato. The later communist period has largely been airbrushed from city history, except for the creation of the Martyrs' Museum and the retention of the Tiglachen Memorial on Churchill Avenue, a column topped by a red star erected in 1984 to commemorate Ethiopian and Cuban soldiers who died in a 1978 war with Somalia—the column paid for by their fellow communist North Koreans. Many Addis streets reference historical names. Apart from Churchill Avenue, there is General Wingate Street (Wingate led the British troops who captured Ethiopia from the Italian colonialists in 1941), Roosevelt Street, Tito Street, Sylvia Pankhurst Street (the former suffragette, she came to Addis at the Emperor's request in 1956 and died here in 1960), Queen Elizabeth II Street, De Gaulle Square and Mickey Leland Street (he was a US anti-hunger activist, who died in a plane crash in Ethiopia in 1989).

Imports from the rest of the world are on show everywhere. Addis males are obsessed with football. You see it played in the street, there is table football in bars and cafes, the local team is in the national league and the national team (not very successful, it seems) is in the All Africa Cup competition. But it's English Premier League football shown live on TV that attracts them most. Signage in English is everywhere. The young speak English confidently: many learn it in primary school and in most secondary schools all subjects are taught in English except Amharic, the national language. The city supports three weekly English language newspapers, titled *Fortune*, *Capital* and *Reporter*. Ethiopian Jazz, known as Ethio-jazz, is a unique fusion of traditional Ethiopian music with jazz, Afro-funk, soul and Latin rhythms; it was developed by Ethiopians in the USA and exported to their native country. Reggae remains popular. And many young men here wear Rastafarian dreadlocks, a style imported from the Caribbean, but smoking marijuana is illegal in Ethiopia. Among Addis people, clothing is more Western than traditional. Many foreign cuisines, as well as Italian, can be found in the city's upmarket restaurants. Coca-Cola, Fanta and Sprite are the most common soft drinks, but the beer, wine and mineral water on offer are local. The major international hotel chains—Radisson, Sheraton and Hilton among them—are here. The Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation's three TV channels are supplemented by multichannel satellite services from abroad. Cars, vans and lorries are mostly imported from Japan. And evidence of Chinese investment is everywhere: in the building that holds the HQ of the African Union, in the new city tram, in the restored rail link to Djibouti on the coast, in new high-rise offices and flats under construction, in new financial businesses, and in the popular brands of mobile phones.

Reportedly, the Chinese are currently the largest immigrant community in Addis, though they remain largely invisible away from their workplaces. Eucalyptus trees, which supply firewood and building materials including scaffolding, were first imported from Australia in the 1890s.

So there is here a conjunction of the present and the past, and of the local and the global. But this is not unique to Addis. It is apparent in the identity of many of today's cities across the world. You can observe this conjunction in cities as seemingly different in identity as Rome and Manila, Los Angeles and Buenos Aires, and Moscow and Kinshasa. Few of these and other cities are to be understood in the present without regard also to inheritances from their past; few are immune from imported influences alongside local practices.

Part Two

Some City Characteristics

The characteristics that create a city's identity can be found in one or more of the activities within it, the look and feel of the place, and the customs of its people. The activities in the city will be evident not only in its economy, the goods and services that it typically produces, and the forms of employment they provide; but also how the city is governed, policed and its public services provided; and what culture—art, performance, writing—is apparent. The look and feel of the city can be found in its buildings, its transport routes and the traffic they carry, its waterways and bridges, its people of differing skin colour and appearance; and also in the smells, whether nice or noxious, and the sounds and tastes of the place. Finally, the customs of its people express how they live their lives: how they feed, dress, travel, entertain themselves and behave in public.

In the following chapters I explore characteristics, in seven elements of today's cities across the world, that can help to define their identity:

Home—concerning address, shelter, homelessness, homeworking, tenure, housing mobility, renewal and removal.

Work—concerning city economies, makers, traders and thinkers, technology, formal and informal sectors, women's work, child labour, rich and poor.

Daily life—concerning food, faith, sport and games, clothing, public behaviour, smartphones, health, and crime.

Politics—concerning city halls, mayors, elections, city powers and finances, city planning, multi-agency and multilevel governance, corruption, civil society, and disorder.

Culture—concerning movies, fiction, music, concert houses and stadia, pop music, soap operas, festivals, flash mobs, and graffiti.

Travel—concerning traffic, street patterns, boulevards and freeways, bridges, pedestrianisation, travel modes, vehicles, cycling, walking, congestion, pollution, and the '15-minute city'.

and Buildings—concerning the vernacular, houses, skyscrapers, markets, stores and malls, factories, transport termini, hotels, infrastructure, cityscapes, and property markets.

Some characteristics may occasionally be unique to individual cities. Commonly, there are characteristics that can be found today in many cities: perhaps building types—like airports or skyscrapers—or graffiti or festivals. Even then, there may be subtle differences from city to city in how the same characteristics appear or function. In all these ways, all cities will have a mix of characteristics that help to define their identity.

CHAPTER THREE

HOME

Address—shelter—homelessness—homeworking—tenure—housing mobility—renewal and removal

For people in cities their home provides them with shelter, a roof over their head. For some it may also be their workplace and an asset that can be traded. But, first and foremost, it can provide an address: a number or name in a street in a defined district of the city. Without an address city life can be restricted, with, most obviously, nowhere for mail to be delivered or for visitors to readily find their way to you; but it is also problematic in seeking employment, registering your children for schooling, or claiming financial benefits or other kinds of assistance. More abstractly, an address is, like your name, also an aspect of your personal identity. With this belief, in Kolkata there is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) whose purpose is to help the residents of shanty districts to acquire addresses, as a necessary step towards getting by in the city.

A home requires walls, a roof, doors and windows. But around the cities of the world, indeed often in one city, they can come in different shapes and sizes. For fortunate households, home means a house or an apartment, in good condition, relatively spacious with many rooms including separate toilet and bathroom, connected to phone and sewerage networks and supplies of power and water, and maybe with its own outdoor space: a balcony, yard or garden. It will be secured by locks or keypads, in some cases protected by door staff in apartment blocks, even by gatehouses controlling entry to rich people's fenced-off communities, and fixed to the front of houses may be boxes denoting burglar alarms or the threat of 'rapid response'.

For the less fortunate, there is slum housing. It takes many forms. In some cities of Latin America and Asia, spacious and elegant homes in inner districts have been abandoned by the rich, then subdivided and squatted by poor households. Two astonishing, though unusual, examples of squatting are the adaptation of old Mameluke tombs in Cairo's City of the Dead necropolis and the occupation for many years of the incomplete 45-storey

Torre de David office building in Caracas. Also, sometimes public housing has been badly maintained and declined into slums. But the most widespread kind of slum is the shanty town of largely self-built huts with minimal services, sharing water taps and toilets, surrounded by uncollected refuse, found today in most cities of the global South. Some of these are vast, covering many square kilometres with populations up to a million or more, either on the periphery of a city or within it on otherwise unused land like hillsides, floodplains or garbage dumps; in some riverine cities, like Lagos, Ho Chi Minh City and Kolkata, some shanty settlements are built on stilts above the water.

Shanty housing on stilts, Mekong Delta

The name they are given varies from place to place: *favelas* in Rio and San Paulo, *pueblos jovenes* [young towns] in Lima, *gecekondu* [built overnight] in Ankara and Istanbul, and *bidonvilles* in Francophone African cities. The geographer Mike Davis in his 2006 book *Planet of Slums* comments sardonically:

> "Thus, the cities of the future, rather than being made out of glass and steel as envisioned by earlier generations of urbanists, are instead largely constructed out of crude bricks, straw, recycled plastic, cement blocks, and

> scrap wood. Instead of cities of light soaring towards heaven, much of the twenty-first century urban world squats in squalor, surrounded by pollution, excrement and decay."[1]

Such settlements are now largely unknown in the cities of the global North but they were present in the past: in the USA during the Depression of the 1930s, they were named 'Hoovervilles' after the President who was held responsible for the collapse of the economy, and in Europe to accommodate migrants in the immediate aftermath of World War 2. They were mostly cleared by public authorities to make way for public housing. Today, trailer homes in trailer parks are equivalent housing for poor people, especially in the USA where they are estimated to represent about 5% of its housing.

Homelessness today, however, is a universal characteristic. In cities of both the global North and South, single people and sometimes whole families can be found sleeping in the streets, 'sofa-surfing' with family or friends, temporarily accommodated in night shelters, hostels or cheap hotels, or even sleeping in their car. One source claims the five cities with the highest numbers of homeless people are Manila, New York, Mumbai, Los Angeles and Moscow,[2] but enumeration is difficult. It seems that larger cities exhibit homelessness most; drug addiction and poor mental health are frequent factors. In *World Cities, City Worlds* I reported:

> "Mumbai has over one million street-dwellers, many of them families, some of them single men or women or even single children. Most are in work and compelled by their jobs—in transport, construction, catering, trading—to live in the otherwise unaffordable heart of the city. Arriving at the main railway station in the late evening you find the concourse taken over by families bedding down for the night, containing themselves within areas marked by white lines, leaving spaces between them for travellers to get to and from the platforms. Elsewhere the homeless are asleep on pavements, beneath market stalls, in alleyways and doorways, anywhere."[3]

Street dwelling is precarious. Protecting belongings can be difficult; you may be abused by passers-by, even attacked by vigilantes; and in some cases forced to pay corrupt police to escape harassment.

Every home in every city is also a workplace. At least there will be domestic tasks to fulfil: cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, and mending, commonly undertaken by women in the household; and household administration like keeping account of income and expenditure, paying bills, negotiating with officialdom, commonly a man's preserve. School children may have homework. And children and adults often have hobbies or interests that can be pursued in the home. For some people the home may

also be where they pursue paid employment. Typically, this will be true where a service can be offered to neighbours as a baker, bookkeeper, watch and phone repairer, translator, and many other skills. This homeworking may only be evidenced by a discreet plaque attached to the entrance or an advert on a local noticeboard, in a newspaper or on the internet. In recent years 'working from home' (initialised as WFH), either part-time or full-time, has become common for some white-collar workers, permitted—even encouraged—by employers. For the employer there is an economy in office space, no longer allocating permanent individual space to workers, but rather offering occasional access to shared space, known as 'hot desking'. For the worker, WFH can offer an easier work–life balance and the avoidance of hurried commuting. The worldwide coronavirus pandemic beginning in 2019 gave impetus to this shift, when in many cities government advice was to 'stay at home', to minimise interpersonal contact in workplaces and on public transport.

The pattern of housing tenure varies between cities and between districts in cities. Basically, either households own the homes in which they live, or they rent them from a public or private landlord; or they squat. In most cities across the world home ownership is dominant; the exceptions—where ownership is less than 50%--are the Czech Republic, Egypt, Nigeria, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland, a mixture of cities of the global North and South, which presumably specific local circumstances can explain. Even other presently communist or former communist cities in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Russia and China have high ownership rates of 80% or more.[4] For owner-occupiers, their dwelling gives them security against dispossession and an investment which may increase in value; conversely, renters have no such benefits. But renting is to be found in most cities at all price levels and all qualities. There will be luxury apartments for the business and government elite, basic accommodation for middle-income families, social housing provided by state agencies, churches or charitable organisations, dormitories or hostels provided by employers, or even shacks in shanty towns, sometimes owned by rich people as profitable investments.

City people often move home. This may be through a change of circumstance—a new, more distant job, a growing family needing more space, or reduced income, for example—or a change of aspiration about where in the city they want to live. When such mobility is shared by many households it can change the social structure of a neighbourhood and its character. Two examples are what are known as 'white flight' and 'gentrification'. 'White flight' has historically been a phenomenon when the immigration into city neighbourhoods of Black, Asian or Latino people has led to an out-migration to suburban districts of existing White residents—

who ironically were themselves often earlier immigrants. This has particularly been a past social change in some US cities, when Black families from the South moved, in search of work and independence, to northern cities in what is known as the Great Migration of the mid-20th century; but such 'white flight' is not unknown in other cities of the global North. The result is a more racially segregated city. So-called 'gentrification' is also a phenomenon of immigration in cities. In this case the migration is of better-off people into neighbourhoods in inner-city locations hitherto occupied by poorer people who are displaced. This migration is often accompanied by a shift from rented to owned properties, property renovation and the creation of new businesses, especially upmarket food stores, restaurants and cafes. Gentrification was first noted and named by sociologist Ruth Glass in 1960s London:

> "One by one, many of the working-class neighbourhoods of London have been invaded by the middle-classes—upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages—two rooms up and two down—have been taken over…when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period—which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation—have been upgraded once again…Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly, until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed."[5]

Over the decades since then, gentrification has become evident in many of the larger cities of the global North and even in some in the global South. The driving force seems to have been the expansion of white-collar, professional work in city centres, the growth of dual-career households wanting to minimise commuting and ease of childcare, and the numerical decline of blue-collar, industrial workers by whom these inner-city districts were originally occupied. There has also been a cultural shift among incomers towards an appreciation of older, characterful housing. But not all older inner-city districts have become gentrified: in some industrial cities, as with the so-called 'Rust Belt' cities of the USA, they have just been abandoned.

Not all mobility is cities is voluntary. Most city authorities have, over the last century or more, accepted a responsibility for housing availability and condition. Housing renewal—demolishing substandard housing and building higher quality replacements—has become a common practice, offering new accommodation to displaced residents. In many cities this required the creation of whole new districts. New immigrants to the city might also be housed here. This new housing was often in high-rise towers

High-rise apartments, Guangzou

and slabs, which in the latter half of the 20th century came to be common in many cities of both the global North and South: witness the tower blocks of Glasgow and other British cities, the housing in the *banlieus* of Paris, the 'projects' of New York, the high-rise towers that characterise Hong Kong and Chinese cities—some of these have already been demolished. Elsewhere, the replacement housing was typically low rise in suburban or

new town locations beyond the city boundary. This process of renewal has greatly contributed to the growing extent of many cities.

But in some cities the renewal process has not always been benign. City authorities, often acting in cahoots with private property interests, have razed existing housing—especially in shanty settlements—often without prior warning. They just send in the bulldozers and renewal becomes removal. The residents must look to house themselves again and elsewhere, and the property is handed over for new development. Frequently, the residents have no legal title to their properties, and the authorities will contest their rights of residence and be under no duty to offer replacement housing. Where they do, it may be at some distance, away from their communities and workplaces. In this way, during the apartheid era in South Africa, the 60,000 Black, coloured and Indian residents of District Six in inner Cape Town were ‘resettled’ in the townships of the Cape Flats, 25 kilometres to the south of the city; District Six was declared a ‘White Group area’.

CHAPTER FOUR

WORK

City economies—makers, traders and thinkers—technology—formal and informal sectors—women's work—child labour—rich and poor

The economy is an important element of all modern cities. The richer the nation, the more urbanised it is likely to be. And as nations get richer, then their cities will grow. This truth was recognised by Adam Smith in his 1776 book titled *The Wealth of Nations*:

> "Private people who want to make a fortune never think of retiring to the remote and poor provinces of the country, but resort either to the capital, or to some of the great commercial towns. They know that, where little wealth circulates, there is little to be got, but that where a great deal is in motion, some shares of it may fall to them."[1]

Unlike many country people who fend for themselves, most city people work for others, who may be employers or customers or clients. When they are in work, first and foremost it provides them with income for themselves and any dependents; for recent immigrants this may include sending remittances to family back home. But work is not just of economic significance. It also gives people satisfaction from using and developing their mental or manual skills. And from it they get status among their peers and in their community, and, with that, greater self-confidence and self-esteem. But there is often a downside to city work: labour exploitation, low wages, irregular income, unemployment and under-employment, unhealthy working conditions, or long journeys to work. Nevertheless, the citizens' cumulative income, skills and wellbeing will account greatly for a city's success as a place to live.

The economists' Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure of the value of all goods and services produced in a place. In cities this can be enormous: Tokyo and New York each have an estimated annual GDP similar to that of Canada and Spain; London's GDP is higher than that of Sweden and Switzerland. Worldwide, individual cities often contribute a

large share to each of their national GDPs. This is almost half in the cases of Seoul, Budapest and Brussels, and in all three their proportion of national GDP is far greater than their share of the national population; the same is also true, albeit at much lower GDPs, of Mexico City, Mumbai and Shanghai.[2] The UN argues:

> "The larger contribution of some cities to the country's GDP relative to their share of the population points to the advantage of urban areas. Specifically, cities benefit from the efficiency gains and consumption benefits arising from location advantages, economies of scale and agglomeration economies, including lower prices for inputs, greater access to specialised services, lower transaction costs, and more fluid knowledge sharing. In turn these advantages attract fast growing sectors of the economy, including services and manufacturing, into cities—in fact, urban agglomeration seems to be a prerequisite for industrialisation. The competitive advantages of cities are even more important in developing countries, where poor transportation and communication infrastructure in the hinterland exacerbates the cities' location advantages that enable firms to access not just the larger domestic markets within the cities themselves, but also export markets."[3]

In toto, it was estimated that between 2014 and 2016 the world's 300 largest cities, with 22% of the world's population, accounted for 36% of global employment growth and 67% of global GDP growth.[4]

In her 1995 book *World Class: Thriving Locally in the Global Economy*[5] the business economist Rosabeth Moss Kanter offered a novel analysis of the variety of city work, distinguishing that done by what she termed makers, thinkers and traders: makers manufacture goods and provide services for local use or for export; thinkers produce information and exploit knowledge in many forms; and traders handle transactions, moving goods, services, money and information, from one place to another inside or beyond the city. Work of all three kinds will be found in every city, but some cities may characteristically specialise more in one or the other.

Makers provide many of the same goods and services in cities around the world. This is because city people, the millions of them, have similar needs: for food, housing, clothing, education, healthcare, travel, entertainment and more. City makers' biggest market is local, though imports by traders will supplement what is available from local suppliers. Demand will vary in quantity and quality, dependent on household income, tastes and priorities. Rich people will spend more than poor people on almost anything, paying for larger quantities, more sophisticated and, probably, more expensive goods and services. Some groups of city people—defined, say, by age, gender, ethnicity or nationality—will have specific tastes: more cosmetics for women? more motorbikes for men? more foreign food imports for

expatriates? more pills for the old? more pop music for the young? And household budgets typically display marked disparities, even at the same level of income, in terms of what people consider necessary or important to them. Even in poor cities you can observe neatly uniformed children emerging from shack housing and on their way to a fee-paying school—their families seemingly prioritise education over housing. Households in faith communities may well donate a share of their income to their church. Makers will often find markets by exporting beyond their city to the whole nation or internationally, succeeding because of a competitive advantage in the price, quality or uniqueness of what they offer. For services it is similar. If you need help from an accountant or an engineer or a psychiatrist, then a visit to the city, probably the city centre, is necessary, for those professionals need a large market to prosper. Some may also draw clients from abroad, as do London's architects, lawyers and Harley Street medics.

Rhine-Ruhr is one of Europe's major industrial regions, named after the two rivers that flow through its many cities. It provides 15% of Germany's GDP, covers 7000 square kilometres and has a population of about 11 million. It originated in the 19th century with industries drawing on the local resources of iron and coal. But it has grown and diversified since then and each of its component cities has a dominant specialism: engineering in Dortmund, media and finance in Cologne, state government in Düsseldorf, some federal government ministries in the former national capital of Bonn, textiles and printing in Mönchengladbach, and chemicals and energy in Essen. Rhine-Ruhr is a polycentric megacity of makers, with also thinkers and traders.

Among thinkers' cities, the university city is archetypical. *The Times Higher Education*'s "World University Rankings" (2019) includes more than 1250 universities, the largest number to date.[6] The most well-known university cities are such as Oxford, Harvard, Bologna and Paris, along with the Sorbonne, in the Western world. But all countries have at least one university and usually in a city location, often the national capital. In such cities brainy people, attracted from across the nation or even from abroad, push the boundaries of knowledge through research, educate new generations through teaching, and develop new ideas, concepts, products and practices for application in society. The economy of the city is closely related with the university and consequently may include hospitals and clinics, publishers and printers, radio and TV stations, libraries, laboratories, business start-ups, student accommodation, academic festivities, and specialist shopping. The city population will be highly educated, probably cosmopolitan and perhaps politically more liberal than elsewhere in the nation. Moreover, the history and life of the city is often intertwined with that of the university,

so that the latter may have become a centre of political, cultural and social influence nationally or even internationally. In cities, there are also kinds of knowledge-based work other than in universities: in technology industries, consultancies of many kinds, media, public agencies developing new products or practices, think tanks, or campaigning NGOs.

In the last few decades, Bengaluru in India has flourished as the centre of India's successful IT sector. Home-grown, now global, companies like INFOSYS and Wipro are headquartered here, as well as R&D centres for foreign-owned companies like Google, Microsoft, Nokia and Philips. Its boom began in the early 1980s with the relocation here of Indian companies from Mumbai and Delhi, attracted by the city's comparatively cool climate and its pool of young, educated and English-speaking labour, which had been nurtured by earlier state investment in higher education and research. Its population grew by almost 50% in the first decade of this century, making it India's fastest growing city. Like other thinkers' cities, Bengaluru offers its well-paid IT workers an attractive quality of work and life, though it has also attracted a poor, immigrant population. And, as a consequence of its rapid growth, traffic congestion is endemic, air and water quality are problematic, and energy supply is not always reliable.

ATMs, Istanbul

Trading in cities embraces both tangible and intangible transactions: from the tangibility of transport, wholesaling, retailing, and the export and import of goods, to the intangibility of financial and information services and flows. Trading is an everyday activity in all cities supplying inhabitants' needs through markets, shops and offices, and increasingly through online websites; supporting them are wholesalers, distributors and delivery services. Even the intangible trading of finance and information has become commonplace in cities, provided by banks, moneylenders, automated teller machines (ATMs), advice centres, bookshops, libraries and again websites. But there are cities that are traders big time, specialising in one kind of trade or another for more than just local needs. They may be leaders, in a country or a continent or even worldwide. The trio of London, New York and Tokyo, with their stock markets, are pre-eminent globally in trading financial products and services. But there are others: Antwerp has a near world monopoly of the diamond trade, much in the hands of Jewish-, Indian-, Lebanese- and Armenian-owned businesses; and Dubai has promoted itself as a shoppers' mecca.

A city may principally have a wide, regional focus with traders of a wide range of goods and services for a territory. Miami in Florida is a good example. It was founded in 1896 when the railroad was extended south from Palm Beach and the first tourist hotel was built. It grew modestly as a resort, though Disney bypassed it when he created his Orlando theme park. But, as Kanter observes, "Miami's single most important economic development agent turned out to be Fidel Castro."[7] For the post-1959 exodus from Cuba, following Castro's revolutionary triumph, made Miami attractive to people of means leaving Cuba, an immigration that was politically supported and eased by the US government. Later, others came from throughout Latin America. Good social connections transformed many of these immigrants into entrepreneurs. Today, 60 years on, Miami is the business gateway to Latin America, its seaport and airport are busy, its banks finance trade, its business people use their linguistic abilities and personal ties to foster contact, and it has business development agencies which organise marketing events and trade missions.

Technology is reshaping work in cities around the globe. For manufacturing, robotics has become the latest stage of ongoing automation, substituting computer-controlled machines for human skill in assembly lines for complex goods, especially vehicles. For trading, much buying and selling of goods and services now happens online and new businesses—so-called platforms—for transactions have become big business. Amazon, founded in Washington State, USA, in 1994, is now the world's largest online marketplace, claiming 100 million subscribers worldwide; it now has

the global South market in its sights, recently arriving in India to the despair of existing retailers. But there are many other specialist platforms—for example, for artworks or second-hand books or financial advice, some unique to particular cities. And for thinkers, the riches of the internet have supplemented personal contacts and print as a source of knowledge: the leader by far is Wikipedia, the non-profit, collaborative, online encyclopaedia which was launched in 2001, and now contains over 55 million articles in over 300 languages, attracting 1.5 billion visitors a month. No person with computer access in any city of the world can do without it. But, as with trading, there are many other specialist online sources. Search engines, like Google and others, can track them down.

In all three kinds of city work—making, thinking, trading—there will be both what economists call the formal and the informal sectors. The formal sector is most readily evident as you go about a city. We observe its offices, factories, shops, government buildings, hospitals and colleges. In work terms this is a world of lawful contracts, good working conditions, trained workers, reliable wages and salaries, workplace health and safety regulations, possibly welfare benefits for sickness or unemployment, and declared and taxed income. This is the work that gets reported in the media, what statisticians measure as the city's GDP, what politicians seek to nurture; it often also characterises a city as the above cases of Rhine-Ruhr, Miami and Bengaluru testify. But in every city, there is also an informal sector, where business is small scale, labour intensive and mostly unregulated, skills are learned on the job, relationships with suppliers or customers are just based on mutual trust, entry is easy but income is uncertain and probably untaxed, there is no benefit entitlement, and activities are sometimes illegal. These characteristics can typically be found in such work as taxis, delivery by foot, bike or minivan, cleaning premises and vehicles, domestic service or childcare, small-scale production of clothing, food or furniture, construction, recycling and repair, hairdressing, catering, food, and lodging. In the city you will find such enterprises in backstreet workshops, on open land, in people's homes, and even in the streets and parks.

In 2009 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published what became a seminal report titled "Is Informal Normal?"[8] It concluded that half the non-agricultural workers of the world were then in the informal economy and it was forecast that this proportion would rise to two-thirds by 2020. In cities the proportion is almost certainly higher, not least because a city population provides such a vast market for the informal sector's goods and services, and a large workforce motivated to seek an income by supplying that market. Such informal enterprises are

Barber in the park, Shanghai

especially typical of cities in the global South. It can account for the majority of employment in cities like Guangzhou, Lagos and Sao Paulo, and even in modern, newly built cities like Brasilia. Robert Neuwirth in his book *Stealth of Nations: The Global Rise of the Informal Economy*[9] gives accounts of such entrepreneurial work in these and other cities. He argues that:

> "[it] emerges whenever people who have been passed over by the dominant [i.e. formal] economy start to act. It emerges from the bottom, starting as a rudimentary economy based on tiny and inefficient increments of profit. But over time, it scales up, creating jobs…and offers opportunities to people who have never been wealthy or well educated."[10]

Informal work comes in two categories: self-employment, including family workers who contribute, and wage employment, including casual labour hired by the hour or day and outworkers contracted to formal businesses.

Much manufacturing of goods and provision of services in cities will come from such informal enterprises, to be sold direct in the street or market, or supplied to formal enterprises, even exporters. Above all, trading is the lifeblood of the informal city economy. There is petty activity such as

buying in bulk and selling in smaller quantities, which is possible with basic food supplies like fruit and vegetables, cereals or detergents. There are market stalls selling new clothing—sometimes rejects or thefts—from local manufacturers. There will be exchanges for vehicles, furniture and household goods. But in many cities there are also informal enterprises that are part of transglobal trading networks. One case is the import of second-hand clothing collected in the global North, often through charity shops, bundled up to be sold by weight and shipped to cities of the global South, where it is unpacked and distributed to market stalls—that's how you come to see Gap T-shirts or Nike trainers on street kids in Accra or Cape Town. Second-hand cars and vans can follow a similar route. Another case is a sophisticated trade in electronic goods from China—sometimes genuine, sometimes fake—shipped in containers to Africa or South America, possibly smuggled across borders to avoid inspection and taxes, and then offered for sale at prices that undercut formal imports. Neuwirth reported that to mastermind such trade there were several thousand Africans living illegally in Guangzhou, China. It is largely such informal trading that has met the burgeoning demand for electronic goods, especially laptops and smart phones, in the cities of the global South.

Bananas being traded, Kigale

In the past it was widely assumed by economists and politicians that the forces of modernisation in cities would lead to the displacement of such informal work by more efficient and productive formal business, which offered regular work. Believing this, many governments in the global South acted, and in some cases still act, to eliminate informal businesses. They may do this directly, by closing them down on grounds such as illegality, tax evasion, bad working conditions, or threats to health and safety: for example, street traders in Moscow have long been in a running battle with the city authorities, and in Lagos in 2020 motorbike taxis, known as *oxadas*, were banned from central areas because, the transport authority claimed, they were a cause of congestion and had a bad accident record. Or the restriction may be indirect by targeting the city localities in which informal businesses operate, where property values are typically low, for new construction projects. Frequently, rival interests in the formal economy are complicit with government in imposing such restrictions on their informal competitors. In practice, in no city in the world has informal business been eliminated. It persists as an effective way of work and, importantly, as a complement to formal enterprise through, for example, subcontracting production or providing support services, like delivery and security, or providing sales outlets for substandard goods.

Informal work is by no means unknown in the richer cities of the global North. Historically, these cities had a big informal economy: in the 19th and early 20th centuries, New York, London and Rome had pedlars, street hawkers and entertainers, homeworkers making confectionery or clothing, and transport workers in casual employment. Still today certain kinds of city work are commonly informal in character: for example, waiters, performers, painters and decorators, therapists, tutors, and domestic cleaners. Beyond that persistent tradition, informal employment has become the *modus operandi* for many new kinds of work in what has become known as the 'gig economy' or 'sharing economy'.* A prominent example is the car-ride-hailing service Uber, founded in 2009 in San Francisco and now used by over 100 million people in over 700 cities round the world. Its business model treats its drivers as self-employed, so they provide and maintain their own cars and are summoned to work only when there is demand; they are not guaranteed minimum hours, their hourly pay varies with demand, and they are not entitled to holiday or sick pay. Other businesses operate this way: for example, in delivering takeaway food like Deliveroo or parcels like Hermes, providing home repairs like TaskRabbit, or letting accommodation like Airbnb. This business model thrives in cities where large populations

* 'Gig' refers to the performance of the service, as originally in music; 'sharing' refers to the relationship between the provider and the user of the service.

provide a high level of demand; it also depends on the wide availability of mobile telephony to connect providers and users and credit cards to make payments. The same technologies have supported a resurgence of informal, home-based work for data entry, programming, customer service or sales, editing and proofreading. Some workers, engaged remotely in such tasks, may be located in cities around the world and indeed some such work has been outsourced from Western companies to cities in the global South, where labour is cheaper and where, as in India, English is widely spoken.

Across the world's cities, women have increasingly become workers in both the formal and informal sectors. Not that they were not working before, often caring unpaid for partners, children, parents and others within their households, but for many that role has become supplemented by paid employment outside the home—women have become breadwinners as well as caregivers. Worldwide in 2019, 47% of adult women were in the labour force compared with 74% of men.[11] This includes agricultural work, which could account for the much higher percentages of women workers in some countries, such as 84% in Madagascar, 77% in Laos and 74% in Ethiopia; in more industrialised and urbanised countries the percentage is lower—for example, 59% in Israel, 55% in Austria and 51% in Japan. Historically, in the 19th century in Western cities domestic service in the homes of well-to-do people was the chief source of work for single women; then factory work became available in the textile and other new industries, often in poor conditions for poor pay; and later there were jobs as nurses, teachers, shop assistants, clerks and typists. Similar opportunities have characterised the more recent expansion of women's work in the cities of the global South, most evidently in domestic service, healthcare and manufacturing workshops. Many women from these countries also have found work as cooks, cleaners and child carers for well-off families in Europe, North America and the Persian Gulf cities. The expansion of outsourced clothing and footwear production for Western companies in cities like Dhaka in Bangladesh, Bangkok in Thailand, and many other cities in Vietnam, Indonesia, China, Turkey and Morocco has drawn women as migrant workers to those places, sometimes leaving families at home in their villages to whom they send remittances. Garments are now the dominant export of Bangladesh, with Dhaka its main centre of production with about 800,000 workers, mostly female, in 2000 crowded and unhealthy factories, working long hours, often seven days a week. Electronics manufacturing is another outsourced industry employing women. Here, Chinese cities have become dominant, none more so than Shenzhen which has grown—with much government support—from a fishing village of 30,000 people in 1980 to a city of more than 10 million today. Its GDP is now $270 billion annually, more than

Portugal, Ireland and Vietnam. Here, there are companies like Huawei which is the largest provider of telecoms network equipment in the world, ZTE which is one of the world's largest smartphone makers, and Foxconn which manufactures Apple products and supplies components for many other devices. Also in many cities, especially in international tourist destinations like Thailand, many women work as prostitutes. In all cities, other occupations are progressively opening up to women.

Child labour is still found in some cities of the global South. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that worldwide 152 million children are in work, the majority in agriculture, with 12% in industry and 17% in services, these being the most likely employment sectors in cities.[12] The highest prevalence of child labour is in sub-Saharan Africa, where in cities like Windhoek or Maputo you can often observe children at work as street-food sellers or couriers. The reasons for the persistence of child labour are various: poor families may need to have their children bring in money; education, even when supposedly compulsory, is easily evaded; and unscrupulous employers may favour cheap child labour for unskilled, and sometimes unhealthy, dangerous or criminal, work.

There are no cities in the world inhabited exclusively by rich people or exclusively by poor people. All cities have both and also middle-income people as well; it is the mix that varies. But the mutual contact and even visibility between the classes may be minimal. In most cities there will be places that the extremely rich locals inhabit: luxury apartments, top-flight hotels, offices, exclusive restaurants, and bars and clubs, all visited in their flash vehicles—Mercedes, Jaguars or Audis, for example. The extremely poor may be hidden away in deprived parts of the city, many in slums or shanties, or they may be present as street sleepers or beggars, or sometimes as silent service workers. There are some cities today where the divide between these classes is sharp. The cities of the Persian Gulf, like Kuwait City, Doha and Dubai, have boomed in recent decades, initially from oil revenues, but more recently from financial services, transport, and tourism and associated property development: for example, Dubai now has a population of 2.7 million, up from 100,000 in 1970; Doha has a population of 1.8 million, up from 80,000 in 1970. The Arab families who rule them and own most of the businesses represent only 15–20% of the city populations. They live in considerable style, not just here but also in other homes that many of them own in London, New York and on the French Riviera. The majority of the population in these cities is foreign. Some are expatriates from Europe, North America and Australasia, on high salaries and low taxes, in professional and managerial work. Others are immigrant domestic staff from the Philippines and construction workers from South

Asia, both on low wages and often with restrictive labour contracts. This pattern, of a rich minority with supportive middle- and low-income people, is also found in other cities like Hong Kong, Singapore and Monaco. Their histories as city states and modern economies focused on finance and tourism are seemingly the common factor.

Most cities have less extreme income disparities. The Gini coefficient is a statistical measure of inequality, based on household income data for a population, where a measure of 0 indicates perfect income equality and 1 indicates perfect inequality. The United Nations has analysed these measures for cities across the world.[13] It reports that globally the most egalitarian cities are in Western Europe, reflecting the regulatory and redistributive policies of their welfare states, though within them sharp differences exist between neighbourhoods. In the cities of Canada, the USA and Australia, racial inequalities in income are evident. In the cities of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, the transition from communist economies in recent decades has sharpened inequalities. In the cities of the global South as a whole, inequalities are generally higher: for example, in 2005 the Gini coefficient for Johannesburg was 0.75, for Mexico City 0.56, Shenzhen 0.49 and Brazzaville 0.45. The UN judges that where there is a Gini coefficient above 0.4 inequality will likely have negative social, economic and political consequences, including conditions conducive to social unrest and conflict in daily life. But the UN also recognises that income is a very unidimensional measure of inequality:

> "It is now generally accepted that human beings can have access to a variety of assets, freedoms and opportunities, besides income, on which they can rely not just to survive but also to express their social and other identities. More often than not, these forms of social capital are not reflected in economic surveys…[which also]…fail to capture 'the hidden economy' of households, such as unpaid labour in-kind and cash assistance from relatives and friends."[14]

This is particularly true of life in cities.

CHAPTER FIVE

DAILY LIFE

Food—faith—sport and games—clothing—public behaviour—smartphones—health—crime

Cuisine can define cities. What is eaten reflects the terrain and climate where local produce lives and grows, but that is not all. For, in any city, as Mina Holland in her 2014 book *The Edible Atlas: Around the World in Thirty-Nine Cuisines* argues:

> "Cuisine is the edible lovechild of both geography and history. Invasions, imperialism and immigration solder the influence of people's movement onto the landscape, creating cuisines that are unique to the place but, by definition, hybrid–like that of Sicily, where the Greeks, Romans, Normans, Arabs, Spanish, French and, most recently, Italians have all had their moment of governance. Today, Sicilian dishes express both the peoples that have inhabited the island and the rich Mediterranean produce available there."[1]

So in Palermo you might enjoy pasta con sarde (pasta with sardines), blood oranges, arancini (rice croquettes), caponata (vegetables in a sweet and sour sauce) or—preferably and—cassata (liqueur-soaked sponge, layered with ricotta cheese and candied fruit, under a marzipan and icing shell). In every city, as in Palermo, locals will mostly be eating their national dishes. Their food preferences may in part be determined by their faiths—as exemplified by the numerous fast days in Addis Ababa. Other customs are the Christian fish on Fridays, and the disdain of Muslims for pork and likewise Hindus for beef. Traditional Jews have a strong culture of cuisine: there is the ritual of the Sabbath, from sundown on Friday to Saturday, for which food must be pre-cooked, and other prohibitions like the combination of meat and milk.

In 2018 the travel guide company Lonely Planet published a book titled *Ultimate Eatlist: The World's Top 500 Food Experiences…Ranked*, based on advice from 20 chefs and food writers.[2] Its top 10 are tapas in San Sebastian, curry laksa in Kuala Lumpur, sushi in Tokyo, smoked and barbequed beef brisket in Austin, Texas, som yum (green papaya salad) in

Bangkok, smorgasbord in Copenhagen, crayfish in Christchurch, New Zealand, bibimbap (a beef, vegetables, rice and egg bowl) in Seoul, pizza in Naples and dim sum in Hong Kong.* Some of the 500 dishes in the book are for home cooking. Others are to be found in local restaurants. But many of them are street food, available from outdoor kitchens and kiosks, for street food is found in every city of the world. Its essence is to be low tech: it must be prepared simply, usually by frying, boiling, grilling or liquidising, be portable, served with just a paper napkin, cup, plate or bowl, to be drunk, or to be eaten with fingers or disposable cutlery like chopsticks or forks. Above all it is for immediate consumption, fast and cheap. As businesses, street-food vendors require the large turnovers that cities can provide. It is a long tradition: there is evidence that there were street-food sellers in Pompeii at the time of its destruction in 79AD. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) estimates that 2.5 billion people eat street food every day: for many low-income city people it may be the least expensive and most accessible means of obtaining a nutritionally balanced meal outside the home.

Street-food stall, Chang Mai

* My Addis Ababa injera appears in the book at number 231, with a spiced chicken stew called doro wat.

Some dishes have become universal, available in most cities of the world: pizza, burgers, croissants, potato fries (also called chips or frites), sandwiches, coffee and ice cream are all examples. 'Multi-cuisine' is now often advertised by restaurants wherever tourists go. There are also specific products that are available almost everywhere you travel. Starbucks coffee is a clear case: first established in Seattle in 1971, its coffee shops expanded outside the USA in the 1990s and now operate in 30,000 locations in 78 countries, with only Africa and the Middle East missing from their world conquests. In Ramallah in the Palestinian West Bank there is a 'Stars and Bucks' coffee shop mimicking the Starbucks logo—it seems to me it's probably a politically inspired piss-take. Even more impressive is the universality of Coca-Cola. First produced in the late 19th century in the USA, it was initially marketed as a patent medicine for morphine addiction, indigestion, nerve disorders, headaches and impotence, no less! It only spread worldwide in the latter half of the 20th century. The company sells syrup concentrate (with the supposed key ingredients of coca leaves and kola nuts in a secret formula) to bottlers who can add sweetening according to taste, thus customising it to local markets. The Coca-Cola company claims that it's drunk 1.8 billion times daily in over 200 countries. Its logo, with the words Coca-Cola in red cursive script, is on display in cities all over the world on billboards, on TV, on vehicles, even stencilled roughly on the side of simple neighbourhood stores—it dates back to its 1886 origin; its iconic waist-shaped bottle to 1915. Some beer brands, such as Heineken, Budweiser and Fosters, are also widely available but must compete with local products in most cities.

Especially in wealthier cities, there are always restaurants specifically devoted to foreign cuisines. And food retailers will offer foreign fruit, vegetables, spices and even ready-prepared foreign dishes. Until recently, French gastronomy was the world leader—indeed in 2010 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) added it to its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. But in recent decades eateries offering other national cuisines—notably Italian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Greek and Mexican—have come onto many city streets. Sometimes these imports are rather ersatz, like Tex-Mex cuisine in the USA or the British adoption of the supposedly Indian chicken tikka masala. In cosmopolitan cities you can find restaurants offering cuisine from almost any country in the world, usually provided by their national immigrants, like in London where there are even Uzbek, Peruvian and Indonesian restaurants.

Coca-Cola logo on tram, Lisbon

Most cities, especially those with multimillion populations, have many such immigrants. They bring not just their cuisines but also other customs like their festivals, their dress, their languages and their faiths. Indeed, the urban historian Lewis Mumford declared that "The great purpose of the city is to permit, indeed encourage and invite, the greatest number of meetings, encounters, challenges between all persons, classes and groups."[3] Such contacts, and the consequent fusion of customs, can add to the richness of daily life in a city. Equally—as Mumford's use of the word 'challenges' implicitly recognises—this may give rise to tension, even hostility, when one group or another feels threatened. The last century has seen some consolidation of the major world religions of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, alongside a growth of secularism. In most cities today one of these is the dominant faith, though others, including some minority faiths, will be present. They do not always coexist in harmony. In recent decades many cities have been scarred by violence between people of different faiths: Jews and Arabs in Tel Aviv, Catholics/Unionists and Protestants/Loyalists in Belfast, Orthodox Greeks and Muslim Turks in Nicosia, Hindus and Muslims in Mumbai and other Indian cities.

Loyalist mural, Belfast

In many cities, devotion to the rituals of faith is complemented, even surpassed for some, by a devotion to the pleasures of sport and games. Every city has its street games, especially for kids, played on backstreets and in parks and playgrounds, on scrub and wasteland. Most require little in the

way of props: balls, sticks or rope are often sufficient. Some are traditionally for boys, others for girls. Many are of great antiquity, passed on by word of mouth and practice from one generation to another. Others—like skateboards or frisbees, for example—are modern inventions. Wikipedia lists 30 common street games, most with local variants. Hopscotch is played around the world, called *Laylay* in Tehran, *Tumatu* in Accra and *Rayuela* in Buenos Aires. Marbles and Tag are similarly universal, as is basketball for adults, invented in the USA in the late 19th century as an indoor sport. Others are unique to particular places: street cricket, for example, is only found where the British Empire once ruled, in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean—surprisingly you can even find it in Greek Corfu, which was under British rule from 1815 to 1864.

But it is football that has conquered the world. It is played informally in the streets or on scrap ground, as table football in bars and cafes, more formally as a school sport, by amateur and professional teams on local football pitches and in stadia, competing in national and continental leagues, and internationally in the four-yearly World Cup held since 1930. While there is evidence of football-type games being played over many centuries in many parts of the world, modern football originated in 19th-century Britain's private schools for the well-to-do. Later that century, following the introduction of work-free weekends, working-class teams were created in what were then growing British industrial towns, like Bolton and Stoke, or in new London suburbs, like Fulham and Tottenham—these places still have loyally supported teams. In subsequent decades enthusiasm for football spread quickly round the world. In 1904 the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) was formed: today it has 211 national members and it estimates that 250 million people play association football, mostly men, though women's football has exploded in popularity in recent years. The USA and Canada long excepted themselves from professional football, which they call soccer, to distinguish it from their national version of football, which is more akin to rugby football, though recently both countries have embraced soccer. Many large cities have more than one professional football team, often with roots in particular neighbourhoods. In Istanbul the teams of Beşiktaş, Fenerbahçe and Galatasaray are dominant, nationally as well as in the city, and are fierce rivals. Buenos Aires has 24 professional teams, the highest number of any city in the world; its best-known rivalry is between the Boca Juniors and River Plate teams, and attending a match between these two has been deemed one of "the 50 sporting things you must do before you die."[4] In Moscow the fortunes of its football teams were bound up in the past with the politics of the communist era—the Dynamo team was long associated with the secret police, Spartak

with the workers (named after the rebellious Roman slave Spartacus), CSKA with the army—and through their history some managers and players fell so far from grace as to be expelled to labour camps.

Street football, Yangon

Then there is the phenomenon of the worldwide television coverage of football games in the English Premier League. It airs to a potential audience of 4.7 billion in 185 countries; that is almost the whole world—the UN has 193 member states. It has made the owners and players of the league's 20 clubs immensely rich. Fans worldwide not only watch the games on TV—in bars and clubs, in homes, in public squares, even in refugee camps—but also read all about them, wear scarves and replica shirts with their favourite player's name on the back, discuss their performance endlessly with fellow fans, and even place bets on games. Though many of the teams' players, managers and owners are now foreign, it seems to be the Britishness of the Premier League that counts: its CEO remarked that "It's a bit like the Queen and the BBC."[5]

Football shirts are not the only exotic streetwear in today's cities. Tokyoites especially enjoy dressing up. Rich people there are ardent fans of Western fashion and leading foreign brands like Prada, Paul Smith and Dior have stores in the city. Equally, local brands like Muji and Uniqlo have

developed styles of clothing that find world markets. But traditional clothing—usually variations of the loose-fitting kimono for both women and men—will still be worn in Tokyo on celebratory occasions. A strange modern Tokyo custom is *kosupurai* [costume play], whereby teenagers gather weekly, dressed up in home-made outfits referenced to rock bands, cartoon characters, or online or movie stars. Equally weird are the 'maid cafes' where the waitresses are dressed in themed costumes as schoolgirls, nuns or nurses; also 'butler cafes' where male waiters are dressed for a female clientele.

Traditional clothing survives as everyday wear in some cities around the world. TV news coverage often shows you how business and political elites dress. In Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states, princes and politicians always appear in flowing white robes and the keffiyeh headdress. In South Asia, the so-called Nehru jacket, a hip-length tailored coat with a mandarin collar, is the male elite's formal clothing of choice. In some places, ordinary people also have some unique styles of dress. In cities in Bolivia, Peru and Chile, the indigenous Aymara women stand out with their colourful clothing: many petticoats below a full, short skirt, a blouse and embroidered waistcoat, often with a shawl used as a carryall—even for babies—and sometimes a bowler hat and hair in pigtails. In other cities, traditional daily wear is less exotic. In India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, for men the main garment is the dhoti, a rectangular piece of unstitched cloth, around 4.5 metres long, wrapped around the waist and the legs and knotted at the waist. For women it is the sari, with fabric that can be draped round the body in many different styles. Some Muslim women wear hijabs, covering heads, or burkhas, veiling the face as well. Male devotees of Hasidic Judaism, who are very noticeable in Jerusalem and in Brooklyn, wear black hats and jackets and leave their sideburns unshaved, a style originating in Eastern Europe where that branch of Judaism originated in the 18th century. In communist China, for some decades after the 1949 Revolution, the dominant garment for leaders and masses was the so-called Mao tunic with four pockets and five buttons: the four pockets were said to represent the Four Virtues of propriety, justice, honesty and shame, and the five buttons represented the branches of China's government. Today it has largely fallen out of fashion.

In cities across the world such traditional local clothing is today increasingly challenged by Western styles. Indeed, the modernising regimes of Atatürk in Turkey in the 1920s and Reza Pahlavi in Iran in the 1930s both decreed its substitution for traditional dress. For formal dress, in business and politics, the lounge suit has become *de rigueur* for men; however, there is less conformity with female dressing. For informal dress the T-shirt and

jeans have become a universal standard for urbanites. Today they are mostly manufactured for world markets in the cities of China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Turkey, Mexico and Morocco. Both items of clothing have US origins. Denim jeans* were originally marketed by the Levi Strauss company in San Francisco in the 1870s as workwear for factories, mines and farms, which was attractive because it was made of tough cotton, strengthened with copper rivets and double seams, and convenient with pockets on front and back. It was almost a whole century later that they became more widely fashionable, initially among young people: James Dean in blue jeans in the 1955 film *Rebel Without a Cause* is commonly cited as a key influence. Today they are worn as workwear or casual wear by all ages, women and men, rich and poor, thin and fat, in the form of ready-faded or even torn, in all colours, and baggy or skinny in fit—this latter style the current youth fashion all over the world. The T-shirt, so-called because of its T shape, originated as an undergarment. It was in the 1950s that its adoption as casual wear took hold: Marlon Brando in the 1951 film *A Streetcar Named Desire* is the oft-cited influence here. Both garments, singly or combined, were initially a US trend, but rapidly spread to the rest of the world, as TV news footage from any city will show. In recent decades the T-shirt has become a way of publicising, through graphic words and images, real or fictional products, brands, organisations or places, often in meaningless English. But it also serves as a medium for self-expression.** As well as jeans and T-shirts, there are other universal items of clothing, especially among the young, including hoodies, beanies, trainers, backpacks and baseball caps. Some city police forces have adopted baseball caps as headgear—though not worn back to front! And the bride's white wedding dress—reputedly first worn by the British Queen Victoria in 1840—has become standard in Western cities and increasingly in many other parts of the world.

In Britain's northern cities, where in winter the evening temperatures can fall towards zero, teenagers can be seen queuing for clubs in the scantiest of clothing: singlets and T-shirts with jeans for the boys, bare legs and short skirts for the girls, certainly no jackets, scarves, hats or gloves to keep them warm. Their motivation is unclear, it has just become the norm. As any world traveller knows, what is acceptable public behaviour varies from city to city and must be learned. It may just be a matter of local fashion,

* 'Denim' derives from the French '*serge de Nimes*' referencing the French town where the cloth was first manufactured; 'jeans' refers to the Italian city Genoa. How the words became attached to Levi Strauss's product is unclear.

** Some personal favourites: 'Life is too short not to be Italian', 'There is no Planet B', 'Shit happens', 'A revolution is not a dinner party' (this is ascribed to Mao Zedong).

as with the freezing teenagers. But often public behaviour may be subject to local byelaws. Such restrictions may be justified as safeguarding public health or maintaining widely held social norms, though, in some cities, they are clearly intended to curb freedom of expression in words or dress or behaviour. Sometimes the rules are legally enforceable. CCTV surveillance may serve as a disincentive and source of evidence. You can jaywalk with impunity—just at personal danger—in most European cities; not so in North America where a cop might fine you, or in China where face recognition technology might identify you and shame you with an onscreen photo and your personal details. Bans on spitting and littering, even the chewing of gum, are enforced in Singapore. Drinking alcohol in public places—certainly being drunk—is now criminal behaviour in many cities round the world; likewise begging or street sleeping. Busking, public speaking or trading may be allowable only with prior permission and in defined locations. Also, many cities have laws against generic offences like 'antisocial behaviour' or 'public indecency'. More commonly, compliance with the restrictions rests on social disapproval rather than legal enforcement.

So, what is deemed to be acceptable public behaviour in cities is malleable, changing with the times. Consider gestures. When greeting friends, shaking hands, or kissing on lips, cheek or hand, are traditional in many cultures. But latterly they have become supplemented, even supplanted, among young city people by hugging, high fives and fist bumps—the last two seemingly originated from US baseball. There are also gestures unique to places: in Addis Ababa a shoulder bump, repeated on both sides, is a common greeting among male friends. Affectionate behaviour in public between adult males is an interesting case. Holding hands, walking arm in arm, or putting an arm round another's shoulder has long been accepted in Arab lands, India, Africa and the Mediterranean but was disapproved of in most Western cities. But in these latter cities, recent more liberal attitudes towards homosexuality have weakened this taboo; while paradoxically homosexual relations are still disapproved of, or even illegal, in some of those countries where overt displays of male familiarity are accepted. The restrictions on physical contact arising from the worldwide coronavirus outbreak in 2019 may produce long-term changes in these gestural practices.

Today in any city in the world you can observe people in the street carrying a small device in front of them. In the dark of evening the light from it will illuminate their faces. These are smartphones, which offer users mobile telephony for voice and text, cameras, computing, gaming, data storage, multimedia for music and videos, and internet connections. The leading manufacturers are Samsung (from South Korea), Apple (USA) and Huawei (China), with about 50% of the world market between them; there

are smaller companies providing the other 50%, which are cheaper, mostly from China, sometimes knockoffs with names like Sansung, Motorloa or Sany Erickson. It is only a decade since smartphones came on the market, but the rapidity of their spread around the world has been extraordinary; it is estimated that more than half of the world's adult population, and many children, will soon own one. In the adoption of smartphones, 'apps' (meaning applications) on an individual's phone have become key. Some are universal, sometimes installed on the phone as purchased, such as a calendar, WhatsApp for interpersonal messages, Facebook, Google, Wikipedia or BBC World News. Others are more local, tailored to particular cities, to which users can subscribe. These might include online banking, money transfers, local weather forecasts, traffic reports, pollution alerts, bus and train services, recommended businesses, health advice, and dating agencies. Facebook is an online service on which users can post their personal profiles and news, and communicate with others. Launched in the USA in 2006 for anyone over 13 years of age with an email address, it rapidly expanded around the world, claiming 500 million users by 2010, 1 billion by 2012 and 2 billion by 2017. As of October 2018 the highest number of Facebook users are from India and the USA, followed by Indonesia, Brazil and Mexico. Google is the other technology giant, also North American, founded in 1998, most known for its search function but also for email, mapping, translation and YouTube videos. With its panoply of apps, the smartphone has displaced other items like a diary, address book or street map that in the past many city people often carried; it has also largely displaced cameras because it takes photos and videos too. Smartphones have become an essential aid to daily city life. Conventions for their public use are contentious and vary from city to city: use in the street is acceptable everywhere, though sometimes distracting and dangerous in crowds, but use on public transport or in restaurants may be frowned upon, use in cinemas or theatres forbidden, and use while driving a car a criminal offence.

The daily wellbeing of city people is challenged in many ways. Their sheer density, living cheek by jowl, can threaten health through contagion. Cholera, diarrhoea, typhus, tuberculosis and pneumonia were common ailments in the cities of the global North in the 19th and early 20th centuries; they are rare there now but still found today in some cities of the global South. In recent decades new contagious diseases have scarred life for many city dwellers. HIV/Aids killed over 30 million people since its recognition in the early 1980s and African cities suffered most. No other condition has reached this level of mortality. SARS occurred in China and the Far East in the 2002–2004 period, bird flu caused deaths in Chinese cities in 2013–

2015, and outbreaks of Ebola have struck in many places in West Africa over the last 40 or so years. More recently in 2019 to the time of writing, the whole world, both global North and South, has been at risk of infection from coronavirus, a true pandemic. In the North, major cities were particularly hard hit, probably because of their international travel connections: for example, New York, Tokyo, Moscow, Madrid and Dublin all had infections at rates far higher than their national average. In the South, it was people in shanty towns who were particularly affected since mitigation through self-isolation, social distancing and regular handwashing were harder to achieve; here, cities like Mexico City, Jakarta and Sao Paulo were heavily infected.

There is a contrasting connection between inequality and health between some people of the cities of the global North and of the global South. It is that while many of those in the South—who are relatively poor—are likely to be undernourished, people in the North—rich, relatively speaking—are prone to obesity. The World Health Organization (WHO) claims that in these rich cities, being overweight kills more than being underweight, and that trend has increased in recent decades. This growth in obesity is partly to do with cheap, processed foods being so widely available, with the overuse of sugar in diets and with too little regular exercise in the course of the working day: travelling to school or work by vehicle and being sedentary once there. One consequence is observable in many of today's Western cities where exercise-seeking cyclists compete with vehicles on the roads, joggers pound the pavements and personal trainers put clients through their routines in the parks; and everywhere there are gyms—some open 24/7—full of weights, running machines and exercise bikes. Such personal exercise customs are also becoming apparent in some cities of the global South. Generally, within all cities there are sharp differences in morbidity and mortality between rich and poor, arising from housing, diet and working conditions. Mental illness, though it generally gets less recognition, is widespread. Better provision of water and sewerage, safer housing and workplaces, healthier diets, and good healthcare services are how to protect people from sickness, but not all cities, not even all neighbourhoods, provide these. And in all cities round the world today air pollution—especially from motor vehicle fumes—is a threat to citizen's health. WHO claims that it is now the cause of one in nine deaths worldwide. Both rich cities like London and poor cities like Delhi fail to keep their air clean.

Short of illness, many city people experience shock, fear and anxiety in their daily lives, often caused by the behaviour of fellow citizens. Being verbally abused, pushed and shoved, even assaulted, may be a common experience in any city, which people, including children, must learn to cope with. Beyond this, crime in cities is too a threat to life, limb and livelihood.

Cities are more crime-prone than smaller towns or the countryside for many reasons: poor people there may be tempted by crime as a means of survival, the size of cities provides many potential victims, there is visible wealth, neighbourly social constraints may be weaker and law enforcement may be inadequate. A distinction is often made between blue-collar and white-collar crime: the former likely to be smaller in scale, involving direct contact with the victim, as with assault and robbery, or with property, as with burglary or vehicle theft; the latter practised more remotely with probably larger payoffs, as with embezzlement and fraud. All cities offer rich pickings for both kinds of crime. Often these misdemeanours of city life are associated with certain social groups within the city who are believed—rightly or wrongly—to be antisocial; the finger often points at recent immigrants. In some cities at certain times, people—so-called vigilantes—take upon themselves the task of law enforcement; their typical victims are drug dealers, street children, homeless people and homosexuals. The vigilantes act without official authority but sometimes with the connivance of city authorities, like the police or the judiciary, who turn a blind eye. Bogota in Colombia and Manila in the Philippines are two cities in which vigilantism seems presently rampant. More widely, city police cannot always be trusted to protect or defend victims, for in many cities—in both the global North and South—the police forces may themselves be corrupt or prone to violent behaviour, for which they may not always be held to account.

CHAPTER SIX

POLITICS

City halls—mayors—elections—city powers and finances—city planning—global challenges—multi-agency and multilevel governance—corruption—civil society—disorder

In many of the world's cities, the City Hall, which houses its government, is often a prominent building, and sometimes a tourist attraction in its own right alongside the mosques and cathedrals, palaces and barracks that symbolise other historic sources of power and authority in a city. In Munich, the *Neues Rathaus* was built in central Marienplatz in the late 19th century in a decidedly Gothic style to replace an older, smaller city hall that had been outgrown; its hourly clock chime always attracts the crowds. Tokyo's metropolitan government building was also built to replace older accommodation but here in two 48-storey towers in the Shinkuku district, finished in 1990; its popular feature is its observation decks. In London, County Hall, completed in 1922 as a home for the London County Council and later for the Greater London Council, was stripped of its function in 1986 by the national government in a fit of political spite, and is now two hotels, an aquarium and residential apartments. All London government was restored in 2000 and the new, more modest administration moved to a new City Hall downstream from the former County Hall.

In most cities these buildings house governing bodies with legislative and executive functions: the former is commonly an assembly or council of politicians, usually representing city districts, and the latter will be salaried bureaucrats under the direction of political leaders. Some appointments may be made by national governments or national political parties. Or they may be more or less democratically elected by the city population. Otherwise an elected executive leader may appoint a legislative assembly; or conversely an elected assembly might appoint the executive leader. Whatever the electoral process in cities, suffrage may not always be universal—perhaps dependent on wealth or occupation—and voter turnout may rarely rise above 50%.

Many cities today have mayors as the head of their executive; the post may sometimes be titled city governor, chief executive or chief magistrate. Some cities in Northern and Western Europe have a long tradition of city mayors, known in German as *burgomeister* (literally master of the borough). The French Revolution of 1789 to 1799 created the post in all French cities and elsewhere in Europe where its revolutionary influence prevailed. Today mayors are found in cities all across the world. Differences in the roles and authority of mayors are rooted in local customs and sometimes defined in national constitutions.[1] In most cities he, occasionally she, will be directly elected by the populace: such a directly elected Mayor is found today in, for example, Algiers, Athens, Hanoi, Istanbul, London and New York—and contentiously in Hong Kong where a shortlist of candidates has to be approved by the mainland Chinese government and then is subject to election by just 1200 people selected from the city's 7.5 million citizens. In some other cities, such as in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Havana, Prague and Tashkent, the mayor will be the leader of the winning party in city assembly elections or voted into office by the assembly. In a few cases, usually for capital cities, the mayor—most probably then called the governor—may be appointed by the national government, as happens in Accra, Baghdad, Brussels, Kuala Lumpur and Phnom Penh. Sometimes the national government has the power to dismiss an elected assembly or mayor and substitute its own nominee: recently in Turkey a number of elected mayors in Kurdish cities have been supplanted in this way, purportedly for fostering terrorism.

City politics may or may not reflect that of the nation at large. Those running for elective office, as assembly members or as mayor, may present themselves as candidates of one national party or another and have support from its national organisation. But in city politics, compared with national politics, personality may count for more in gaining popular support and candidates may run as independents, and succeed, without party political support. Elected city leaders may often be in opposition to national leaders; in particular, it often seems the case that more progressive politicians gain office in cities than nationally, perhaps because the greater sophistication and diversity of their electorate has a more liberal world view than provincials. In Delhi's city politics, the local Aam Aadmi party [translated as Common Man Party] has had three successive election victories to defeat the nationally dominant Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In Europe in recent years the mayors of capital cities have been mostly left wing politically, while national governments have been mostly right wing. Indeed in 2019 the mayors of Budapest, Warsaw, Prague and Bratislava signed a so-called 'pact of free cities', committed to 'common values of freedom, human dignity,

Local election poster, Izmir

democracy, equality, rule of law, social justice, tolerance and cultural diversity', to express their opposition to their increasingly authoritarian national governments; they intend to lobby the European Union for direct transfers of development funds to their cities.[2] In personal terms, sometimes a city mayoralty has become a stepping stone to national politics: current examples are Recip Erdogan, President of Turkey, former Prime Minister and before that Mayor of Istanbul 1994–1998, and also Boris Johnson, British Prime Minister and former Mayor of London 2008–2016. Only three historic US presidents were former city mayors, and they had also served previously, and perhaps more importantly, as state governors or senators. By contrast almost all French presidents and prime ministers in modern times have previously served as city mayors; current President Emmanuel Macron is an exception.

The powers and responsibilities of city governments vary greatly. Many have evolved over time through additions and subtractions made by their national governments, since there is always a degree to which national, or in federal structures state, governments supervise and regulate city governments. The reasons for differing powers may be diverse: among them a wish to redistribute resources between richer and poorer cities, a need to secure consistent national policies or standards within the cities—avoiding

what is sometimes called 'the postcode lottery'*—a national commitment to constrain overall public expenditure, or even the rivalry of different political leaders or parties. In practice, city, state and national governments often have degrees of shared responsibility for most services. In a 2014 survey of 127 cities, city governments had on average dominant (i.e. 50% or more) responsibility in just six services: planning, culture, utilities, transport, housing and social care; they had a lesser (around 30%) responsibility for policing, environment and economic development; and a minor (less than 20%) responsibility for education and health.[3] Cities have often been innovative in their public service provision, introducing approaches that national government imitate and mandate more widely: for example, in recent years 'green' policies favouring public over private transport, safeguarding open land and controlling air pollution.

The effectiveness of a city government depends heavily on the sources of its funding. Many are strongly dependent on payments from national or state governments. These may be either a general support grant or a subsidy for specific purposes like public transport or schooling. But cities may draw revenue from local taxes on property, sales or income. It may also come from the profits of public businesses that they own. Or from the lease or sale of public assets, particularly land and property: in communist-ruled cities, notably in China, all urban land is in public ownership and developers must lease it from the city authority; in other cities, the city leases new land created through reclamation, as in Hong Kong, Singapore and the Gulf cities. Increasingly, there may also be income from fees and charges for some local public services. And city governments might borrow to finance the development of infrastructure through issuing bonds. The proportion of such local sources in city government revenues varies greatly: for example, Paris has 83% local revenue, Tokyo 82% and New York 74%, in contrast to London's 31%.[4]

The nature of city planning varies from city to city. Mostly it focuses on the physical environment of buildings, transport routes and open spaces; only occasionally, in some cities, more holistic processes are in place for the planning and management of social and economic change. There are a number of traditions evident here. There may be regulations for the size and stability of new construction, though they may not always be heeded. Then there may be zoning regulations for the use of land and buildings such that, for example, residential, industrial or commercial zones—sometimes up to 10 zone types in number—are defined on maps of the city, and for each zone the range of permitted uses, the density of development and maybe too the

* 'Postcode lottery' is a term for when access to public services varies by location.

scale of building are specified. Also new routes for transport or other infrastructure may be safeguarded on such maps. Zoning originated in New York in the early 20th century, is now found in most North American and European cities, and has been adopted in many cities in other countries: for example, in Singapore and Tokyo.

Cities around the world currently face new political challenges in responding to global events. The coronavirus pandemic of 2019 onwards is the most recent, impacting massively on health, livelihoods, business, travel and other aspects of daily city life. Before that, and still, there is concern in many cities about poor air quality—largely caused by vehicle emissions—and concern in some cities about the availability and quality of water supply. There are also the occasional natural disasters that can cause death and damage when they strike cities, as with: the tsunami of 2004 on coastal cities of the Indian Ocean, Hurricane Katrina of 2005 that breached Mississippi levees with the consequent flooding of New Orleans, the earthquake of 2010 that damaged much of Port au Prince in Haiti, and a succession of earthquakes impacting Mexican cities between 2017 and 2020.

The governance of most of today's cities is both multi-agency and multilevel. In recent decades across the world there have been moves to devolve many traditional responsibilities of city government to other agencies. This was often part and parcel of a neo-liberal agenda to reduce the size of the state, or at least its urban manifestation, energetically promoted under so-called Structural Adjustment Programmes funded by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Measures included the privatisation of public services like energy or water supplies, the removal of subsidies for transport and housing, deregulation, and the introduction of user fees for healthcare and education. Also, it has seen the creation of independent public agencies, given their own budgets and executive powers, to undertake specific tasks: this has been common in urban regeneration, economic development and manpower training. A variation on this has been the creation of so-called partnerships between city governments and business interests and/or non-profit organisations. In recent years some cities have been rowing back on these changes under the banner of 're-municipalisation', whereby privatised services have been brought back into public ownership or new public services have been created. A recent report cites examples in cities in 58 countries round the world, including water supply and sanitation in many French cities, new public pharmacies in Chilean cities, and telecommunication services, where private providers would not go, in some US cities.[5]

Across the world, cities have become so large that rarely can they be governed by one level of government. Typically, today they will have two,

or sometimes three, levels. Below the government for the city as a whole, there may be some form of government for neighbourhoods or districts within the city. Many of the very large cities of the world now have a higher level of government, commonly prefixed with the term Metro as with Metro Manila or Metro Tokyo, or Greater as with Greater London. Where no such higher city authority exists, there may be single-purpose agencies for city-wide functions like water and waste, policing, higher education or transport. These lower and higher authorities may be democratically elected, or may be appointed by city or national government.

In some of today's cities the administrative units of government and their boundaries have remained unchanged for a century or more. Paris's central *arondissements* originated in 1795 and were expanded to 20 in number in 1859 as the city grew, each with a mayor, a council and an administration: it is the citizen's first port of call for official business. New York's five central boroughs—The Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island—were created in 1898 and have remained as such since; new districts of greater New York, which have developed over the century and more since then, have become independent administratively, such as Long Island within New York State, or Newark within New Jersey. In contrast, London's boroughs have been redefined more than once over the last century and more. In 1900, 28 boroughs were created as subdivisions of a new County of London; then in 1965 these were merged into 12 boroughs, to which another 20 boroughs were added through the incorporation of districts hitherto outside the London boundary, with all 32 boroughs under the new Greater London Council and later the Greater London Authority; a 33rd borough is the long-standing City of London, its financial district. City enlargement and boundary changes are often politically contentious. There may be resistance from the new suburban areas that have grown up outside the old boundary: they may have come to value their autonomy, they may not wish to pay the same taxes as within the city, or they might favour different political parties.

City governments around the world are all prone to corruption. Politicians, officials and business leaders, even gangsters, may be members of the same local elites. And for them the temptations and putative rewards of corruption are often great, while oversight and scrutiny by courts or auditors may be absent or lax, and vigilantes are sometimes recruited by elites to secure their interests. Elections may not always be fair: corrupt practices include gerrymandering constituency boundaries, rigging voter registration, banning candidates on supposedly legal grounds, blocking oppositional print and online media, bribing voters, stuffing ballot boxes with extra votes, and miscounting results. Elections with 90%-plus votes

cast for the winner, often on a claimed 90%-plus turnout, are common but will always be suspect. But malpractice can also backfire: for example, in the 2019 mayoralty election in Istanbul the candidate from the hitherto ruling party, defeated by a margin of 14,000 votes, persuaded the electoral commission to grant a rerun of the election because of claimed irregularities; but then the winner increased his majority to 800,000!

The conduct of government business may involve racketeering: nefarious practices include extortion and bribery, theft of public money by politicians or officials, nepotism, or kickbacks in making appointments or awarding contracts. Intimate relations between city bosses, police and criminals exist in some cities, and this situation has become a trope in much crime fiction and movies: witness the Marseille of the *French Connection* (1971 and 1975) movies, and the *LA Quartet* novels (1987–1992) of James Ellroy. In many real cities across the world there is often believed to be a powerful criminal organisation with political influence: in Palermo and other Sicilian cities it is claimed that the cities build unnecessary roads to require the supply of construction materials that Mafia firms control; in Kolkata it is claimed that the local Mafia influence the city traffic engineers on the timing of traffic lights to maximise the opportunities for street beggars, who they control, to accost drivers. Short of corruption, city councils may be subject to pressure from vested interests. In particular, where the city council needs to raise much of its income locally from business or property taxes—as is the case in the USA—then it may be responsive to proposals from business or developers, for example, in rezoning land for building, providing infrastructure or giving tax breaks. Similar temptations may be offered to secure private-sector partners in regeneration projects. Competition between cities for footloose investment can intensify such pressures. For individual citizens, exploiting connections to people in authority, paying them bribes, or even giving sexual favours, may be the only way to get access to medicine, education or healthcare—this is known as *guanxi* in China, *blat* in Russia, *pistolão* in Brazil and *wasta* in Arabic-speaking cities. Transparency International, which campaigns against misconduct and corruption in local and state governments around the world, claims, for example, that in North Africa and the Middle East one in three people must pay bribes to get access to public services.[6] Even when well evidenced, prosecution of corrupt practices may not follow if the government or judiciary are tainted.

Then, only campaigning by non-governmental organisations may achieve redress. All cities have such organisations, representing the interests of particular neighbourhoods, or ethnic, national or faith groups in the city, or persons with shared interests in, say, health, sport or culture. Some may

be unique to the city, and some may be local city branches of national or even international organisations, like Amnesty International or the World Wildlife Fund. Collectively they are known as 'civil society', signifying a sector of society distinct from government and business. Authoritarian regimes often seek to restrict the existence or the activities of such organisations: it was long a tenet of both communism and fascism that there was no place for such association outside the ruling political party. But then secret associations continue, bursting into life once repression founders, as has been seen in the cities of communist states.

Political demonstration against corruption, Mexico City

Even though a right to peaceable assembly may not be constitutionally guaranteed, cities are politically volatile places. They are the locales for public demonstrations, marches, rallies, blockades and sit-ins. For it is here that people reside in the greatest numbers and nearest to seats of power, and today to the media. Young people increasingly take the lead in such political action, for in cities there are more such young, and they are often well-educated in the city's schools and universities, frustrated not just by corruption but also by the lack of political representation and the frequent absence of work opportunities, globally aware and media savvy. The potent influence of new media has been shown time and again in modern politics,

when popular demonstrations have been bolstered by their organisers through the use of smartphones, emails, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook. The locations for demonstrations have sometime become iconic, such as Tiananmen Square in Beijing, The Mall in Washington, Trafalgar Square in London and Tahrir Square in Cairo. Here, protest is designed not just to attract the maximum number of participants but often also to symbolically represent its objective by banners, flags, costumes or face paint. There are famous historic examples: Gandhi's 240-mile Salt March across India in 1930 to protest non-violently against British imperial laws and taxes, the 1963 March on Washington by Martin Luther King and others (at which King gave his famous "I have a dream" speech), and the 1989–1990 street demonstrations in Leipzig, Prague and Budapest showing public support for ending the communist regimes in those countries. More recently in the early 2010s, many of the street demonstrations in the cities of North Africa and the Middle East—the so-called Arab Spring—brought some regime changes initially, though rarely permanently. In recent years in Hong Kong, large street gatherings have protested against the erosion of political rights guaranteed under the British relinquishment of colonial power in 1997. For the organisers of city demonstrations, media coverage, beyond the city in the nation at large and even internationally, has become a prime objective, so banners and vox pop in English for foreign TV news are common. Also, occasionally, there is also theatrical behaviour like the recent adoption of umbrellas in Hong Kong, the three-finger gesture of solidarity in Rangon protests against the military coup in 2021 or, memorably, the rattling of keys in Prague's Wenceslas Square in 1989 to tell the regime that its time was up.

Even where constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and assembly may exist, popular gatherings are generally seen as a threat to established political regimes—equally in cities that are democratically or autocratically governed—and their instinct is usually to be repressive. Oppositions may be infiltrated. Advance permission for meetings and marches may be required and then be denied or circumscribed, in terms of numbers, locations and routes. Social media may be blocked. Heavy policing may seek to discourage or contain demonstrators, with tactics including kettling (containing demonstrators within police cordons), using tear gas or water cannons, arbitrary arrests, and firing rubber bullets, or even live bullets, over the heads of demonstrators. If disorder persists the army may be called in to supplement the police. The outcome varies in the short and long term: occasionally the authorities re-establish order and control, but sometimes such public demonstration becomes a prelude to political change, or at the least withdrawal of policy commitments, and—at the most—the collapse of a regime.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CULTURE

Movies—fiction—music—concert houses and stadia—pop music—soap operas—festivals—flash mobs—graffiti

All cities in the world have cinemas for showing movies, that quintessential modern art form. They may be multiscreen venues in the city centre or a shopping mall; or single-screen neighbourhood cinemas; or even a screen in an outdoor space for walk-in or drive-in customers. The origin of the movies can be attributed to performances by the Lumière brothers in 1895 Paris. Its technology spread quickly. By the early years of the 20th century, the film studios of Hollywood in Los Angeles had become the dominant locale for producing films that were distributed universally. Rivals developed in both Mumbai, India, from the 1940s onwards—nicknamed Bollywood—and in Lagos and other cities in Nigeria—Nollywood—from the 1970s. In time they produced films that commanded audiences that rivalled, even surpassed, the Hollywood movies. In recent decades many countries have developed national film industries, usually located in their capital cities. Sometimes their films have gained recognition at international film festivals: the prestigious *Palme d'Or* prize at the annual Cannes Film Festival has been won over the last decade by movies from Thailand, the USA, France, Austria, Belgium, Turkey, the UK, Sweden and South Korea. This last—*Parasite*, a tragi-comedy about the contrasting lives of a poor and a rich family in Seoul—achieved a breakthrough for a non-English-language film, in also securing the Best Picture award at the 2020 Oscars.

Writing and publishing fiction has likewise attracted international authors. Here, winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature over the last decade have come from Peru, Sweden, China, Canada, France, Belarus, the USA, the UK, Poland and Austria. In modern fiction many cities around the world have provided settings for stories of city life. Just in Africa, for example, note the Cairo of many of Naguib Mahfouz's novels, the Mogadishu of Nuruddin Farah's trilogies and the apartheid cities of South Africa in the novels of Nadine Gordimer. But there is one form of fiction in which its city location is deeply embedded in its narrative: the crime novel. Raymond

Chandler's LA-based novels are a prime example: here, criminality is a pervasive feature of city life and in tackling it, his detective, Philip Marlowe, must mix it with all classes of people, be traduced, and probably get beaten up or shot at—in Chandler's much quoted phrase, "Down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid."[1] Other authors have also focused crime fiction on Los Angeles and on other US cities like Boston, Chicago and Baltimore. But many other cities of the world have provided settings for crime fiction and their detectives, like Donna Leon's Commissario Brunetti in Venice, Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse in Oxford and HRF Keating's Inspector Ghote in Mumbai.

Similarly, traditional music is sometimes rooted in particular cities. You can hear fado in Lisbon, samba in Rio de Janeiro, tango in Buenos Aires, highlife in Lagos and, of course, reggae in Kingston, Jamaica. Many of these local musical genres have been exported around the world: the term 'world music' is sometimes used to embrace them all. But, in modern times, it is Western music that has been dominant in both classical and pop genres. Classical music attracts international audiences, but its repertoire and performers are predominantly from the Western world. The major Western cities all have their own symphony orchestras, smaller ensembles, opera companies and dance companies, and sometimes more than one: London, for example, has five orchestras, Berlin has three opera companies, and New York has over 50 dance companies, categorised as classical ballet, ethnic, jazz and hip-hop, Latin, and modern dance. These opera and dance companies typically include performers from around the world and they tour to the world's cities. In recent decades, cities have built new concert halls and opera houses to accommodate them. The Sydney Opera House, constructed from 1959 to 1973 at a massive cost and timetable overrun, set the trend. In recent years equally spectacular examples, designed by international architects, have been built: the Central Concert Hall in Astana, Kazakhstan, the Guangzhuo Opera House in China, the Music Centre in Reykjavik, Iceland, and the Elbphilharmonie concert hall in Hamburg. In similar ways new museums and galleries have been built, some with contents franchised by Western institutions, like the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao, Spain, the Louvre museum gallery in Abu Dhabi, and the Centre Pompidou exhibitions at the West Bund Museum in Shanghai.

Opera House, Sydney

Longer established, since 1883, is the *Art Biennale* held in Venice every second year. Here, national pavilions display their artists and there is an open fringe event, both focused on the current avant-garde. This is one of a number of international cultural events that have come to parallel the world's sporting events. Many have been promoted as so-called World Expos. The 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, London, is often accounted the first such exhibition. Its focus was very much on industry and technology. This was the pattern for many subsequent Expos that took place in other Western cities and, in time, in other cities around the world. They came to be organised under the aegis of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE). But progressively their focus shifted to cultural promotion and they had national pavilions, sometimes with stunning architecture. The most recent Expos were in Shanghai in 2010 and Milan in 2015; the next planned events are in Dubai in 2021 and Osaka in 2025.

Large new stadia have been another recent fashion in cities around the world, often first built to accommodate international sporting events like the Olympics, the football World Cup and many others held in a city somewhere in one of the continents every three or four years. But they have also acquired another use, as the locations for pop music concerts by touring

individual or group performers. This trend developed from the 1970s onwards with music performed by large bands, often with backing singers, designed for large audiences, with strong melodies and singalong choruses. Amplification was essential, and film projection and lighting became part of the show. The tours may go on for months and visit most continents. For example, Elton John's supposedly final "Farewell Yellow Brick Road" tour started in 2018, included over 300 shows in cities in North America, Europe, South America, Asia and Australasia, and was scheduled to conclude in 2021—though the coronavirus outbreak in 2019 disrupted the schedule. Most tours are more modest in their length and locations, often designed to promote a new album. In 2020 the young female singer Taylor Swift toured venues both inside and outside her home country, the USA, to promote her new album, *Lover*: she performed in Oslo, Denmark, London, Lisbon, Berlin, Poland and Sao Paulo. Such stadium events don't just promote the album, they also charge high prices for attendance and sell merchandise. In this way, successful pop stars can become very rich.

This Western, more especially US and British, dominance of popular music has latterly become challenged.[2] Rapping has been adopted in many places and is easily adaptable to local languages. Rock 'n' roll had its adherents in many cities of the world, although it was rarely recognised abroad; the Swedish group Abba were the big exception and they, of course, were singing in English—as indeed do most of the national entries for the annual Eurovision song contest. But K-Pop (an abbreviation for Korean Pop) is something else. Over the last decade it has found global audiences outside South Korea, through album sales, through plays on YouTube, Spotify or Apple Music, and through live performances. The performers—commonly called 'idols' and given abbreviated English names—are either boybands or girlbands, usually with five or more members. Their music is aggressive and danceable, a fusion of many styles with a strong hip-hop element. They sing in Korean but with a lot of English thrown in, and Western songwriters are often employed, though song versions in Japanese and Chinese are produced for those markets. Dance routines are an important part of the performance and clothes are carefully chosen. The groups are developed, managed and produced by powerful agents, based in Seoul, who recruit potential idols in their early teens, train them in singing, dancing, media appearance and foreign languages, working to maintain a squeaky-clean image: no sex, no drugs, perfect looks. The most successful boyband BTS (from Bangtan Sonyeondan in Korean) has—like Elton John and Taylor Swift—done world tours, including Wembley Stadium in London and even Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, a first performance there by foreign artists and livestreamed globally. They had a breakthrough in 2020

with the English-language song "Dynamite" that went to the top of the USA Billboard 100 chart—the South Korean president even tweeted his congratulations! Interestingly, K-Pop is supported by the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which regards it—along with other cultural exports in what is sometimes called the Korean Wave—as an important element of its soft power, though this has caught K-Pop up in the politics of the US–Chinese trade dispute, limiting its Chinese market.

Soap operas originated in the USA on radio and then TV—so-called because in the early versions the commercials were usually for cleaning products. Now, they are one of the most popular genres and are made for TV in countries all round the world. They focus on a group of characters, often city dwellers, and how they get by in their community, dealing with personal ambitions, struggles, victories and defeats, and their interaction with relatives, lovers, neighbours, friends, workmates and officialdom. The British *Coronation Street*, which started in 1960 with storylines based in Manchester, is the world's longest running TV soap. Many soaps are exported from their country of origin and maybe dubbed for new audiences, or sometimes even remade. Early Australian soaps—notably *Home and Away* and *Neighbours*—were distributed across the English-speaking world. The *telenovela* genre from Latin American countries has found audiences among the Hispanic population of the USA. In recent years Turkey has become the second-largest exporter, after the USA, of TV programmes, especially those in the so-called *dizi* [series] genre which is strongly imbued with Turkish culture, either in everyday or historic settings. Some have won international Emmy (Academy of Television Arts and Sciences) awards. Made in Istanbul, they find markets in the Balkans, Russia, Ukraine, the Arab world, South Asia and even Latin America. Thai TV has pioneered a number of BL series (BL = boys love, i.e. gay), in which good-looking young men in Bangkok, usually students and well-to-do with nice apartments and often cars, dump girlfriends and fall in love with a male friend. They are distributed online—thus evading national censorship—across South-east Asia, Japan and China to, it seems, predominantly female fans. Netflix, the new titan of the film world, is reportedly interested in investing in such local TV production.

The vicarious excitements of soap operas are brought to real-life city streets in public celebrations. In *The Epic City*, his memoir of a childhood in Calcutta (now Kolkata) and then a later adult return, Kushanava Choudhury writes excitedly of the festival of Durga Puja in the city:

> "From Sovabazar we walked northward to Bagbazar. Bagbazar's Durga was housed in a temple-style pandal [a temporary bamboo structure] in a public park, just as I remembered from my childhood. Bagbazar was one of the first

> *sarbajanin*—literally 'for everyone'— pujos in Calcutta. It was founded about a hundred years ago, when pujos were democratised, moving from the courtyard altars of aristocrats into the streets. Among para [neighbourhood] pujas, Bagbazar was also the standard-bearer of tradition. It did not deviate according to the aesthetic whims of the moment: its deities and demons did not look like Bollywood icons; they did not levitate or wear sarongs…The *anjali*, or serenading of the deity, had just started when we entered the pandal. The venue was packed, and in our midst were the drummers with *dhols*, or drums the size of barrels. The drummers were moving around in a circle. Around them danced men and women with lit bowls of incense, smoky and strong. The smoke entered us, obscured our vision. The deafening thump of the drums roared faster and faster. The beat resonated in our bones. We were in a pulsating cloud that demanded trancelike submission of mind, of thought. It was not something to think about, or observe. There was nothing to do but feel."[3]

Durga Puja is a major event in the Kolkata year. It celebrates the battle victory of the goddess Durga over the shape-shifting, deceptive and powerful buffalo demon Mahishasura. It has existed since at least the 14th century and today it is as much a social festival as a religious one. Alongside recitations of scriptures, there is song and dance, revelry, and processions with temporary clay effigies of deities. Cafes stay open 24 hours, presents are given, especially new clothes to wear, and the locals and visitors to the city tour the sights. Some radio and TV channels devote whole days to the puja.

All of the world's cities have such festivals.[4] Many have found their way on to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List of song, music, dance, drama, skills, cuisine, crafts and festivals. Some, like Durga Puja, have a religious origin and purpose. In Mumbai each year there are separate festivals that relate to Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Christian and Parsi beliefs. Carnival, a pre-Lenten festival, is celebrated equally in Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox communities across the world, most spectacularly with parades and street parties in the Caribbean and South American cities; it also has a spin-off in London's Notting Hill Carnival. Other festivals are secular, often political, in origin. Witness the July 14 national day in French cities, on the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille prison in 1789, the opening act of the French Revolution, which includes in Paris the oldest and largest military parade in Europe on the Champs Élysées.[*] The 5 November Guy Fawkes Day in English cities recalls with bonfires and fireworks the discovery of a plot in 1605 to kill King James I by blowing up Parliament.

[*] President Donald Trump was so impressed that he decided to copy it and militarise the traditional US July 4th national holiday.

Munich's Oktoberfest, initiated in 1810 with a fair and horse racing to celebrate the Bavarian Crown Prince's marriage, is now principally devoted to beer drinking in large tents with bands. In Buenos Aires on 31 April 1977, the self-styled Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo walked silently round the square bearing photos of their children who had been 'disappeared' by the then-ruling military junta; the Mothers continued doing so every Thursday for 30 years. In Moscow, on 9 May's Victory Day, people similarly parade photos, here of relatives killed in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945.

Making festival effigies, Kolkata

Parading photos of family dead, Victory Day, Moscow

As well as such public events, these festivals may also be celebrated in the home through a gathering of family and friends, often with traditional customs and food. This duality characterises Edinburgh's Hogmanay on New Year's Eve. Its origins and etymology are uncertain: maybe French, Gaelic or Norse. Domestically the custom is the so-called 'first footing' whereby friends or neighbours visit others, bringing gifts of salt, coal, shortbread, whisky or black bun (a rich fruit cake) to confer good fortune for the coming year. The public celebration includes music, bonfires and fireworks in the city centre with a countdown to midnight, recognised by the Guinness Book of Records as the largest New Year's party in the world. The traditional Hogmanay song is "Auld Lang Syne" (which loosely translates as 'for old time's sake'), based on a Robert Burns poem which is now sung at New Year in many other countries and cities.

Many festivals and their customs have been exported in this way from their origins, often through the agency of diasporas. As with St Patrick's Day on 17 March (St Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland) when in cities all over the world everyone, however slight their claims to Irish ancestry, joins in. Christmas is the most obvious example of a near-universal celebration, essentially secularised while retaining many of the traditional symbols, especially the Christmas tree and Santa Claus, and now found equally in Bangkok, Shanghai and Havana as in Rome and New York. Halloween,

equally of Christian origin, is also becoming a universal celebration. In Mexico City the related Day of the Dead on 1 November is marked by a parade of people with grotesque, white skeleton faces and ghoulish costumes—an event that has reportedly got bigger since featuring in the 2005 James Bond film *Spectre*. Universality is found too with some festivals originating in more recent times. The first modern marathon was run at the 1896 Olympics and the first city marathon in the streets of Boston the following year; today there are over 800 marathons each year in cities around the world. Labour Day (a.k.a. Worker's Day), a celebration of the achievement of workers commonly though not universally held on 1 May, was originated in 1904 by the Sixth Conference of the Second International, the organisation of socialist parties; it is a public holiday in many places. A Gay Pride festival and parade was first held in New York in 1970; today they happen annually in over 50 cities of the world, with the largest attracting over a million participants.

The growth of social media has created new opportunities for spontaneous, shared celebrations. Groups of people with shared interests, maybe not even knowing each other beforehand, can be called together in a city at short notice. These so-called flash mobs take over a public space—a square, a shopping centre, an airport or railway terminal—just to celebrate through a joint performance: dancing, music making, reading, painting, dressing up and even declarations of love are all possibilities. Musically, popular choices are Ravel's "Bolero", Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and John Lennon's "Imagine". Flash mobs are always joyous, with or without prior rehearsal, drawing a crowd. YouTube can show you hundreds of flash mobs recorded from cities around the world.

Equally celebratory, though more subversive, is public graffiti in cities. Writing, drawing or painting on public walls or other surfaces has a long history: it is there in the ruins of Ephesus, Pompeii and Rome. The word 'graffiti' originated in mid-19th-century Italy, from *graffito* [to scratch]. The modern practices of graffiti originated in New York in the 1970s, associated with the emergent hip-hop culture and eased by the invention of spray-can paints. Now it is found in cities all round the world, not just on walls but also on trains and buses. Indeed in some cities the graffiti-like decoration of vehicles has become accepted practice: witness the Matutu buses in Nairobi and the jeepneys of Manila. Typically, graffiti will mark a presence (like 'Kilroy was here'[*]), express an opinion ('Your war, our dead'), celebrate achievement ('Read less, live more') or relationships

[*] Kilroy is long established; there is a story that, at the 1945 Potsdam conference of World War 2 allied leaders, Stalin emerged one morning from his bathroom to ask who Kilroy was!

('Batman loves Robin'), and comment on prevalent mores ('My mother made me a homosexual', 'If I sent her the wool would she make me one too?'). Graffiti usually advertises the anonymous artist through nicknames called 'tags'. Its stylistic conventions are universal: a riotous colour mix, thick lettering, and a crowded juxtaposition of images and words. Everywhere there is a debate about whether graffiti is just vandalism or maybe art. It can, of course, be both: practitioners such as the British 'Banksy' and the American Jean-Michel Basquiat both straddle this divide. City authorities often try to contain or erase graffiti, not always successfully. Robert Reisner, in his history of graffiti, argues that:

> "Graffiti, then. are little insights, little peepholes into the minds of spokesmen not only for themselves but for others like them."[5]

Graffiti, Athens

CHAPTER EIGHT

TRAVEL

Traffic—street patterns—boulevards and freeways—bridges—pedestrianisation—travel modes—vehicles—cycling—walking—congestion—pollution—the '15-minute city'

When I visited Beijing in 1993 it was bicycles, in their thousands, that filled the streets, ridden by young and old, men and women and children, on their way to school or work, or out and about their business. Not the fancy bikes, with multicoloured, lightweight frames and multiple gears, that had become the norm in my hometown London; rather, sturdy black bikes, with three gears, if any, usually with a basket at the front and certainly made in China. Of course, there were pedestrians too, who were only able to cross the street safely at places where and when traffic lights briefly held back the continuous stream of cycles. There were few cars, though some overloaded lorries and crowded buses. The cycle was the dominant mode of travel. Revisiting the city about a decade later, I saw that motorbikes had arrived, often carrying two, three, even four people—two adults, two kids—and driven aggressively, often putting both walkers and cyclists at risk. Most of the motorbikes were imports from Japan: Hondas, Suzukis, Yamahas. And now, there were also some four-wheeled vehicles. Another decade on, in the 2010s, cars, vans, lorries and motorbikes, and even a few SUVs (sports utility vehicles), filled the streets; traffic congestion, noise and pollution had become endemic to getting around in Beijing. The vehicles include imported Audis, Toyotas and Fords, with some Chinese-built models from SAIC (the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation) and other local makers. This sequence over time of the dominant modes of city traffic has historically characterised most cities of the world: you could observe variations of it in Madrid or Chicago in the early decades of the 20th century, or in Ho Chi Minh City or Lagos in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Motorbike traffic, Ho Chi Minh City

Travel in cities is constrained by the streets. The street pattern in cities is usually irregular, which is the consequence of the piecemeal development of the place. The line of some streets may even derive from pre-urban rural routes—that's the explanation for New York's Broadway, which uniquely cuts diagonally across the Manhattan street grid, originating from a Native American trail from before the arrival of Europeans. Regular street patterns, usually rectilinear or curvilinear, are usually the exceptional product of city planning in new foundations or city extensions. Sometimes the motivation for such regularity was aesthetic, to create grandeur, equally evident in L'Enfant's design for Washington DC, Lutyen's for New Delhi and Lucia Costa's for Brasilia. Sometimes regularity is judged to be economical in enabling the subdivision of land into marketable property lots, characteristic of many newly founded US cities. Sometimes it is thought a practical way to ease traffic flow by minimising and simplifying junctions.

The 19th and 20th centuries saw the insertion of two new kinds of regular street into existing cities: the boulevard and the freeway. A boulevard is a wide, straight street, sometimes lined by trees and often with a focal point in a grand building like a palace, church or theatre. It is typically driven through and superimposed on an existing street pattern. Though there had been earlier boulevards in European cities, the large-scale

creation of boulevards is associated chiefly with the rebuilding of central Paris by Baron Haussmann, at the behest of Napoleon III, in the mid-19th century. Here, in an astonishingly few years between 1853 and 1870, Haussmann built the many boulevards that still characterise central Paris. His methods were authoritarian: expropriating property, extensive demolition, constructing the boulevard, leasing new frontage sites to developers, and regulating their building forms and styles. In this way Haussmann created a wholly new cityscape, flanking the broad carriageway with six- or seven-storey buildings, street-level commerce with apartments above, pavement sales kiosks and advertising pillars, greenery, and spaciousness including new public squares. It has also been claimed, at the time and since, that his boulevards enabled speedier troop movement and better sightlines for firepower in dealing with insurrection. This building of boulevards displaced much of the city's working class from the central city. Later Paris's underground Metro lines mostly followed the boulevards, being built by the cut-and-cover method—hence the sharp, shuddering turns that you experience travelling on them. Over the succeeding century Paris's boulevards were copied in cities on all continents: for example, you will find them in Moscow, Teheran, Saigon and Buenos Aires.

In the history of the urban freeway it was Los Angeles that provided the model that became as iconic for that city as the boulevards are for Paris. In the 1920s car ownership in Los Angeles was already reaching one per two residents, meaning that virtually every able-bodied adult owned and drove a car—a level that was only reached in other US cities in the 1940s and in European cities, if at all, in the 1980s. At first, street widening, synchronising traffic lights, banning left turns and providing off-street parking sought to keep the traffic moving. By the 1930s the idea of an additional network of 'super roads' was being floated, exclusively for motor vehicles, with many lanes, separated from existing streets, with limited access points, and called 'freeways' or occasionally 'parkways'. The first short stretches were built in 1938 and over succeeding decades the near 1000 kilometres of the city's present freeway system were built. In doing so a quarter of a million people lost their homes. Other US cities followed the Los Angeles example. A crucial decision was to route the federal Interstate Highway System, built from the 1950s onwards, not round but through the built-up parts of many cities, with this justified as urban renewal projects, often—some argue—targeting poorer, African-American communities for demolition. Many other Western cities followed the USA's lead in inserting freeways into their city road patterns. But today building urban freeways has fallen out of favour in North America and in many European cities, even in cases leading to the removal of existing freeways, sometimes replaced by streetcar lines,

parks or other uses, or by substituting tunnels. But freeways are still getting built in the more prosperous cities of the global South, such as in Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo and Manila.

Within some riverine cities new bridges have been important functionally in connecting districts that may have been socially, economically or administratively distinct. Before the bridge, ferries may have served this purpose and some famously still do: witness the Mersey Ferry in Liverpool, the Staten Island Ferry in New York or the Star Ferries in Hong Kong. But new bridges or, in some cities, tunnels crossing the river or harbour have far greater capacities. They have just become sections of the city's road network and, in some cases, carry trains and pedestrians too. But some city bridges have become recognisable well outside the city, even internationally, and have in fact become iconic. This is so with the attractively engineered structures of the Brooklyn Bridge (opened in 1883) connecting Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York, the orange-vermilion-painted Golden Gate Bridge (1937) across the entrance to San Francisco Bay, and the Sydney Harbour Bridge (1932), popularly known from its appearance as 'the coat hanger' and now paired iconically with the later, nearby Opera House. Also iconic are the eccentrically Gothic Tower Bridge in London (1894) and the cumbersome, frankly ugly, Howrah Bridge in Kolkata (1942), which is without nuts and bolts, entirely soldered together; it looks like a child's Meccano construction.

There has been another modern change in city street patterns with the introduction of pedestrian-only streets. In some European cities—perhaps inspired by historic examples like Venice* and Ghent—wide areas have been converted in this way, usually only with vehicle access for delivery or street cleaning permitted in limited hours. Early examples were Lijnbaan in Rotterdam, opened as a pedestrian street in 1953, Stevenage town centre in 1959 and central Copenhagen—still one of the most extensive cases—in 1962. Car-parking provision and public transport re-routeing are common complementary measures. In succeeding decades these practices have spread to cities in other continents. And areas of new development in cities, for both residential and commercial use, are often designed as pedestrian areas with vehicle access restricted, either underground or on the margins. In the downtowns of a few cities, there has also been the introduction of separate levels exclusively for pedestrian circulation. They may be above ground level, sometimes called skywalks, or below ground level, perhaps termed subways. Either way they separate the pedestrian from the vehicle traffic in the main city streets. Science fiction had long promoted the concept

* While visiting Venice, Google Maps advised that the distance to a sought restaurant was only 15 minutes—by car!

Howrah Bridge, Kolkata

of a multilevel city. And planners in a few European cities adopted the idea in their proposed reconstructions of city centres damaged in World War 2, but these were rarely fully realised. Rather, it has been property developers, mostly in North American and Asian cities, who have embraced the concept of separate levels for pedestrian circulation in downtowns, often accessed by escalators and connecting to store entrances, restaurants, hotel or office foyers, car parks and sometimes metro stations, and giving protection from summer heat or winter cold.[1] Some of these so-called 'interior cities' are very extensive: Minneapolis has 18 kilometres of skywalks, colour coded to aid navigation; Hong Kong has 500 raised walkways for which a 3D city map and guide has been published; and Montreal has a 30 kilometre-long RESO (from the French *reseau*) underground network. Access to these pedestrian levels is often overseen by security guards and CCTV cameras, and sometimes signed as 'private property', to discourage some city dwellers—the poor, the ragged, the infirm, the mentally ill—from entering these spaces.

The innovation of motorised transport has made the automotive industry one of the world's largest economic sectors. For many decades of the early- and mid-20th century, US companies were dominant: this was when Detroit, the home of Ford, Chrysler and General Motors, was nicknamed Motown.

European countries like Germany, France, Italy and the UK had, and still have, automotive industries, sometimes long associated with particular cities, like BMW in Munich, Renault near Paris and Fiat in Turin. But in recent decades China and Japan have become major vehicle producers in the world, with other countries in the global South like India, Mexico, South Korea and Thailand also new sources. But of the 50-odd countries that produce vehicles, only 14 design models, whereas the others produce them under licence from the leading companies; and among the 14 there is much cross-ownership and many joint ventures. Overall nearly 1000 million motor vehicles are produced worldwide each year and there are an estimated 1.4 billion in use, with many in the world's cities. One consequence of this boom is the political strength of the motoring lobby—comprising vehicle makers, owners and users—in shaping urban transport policies.

Vehicles—both motorised and non-motorised—for getting around cities have evolved over the last century. Previously, poorer people just walked; richer people in cities may have ridden donkeys or horses, or have been carried in sedan chairs, horse-drawn carriages or even in human-pulled rickshaws. Horse-drawn trams on rails appeared in New York in 1832, in Paris in 1855 and in London in 1870, and were later replaced by motorised versions. Also, from the 1830s onwards in Europe and North America steam railways pushed lines into the cities, connecting their centres with new suburbs—the concept of commuting was born. In cities with rivers or canals, steamboat ferries were introduced: Venice's *vaporetti* [little steamers] date from the 1880s and are still the city's main public transport, though now are diesel-driven. An underground railway within a city came first in London in 1863, and was initially steam-propelled and rather unpleasant for travellers as a consequence, before being electrified in 1890. Other cities followed suit with, sometimes, a mix of underground and overground lines. The systems are now widely called metros**,** originally from the Parisian *Chemin de Fer Métropolitain*. Today there are metros in almost 1200 cities around the world, of which 40 are in China; indeed Asian cities have seen the biggest growth in metros in recent decades. Today's world records include: Beijing with the longest route length, New York with the most stations, Tokyo being the busiest in passenger numbers, London being the originator of the diagrammatic route map which is now universal, and Moscow being the most astonishing visually—Stalin had decreed 'palaces for the people' with spaciousness, marble, paintings and chandeliers. On the streets, bicycles were the first mechanical mode of transport, and then the internal combustion engine made cars, vans, lorries and motorbikes possible; also taxis and buses.

In cities, travel by private car is now often dominant, though an aggregation of individual journey to work data for million-plus cities shows a vast range.[2] There are measurement uncertainties in the data (including definitions and dates) but some patterns can be seen. One is the experience in North American cities that are highly motorised, with over 80% of journeys in private motor vehicles (including drivers and passengers in cars and on motorbikes) with little walking, cycling or public transport; Las Vegas is the extreme case with 90% of people travelling to work by private motor vehicles but only 4% by public transport (by bus in this city), 1% walking and none cycling. At the other extreme the highest walking percentages, over 20%, are found in both some Asian cities, like Mumbai, Shanghai and Tokyo, and some European cities, like Vienna, Madrid, Helsinki and Brussels. Cycling is mostly below 10% but much higher in some individual cities like Berlin, Osaka, Amsterdam and Munich. Amsterdam, like other Dutch cities, as any visitor will have observed, has very high bike ownership (almost 2 per household) and usage (almost 30% of all trips)—the Dutch are reportedly submitting cycling for inclusion in UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Cities with more than 50% of journeys by public transport (bus, tram, metro, train, taxi) include Bogota, Minsk, Paris, Prague and Seoul. There are various explanations for these patterns. The wealth of residents is clearly one, for richer people will own cars and want to use them. And—unless there are tolls—their use of the roads is free and the running costs of car use less evident than are public transport fares. City land uses, layout and density may shape modal choices, minimising distances to work or shops, to make walking or cycling more manageable. Public policies, favouring or disfavouring one mode or another, may be influential: for example, restricting road space for cars; increasing space for buses, bikes or pedestrians; subsidising public transport fares; or charging tolls for road use by car and parking.

Differences in public transport modes have traditionally existed between cities of the global North and South. In the North, buses and taxis are distinct modes: distinguished by shared versus exclusive occupancy, large versus small capacity, fixed versus negotiated fares, and defined routes and stops or the passenger being taken to their chosen destination. In the South, there has been a less clear distinction and far more variety. There you will see and use cyclo-rickshaws; there are motorbike taxis where you ride pillion; there are three-wheeled auto-rickshaws, often called tuk-tuks, which can squeeze in up to six passengers or goods; there are cars as taxicabs, though the driver may feel free to pick up other passengers on the way; there are minibuses that stop anywhere on a given route, usually with a teenage kid hanging out of the door calling out stops, collecting fares and controlling passengers

getting on and off; and regular buses or trams with fixed routes and stops. In many cities, only the latter are likely to be run by public companies; the others are privately owned and may well be unlicensed and uninsured. Some—especially tuk-tuks, motorbike taxis and minibuses—may be owned in fleets by rich people as investments, leasing them to operators.

Rental bikes, Shanghai

Some of this variety has recently been imported into European cities: cyclo-rickshaws can be seen in London and Barcelona, mostly offered as a tourist experience, and tuk-tuks are present in Paris, Lisbon and some Italian cities. In the latter, they are well-suited—like Vespa scooters and Fiat 500 minicars—to narrow, old town streets. Other new technologies are also on show: electric and dual-fuel cars, new tram systems, and electric scooters, with driverless cars under development. Bicycles rentable by the hour are now common in many cities, either available from stands or tracked by a phone app and left anywhere. Then, there are new transport technologies that have not made it into widespread adoption. For example, moving walkways are now only found in transport terminals; monorails have only found application as fast routes to airports, most spectacularly with Shanghai's Maglev which can run at 500km/hour; or helicopters which have only become part of Sao Paulo's city transport with about 500 flying around

the city, many as taxis, used by the business class for commuting from their distant homes, thereby escaping the traffic congestion on the streets and—probably just as important—avoiding the danger of passing near the poor shanty towns below. Another transport innovation is the growing popularity among car owners of the so-called SUV, which contains features from off-road vehicles, such as raised ground clearance and four-wheel drive; they now account for about 40% of new vehicle production, are major elements in city traffic in rich countries and are increasingly to be seen in cities of the global South. They have higher fuel consumption and are heavier polluters than other cars.

But walking is still a main way of traversing any city.[3] You may walk purposely—to reach a destination—or recreationally for exercise—as with the Mediterranean *passegiata*, a late afternoon stroll through the city in company, stopping off at a cafe. The Chinese proverb of 'Every journey begins with a single step' undoubtedly has an intended philosophical significance, but it expresses a mundane truth about city life—even driving a car requires a walk to and from the vehicle at a trip's origin and destination. Walking almost always involves carrying something: personal possessions, work items, shopping, food and drink, even babies in slings. Also, walkers may often push or pull wheeled carriers for people, especially children or the disabled, and goods. But as mechanical transport has taken over city streets, pedestrians have been increasingly confined: required to stay on sidewalks which may have to be shared with cyclists, hawkers and sleepers, restricted to crossing streets at designated pedestrian crossings controlled through red and green lights, or directed through tunnels or over bridges. Rules about jaywalking—pedestrians crossing streets at any point—vary greatly from city to city, to the confusion of visitors. In recent years in some cities there has been a greater recognition of the role of walking and a reassertion of the rights of pedestrians in the city. This has taken a number of forms. One is to redesign street layout to balance the needs of different road users: this may require the widening of pavements and narrowing of vehicle lanes, even the merging of pedestrian and vehicular road space, and the introduction of speed limits and physical barriers, like road humps, to reduce vehicle speeds in residential areas.

No city in the world is without traffic congestion in its streets, whatever the number or mix of vehicles. The terms 'traffic *jam*' and 'grid*lock*' (my italics) metaphorically express this immobility. Behind this experience is a universal truth that, when it comes to urban traffic, the economist's conventional relationship of demand and supply does not work: increasing supply—that is, road capacity—to satisfy demand does not produce equilibrium**, f**or so elastic is demand that an increase in supply will just

stimulate it further, i.e. demand follows supply. A few cities have not yet learned this lesson and are still seeking through increasing supply—for example, by building freeways, increasing car parking or adopting one-way streets—to accommodate more vehicles: sometimes in response to the motorists' political lobby. But most cities, in both the global North and South, recognise that they must find ways of tackling congestion by restricting supply. Some means are long established and universal, such as speed restrictions and traffic lights. Others are more recent, such as tolls on entry to the city centre, pioneered by Singapore in 1998 and since adopted in many other cities. Another approach is to give preference to other road users through reserved lanes for buses, taxis or trams, and for cycles. More ambitiously, some cities have created new high-speed and high-capacity bus systems on their own dedicated routes, often down the centre of wide boulevards: Mexico City and Dar Es Salaam have both adopted this strategy. Even more innovative are the aerial cable cars in El Alto in Bolivia, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and Medellin in Colombia that connect the downtown to upper, often poorer, parts of the city.

Cities are rich in ways of communication. Over the last century new travel modes have expanded and are now found in many of the world's cities. True, cable cars and funiculars are rarities and only a minority of large cities have trams or metros, but buses, taxis, cars, motorbikes and pedal cycles are universal, as is walking. Moreover in recent decades some new modes—like tuk-tuks and minibuses—have spread from city to city. All these modes are both substitutable and complementary. The scale and variety of city transport means that people there are rarely at a loss of the means to get from place to place, for there is usually a choice—differing in route, time taken, cost and comfort—in making any particular journey. And the modes can frequently be combined for that particular journey, as with the cycle ride to the metro station or the taxi from one business meeting to the next. Indeed it is one of the tasks for the successful planning and management of city transport to maximise such substitutability and complementarity.

But there is a downside to city travel. Road vehicles, when powered by petrol or diesel, are a major source of air pollution in cities, in terms of both gases and particulates. Smog is the most visible form of air pollution and a recurrent experience in Los Angeles, Mexico City, Delhi and Beijing, in some cases intensified by the local basin topography. More generally, less visible air pollution from vehicles is a health risk—through respiratory diseases and cancer—for many city people, in both the global North and South. And there are also, from vehicle carbon dioxide emissions, impacts on climate change. One way of minimising these impacts is through

improved vehicle technology: less polluting petrol and diesel, more efficient fuel consumption, and particularly a switch to electric road vehicles. A slow-speed electric vehicle for milk delivery—a so-called 'milk float'—had been a unique feature of British cities since the 1930s, but has largely disappeared as door-to-door milk delivery has declined. But a widespread adoption of electric cars, vans, buses and bicycles has been recent in many cities, and there are ambitions among vehicle makers to make such vehicles standard over the coming years. But there is a wider approach mooted by some commentators, which is simply to reduce the distance and frequency of vehicle travel in cities. The coronavirus pandemic beginning in 2019 produced a shift to home working, which led to a reduction in commuting in some cities and subsequently reduced traffic levels; how permanent a change this will be in many cities is an open question. The US Institute for Transportation and Development Policy has promoted three measures of a walkable, less vehicle-dependent city[4]: (1) the proportion of people living within 100 metres of a car-free place, which could be a park or a pedestrian street—on this measure Hong Kong scored highest; (2) the proportion of people living within 1 kilometre of both healthcare and education—Paris comes top; and (3) the average size of a city block, as smaller blocks minimise distances to destinations—Khartoum comes top. Interestingly, this analysis finds cities of both the global North and South performing highly. It also has similarities to the concept of the '15-minute city', expressing an ambition for city people to be able to access services—like shopping, healthcare, schooling and parks, for example—within a non-motorised 15-minute walk or cycle ride of their home. Some cities, including Paris and Sydney, are exploring the application of this travel concept.

CHAPTER NINE

BUILDINGS

The vernacular—houses—skyscrapers—markets, stores and malls—factories—transport termini—hotels—infrastructure—cityscapes—property markets

Crossing Europe by land—either by rail or by road—you pass through or by many cities. From north to south you might experience Edinburgh, York, London, Paris, Lyon, Marseilles, Turin, Rome, Naples and then Messina. From west to east: Dublin, Bristol, London again, Brussels, Cologne, Berlin, Warsaw and finally Kiev. Through your window or windscreen you observe the cities and how different many of them look. Brick, stone, timber, steel or concrete may be the dominant building material. Dwellings may mainly be one, two, three or more storeys in height. Roofs may be flat or pitched, and pitched at different slopes with different kinds of tile. Windows or doors may have typical shapes. Such architectural features are commonly called 'vernacular': the word referred originally to the language or dialect spoken by ordinary people in a particular place, but the concept has been carried over to express a common building style. London, Paris, Naples, Berlin and other cities each have their own vernacular. For, contrary to the assertions of some xenophobic commentators, the appearance of European cities has not become homogenised. And this is true too of cities globally: they mostly look different from each other. They each have their own vernacular, which, especially as visitor, you notice. Even many recent buildings will often reflect this.

In all cities most new buildings serve traditional uses and may take traditional forms. They are the dwellings, workplaces, schools, colleges, shops, hospitals and other building types that fill up most of the city. In all cities there are near-constant processes of building and rebuilding, but with their pace and extent differing in economically good times and bad. Some building work is undertaken by users themselves, maybe with the help of friends and family; in other cases users will be clients, hiring architects and builders to construct premises to their specification; and then, particularly

in larger cities, there will be property developers who finance the acquisition of sites, and design and construct buildings, which they then sell or rent to occupiers. In these ways, cities expand and renew themselves physically. In this development process, there are new kinds of buildings that are the creation of modern times, among them terraced and detached houses, blocks of flats, skyscrapers, supermarkets and shopping malls, factories, and transport termini.

In the 1930s a Danish architect and academic, Steen Eiler Rasmussen, published a book titled *London: The Unique City.* He opened his book with a bold declaration:

> "Two chief types are distinguishable among large cities: the concentrated and the scattered. The former is the more common on the Continent [i.e. of Europe] and is clearly represented in the big government seats of Paris and Vienna, which were the prototypes of European town planning at the end of the last century. The second type is represented by the English town, which now seems to many of us the ideal."[1]

One of the characteristics unique to London, he argued, was that it had expanded in the two previous centuries, largely through the building of houses, each accessible from the street and with its own outdoor space. You can see this in the now older Georgian and Victorian terraces and in the later 20th-century suburbs. The same was true of many other English towns and cities. The English house has not always been a terrace house. There were also detached, individual houses—sometimes called villas—and paired houses—called semi-detached, a clearly aspirational term, rather than semi-attached. The latter were particularly common in the housing built in the 20th century.[*] Houses, rather than flats, were the preferred dwellings provided by commercial property developers for sale and by public authorities for rent. This was also true in the new towns built around London after World War 2. But what Rasmussen found historically unique to London became, in the 20th century, common in cities elsewhere in the world. Indeed, in the USA, Canada and Australasia, suburban development largely took this built form, usually with detached rather than paired or terraced houses. And it has increasingly taken hold in many other cities of both the global North and South, where a growing middle-class population seeks to own or rent more spacious and individual accommodation. For

[*] In my teenage years, living in a small town, there was much excitement from the arrival of French girls on a school exchange. One in particular, Françoise, was much courted by us boys. I successfully dated her. While driving her to London and passing through the suburbs, she remarked how most of the houses were in pairs—"like lovers". Wow!

example, Shanghai, one of China's most prosperous cities with a population of 23 million, has suburbs and new towns on its expanding periphery, which architecturally ape Western vernacular styles: British, Swedish, German, Swedish, Italian, whatever you fancy.

In contrast, the modern development of most cities in continental Europe took place characteristically by building blocks of flats. In Berlin, these buildings were known as *Mietkaserne* [rental barracks], often constructed round interlocking courtyards. And in some non-English cities of Great Britain, the block of multiple dwellings became the common residential building type, as with the so-called tenements in Glasgow and Edinburgh. In 19th-century New York, tenements were built in the Lower East Side to accommodate immigrants, with very small space standards. In Mumbai, the so-called *chawls* were built in the 19th and early 20th centuries, a 3–5-storey block of 3–400 dwellings, each just one room plus kitchen with shared latrines; they made up about three quarters of the city's housing stock. In time, in most cities, higher buildings—serviced by elevators—came to replace such blocks as the dominant building type for shared housing.

Architecturally, at the other extreme to the typically suburban low-rise dwelling is the skyscraper. This too has become in modern cities a near-universal building type. The first skyscrapers were built in Chicago and New York from the 1870s onwards. Before them, buildings in cities were rarely higher than six or seven storeys, which was generally the limit for climbing by stairs. Two technologies made higher building possible: the invention of the elevator and the substitution of the steel frame for load-bearing masonry walls. The early skyscrapers mostly provided office space for businesses, which were sometimes the exclusive occupant of a building that then bore a corporate name, like New York's Singer Tower, opened in 1907, the Woolworth Building of 1913 dubbed a 'cathedral of commerce' and the Chrysler Building of 1930. The American skyscraper became very exportable:

> "Just as the skyscraper skyline emerged as the dominant symbol of the US central city, so skyscrapers loomed large as images of modernity and futurity within fiction, cinema, comic books, art, architecture and urbanism…key symbols of the power of consumer and corporate culture; they romanticised power and the intensity of the twentieth-century metropolis; they were 'literal embodiments of the promise of modernity, technology and progress; and they were powerful icons of the most powerful nation on Earth.'"[2]

Surprisingly perhaps, the terrorists' destruction in 2001 of New York's World Trade Center towers, then Manhattan's tallest buildings, caused only a momentary blip in the world's embrace of the skyscraper. Even the anti-capitalist Soviet Union had been an imitator with the so-called 'Seven

Sisters'—a group of skyscrapers built in Moscow in the late 1940s and 1950s in a combination of Baroque and Gothic styles, at the time the tallest buildings in Europe; the Soviets also gifted similar skyscrapers to its satellites in Warsaw and Riga. In more recent decades the imitative craze for skyscrapers has characterised some cities of Europe, notably London, and of the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. These buildings have reached new heights enabled by high-speed elevators and lightweight aluminium structures: the height record is presently held by the Burj Khalifa in Dubai with 163 floors. Dubai is today the city with the fourth largest number of skyscrapers, behind Hong Kong, Shenzhen and New York; in total there are now 90 cities in the world with more than 10 skyscrapers. Typically, these new skyscrapers are not, as their Chicago and New York predecessors were, accommodation for company HQs. Most have mixed uses with hotels, restaurants, office space, viewing platforms and luxury apartments. Advanced structural engineering has enabled them to be designed with diverse profiles, different from the earlier curtain-walled box, and they sometimes acquire monikers to express this: London, for example, now has 'The Gherkin', 'The Walkie-Talkie', The 'Cheesegrater', 'The Shard' and 'The Vase'. As architecture, these buildings invert the classic modernist dictum: form does not follow function, rather function follows (i.e. accommodates itself to) form.

All over the world, cities have always had markets. Country people may provision themselves from a plot of land or barter with neighbours, but city people live in a cash economy and need to buy in what they need: markets, from street markets to supermarkets, is where they go. A street market will be open air; it might not in fact be precisely in a street, maybe in a square or on some open land or even in boats on water, as with the so-called floating markets found in Bangkok. Some vendors will simply spread a sheet on the ground for their goods; others will have stalls, which may be erected every time the market opens or be permanent, in which case their goods must be protected from damage or theft when the market is closed. The display of goods may be simple, just piled high, or complex in, for example, glass-fronted, even refrigerated cabinets. In many cities, fruit and vegetable stalls present a colourful sight, always photographed by tourists. The market may be open daily, or just once or twice a week, perhaps in shifting localities—in Mexico City the latter are called *mercados sobre ruedas* [markets on wheels]. Or markets may be seasonal, associated with fairs or festivals. Some Asian cities traditionally have night markets, sometimes open all night, with an emphasis on ready food; they are also found elsewhere in the world with Chinese immigrant communities.

Burj Khalifa, Dubai—presently the world's tallest skyscraper

In some cities, markets have spread to whole districts, usually with permanent buildings along innumerable lanes. This is so with the bazaars and souks in many cities of North Africa and the Middle East, which have grown incrementally over many centuries. The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul is a fine example, constructed in the 15th century after the Ottoman conquest of the city and now with 4000 shops attracting hundreds of thousands of

customers daily, shopping for jewellery, leather goods, antiques, fabrics, clothes, carpets and ceramics; the surrounding streets cater for more everyday needs. These souks and bazaars have more recent, less elegant equivalents. One of these in Addis Ababa claims to be the largest market in Africa. A guide book warns that:

> "The market chaos known as Merkato, just west of Addis's centre, can be as rewarding as it is exasperating. You may find the most eloquent aroma. You may also find that your wallet has been stolen and that you've got stinky excrement on your shoes…What should be noted is that this isn't one of those nicely photogenic markets with goods laid out on the ground or in little stalls. Most vendors now have permanent tin shacks to house their wares…The mass of stalls, produce and people may seem impenetrable, but on closer inspection the market reveals a careful organisation with sections for each product. You can spend your Birr on pungent spices, silver jewellery or anything else that takes your fancy. There's even a 'recycling market' where sandals (made out of old tyres), coffee pots (from old Italian olive tins) and other interesting paraphernalia can be found."[3]

In some Western cities, there are market halls, many of them andsome buildings dating from the 18th or 19th centuries. Some are still in market use, while others have been converted to ordinary retailing or to restaurants and clubs; either way they are now major tourist attractions. Fine examples are La Boqueria in Barcelona, the Saluhall in Stockholm, Covent Garden in London and Faneuil Hall in Boston. In some cities, such market halls have been built in more recent times, sometimes to replace an open-air market: such is the case in Phnom Penh with an Art Deco building dating back to French colonisation and in Tashkent with a brutalist building from Soviet times.

In all cities, there are always shops aside from markets. They come in great variety: some not more than the front room of a shanty town dwelling selling a few basic, everyday goods; then neighbourhood stores with a larger range; more specialist retailers of shoes, furniture, stationery or many other goods; bars, cafes and restaurants; others providing services like hairdressing, laundry and money transactions; and on to upscale boutiques for fashionable clothing and accessories. They may be individual enterprises or part of chains. Some such chains are now found in cities across the world, having become global brands, especially in clothing (like Levi Strauss, Gap, Nike or Prada) or food (like McDonalds and Kentucky Fried Chicken). Shops have got bigger and taken on new forms, notably as supermarkets. They originated in North America in the 1930s and over succeeding decades spread to cities in the rest of the world. The supermarket's distinctiveness is not just its size and the range of its goods, but also in being self-service, with lower prices from high turnover, pre-packaging, and payment by cash

or card only; that is, no accounts. Many city supermarkets are owned by national chains. There have also been attempts by Western supermarket companies to operate globally, like the French Carrefour, British Tesco and US Walmart, though not always successfully because, it seems, of insensitivity to local market expectations.

The shopping mall is another US invention. They have a massive floorspace, are maybe multilevel with hundreds, even thousands, of shops of great variety, cinemas, restaurants, and large car parks, and are usually in an out-of-town location. They pose a commercial threat to traditional city shopping districts. Malls took off in the USA in the 1950s, then spread around the cities of the world. Now, there isn't a large city in the world, even in the poorer global South, without at least one shopping mall, finding its customers in the growing number of car-owning, middle-class residents. Many cities host several malls. In recent decades the fastest growth in shopping malls has mostly been in cities of South and East Asia, and the Persian Gulf, and that is where today's largest malls, some up to 500,000 m^2 or more floorspace, are now to be found. Malls are especially where global retailers choose to establish their outlets. For example, visiting Dubai Mall you are struck by the dominant presence of familiar Western retailers of clothing, cosmetics, food and household goods, and the absence of local businesses or local goods—it just seems like an 'international nowhere'.

Amazon comes to India, Delhi

In the cities of the global North today, online purchases and delivery to households have started to make inroads into the business of supermarkets and malls. Traditional retailers have supplemented their store offers with those online. And new online businesses have claimed larger shares of the retail market. Amazon is now the world leader in terms of customers and revenues. It started in 1994 as an online marketplace for books but rapidly expanded to sell electronics, software, clothing, furniture, food, toys and jewellery. For many consumers it has become the initial port of call for any purchase. The company has consumers in the global South in its sights: it recently established an Indian subsidiary. As online retailing grows, the car trip to the supermarket or the mall starts to be replaced by the neighbourhood delivery van.

Many of the goods on sale in the supermarkets and malls come from mass production in factories. All cities have factories. They have increased in size and scope since the earliest examples in 18th century England, which were devoted to textile manufacture and powered by water, and hence in riverside and sometimes rural locations. Subsequently, coal and steam power, and later electricity, made factories locationally footloose, with their products widened to include steel and vehicles, and today also clothing, prepared food, household and electronic goods among others, and their scale required larger and larger workforces. They claimed a presence in the cities of Europe, capitalist North America, communist Russia and present-day China. As Freeman argues in his history of the factory:

> "The biggest factories in history are operating right now, making products like smartphones, laptops, and brand-name sneakers that for billions of people around the world define what it means to be modern. These factories are staggeringly large, with 100,000, 200,000, or more workers. But they are not without precedent. Outsized factories have been a feature of industrial life for more than two centuries. In each era since the factory arrived on the stage of history, there have been industrial complexes that have stood out on the social and cultural landscape by dint of their size, their machinery and methods, the struggles of their workers, and the products they produced. Their very names—Lowell or Magnitogorsk or now Foxconn City—have broadly evoked sets of images and associations."[4]

In the last decade, large retail warehouses, for companies supplying goods to city shops or to online customers, have become a new kind of factory building in some cities.

Modes of travel have changed greatly in modern cities. In consequence, the transport terminus has become a common building type. The dock was the original kind of terminus, and in the 19th century many cities built new docks for both passenger and goods traffic: think of Cherbourg in France,

Southampton in England and New York as termini for the trans-Atlantic sea voyage. In some cities, such docks remain important today, for cargo more than passengers. The arrival of railways in cities in the last two centuries created new railway termini, typically on the edge of the then city centre, that you now find in any large city of the world.* Many are architecturally magnificent. Some personal favourites are Grand Central in Manhattan, St Pancras in London, now restored to host the Eurostar trains to the Continent, the Art Nouveau Helsinki main station and the modernist Termini in Rome. With the recent construction of new high-speed intercity trainlines in China, new termini have been built—for example, in Guangzhou and in Shanghai—located on the cities' outer edges and vast in scale with multiple levels separating waiting halls, ticket offices, eateries, train platforms, metro and bus connections, taxi ranks, and car parking—the experience of using them is more like that at an airport terminal.

In many cities, especially in the global South, intercity bus travel is as important as boat or rail but only rarely are there proper termini. Usually, there is just an open area where buses depart and arrive, often with minimal facilities like ticket offices, cafes and toilets, and poor information on timetables and routes. For a traveller, these can commonly be places of confusion, though there are exceptions. London has its Victoria Coach Station, built in 1932 in its distinctive Art Deco style. La Paz in Bolivia has an elegant, metal-framed, yellow-coloured *Terminal de Autobuses*, designed in 1875 by no less than Gustav Eiffel, famed for the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Chennai in India has the well-organised Mofussil Bus Terminus, built in 2002, covering 15 hectares, which claims to be the largest in Asia, is able to handle 3000 buses a day and has facilities like free water, dormitory rooms, and even a refuge for lost or abused children.

Today, most cities have airports, and sometimes more than one, as important transport termini. These airports expand all the time, in response to the growth of national and international air travel, and extra runways, terminals, hangars, warehouses and car parks are part of that expansion. An example is how Dubai in the Persian Gulf has in recent decades successfully promoted itself as a transport hub; its airport is the world's busiest for international passenger traffic and it is also the home of the successful Emirates airline. Over the last half century this airport has progressively

* Moscow's main railway termini are called *vokzals*, as with the *Leningradskyvokzal* and *Kievskyvokza*l. The reason is curious. In the 1780s an English theatre manager, Michael Maddox, created a pleasure garden in St Petersburg, which was named Vokzal after London's Vauxhall Gardens. The railway station that was later built to serve the gardens was also called Vokzal. This then became the generic word for Russian railway termini.

Main station, Helsinki

expanded its capacity with new and upgraded terminals, and now offers the passenger—many in transit—all the razzmatazz of food, hospitality and shopping for which the whole city of Dubai is famed. Many city airports, first established decades ago on the then edges of cities, now find themselves engulfed by the subsequent growth of the city, so that their location limits both the growth of flight numbers, their accessibility by ground traffic and their physical expansion. So, some cities have taken the bold step of building a totally new airport at a location well away from it. Tokyo built its new Narita airport 60 kilometres east of the city in the 1970s; Paris also built its Charles de Gaulle airport in the 1970s; London opened a third airport at Stansted in the 1990s—all three were politically contentious choices of location. Hong Kong built a new airport, which opened in 1998, on land reclaimed from the bay and connected to the city by new roads and bridges, and an extension to the metro; its ambition is to expand from being the city airport into what it calls Airport City, a centre of air-travel-related businesses for the whole Hong Kong, Macao and Guangdong region. Istanbul's new airport, built some 35 kilometres north-west of the city, opened its initial stage in 2018 and on completion will replace two existing airports; presently it can only be reached by road but metro connections are planned. In 2019 Beijing opened its brand new Daxing International

Airport, 46 kilometres from the city centre, to complement its existing Capital International Airport, 32 kilometres out; airlines have been assigned slots at one or the other. Daxing's starfish-shaped terminal claims to be the largest single-structure terminal in the world.

The building of hotels in modern cities has accompanied that of transport termini. Places for travellers to stay had existed in most cities before the development of hotels. But as travel over longer distances—by boat, train or plane—became more common from and to cities, then the modern hotel developed. Railway companies were early providers: it is claimed that the Great Western Hotel in Reading, England, built in 1844 adjacent to the station created by the new Great Western Railway from London, was the first. But the grandest hotels were those built at the main railway termini like St Pancras, Charing Cross and Paddington in London, and the Midland Hotel in Manchester. Outside the West, upmarket hotels serving Western imperialism were established such as the Metropole in Hanoi, Raffles in Singapore, the Taj Mahal Palace in Bombay and the Shepheard Hotel in Cairo. Other city hotels have acquired fame from their residents: the fashion designer Coco Chanel lived in the Hotel Ritz in Paris on and off for more than 30 years; former President Herbert Hoover lived in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York from the end of his presidency in 1933 until he died in 1964; and Vladimir Nabokov and his wife, Vera, lived in the Montreux Palace Hotel in Switzerland from 1961 until his death in 1977. Most large city hotels are now owned by international chains, and they have extended their reach into the cities of both the global North and South, such as the French Accor group, the Canadian Four Seasons Hotels, the Hong-Kong-based Mandarin Hotels and the US Radisson group. Even such poor or unsafe cities, like Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo or Port-au-Prince in Haiti, can offer a 4- or 5-star hotel to the well-heeled business or government traveller. All cities will also have hotels across the whole 2- to 5-star range. In some cities there are local specialities, like the smaller 'boutique hotels' with classic décor and bespoke service, economical 'capsule hotels' with very little space and basic en suite, and 'love hotels' let by the hour for sex. Online reservation, through platforms like Booking.com, is increasingly how visitors find their hotel in any city of the world. And accommodation in private homes, arranged through the Airbnb platform, is now rivalling city hotels.

To function, all these city buildings need the supply of water, waste removal, energy and telecommunications. In poor cities, or in the poor districts of richer cities, many of these services will be improvised by residents themselves. Water may be gathered from shared wells and pumps, or bought from mobile water sellers. Solid waste may simply be dumped or

incinerated, and human excrement may find its way from shared latrines into watercourses. Coal or timber may be bought and burned for cooking and heat. Electricity may be 'stolen' from overhead lines; ditto telephony, though increasingly the widespread ownership of mobile phones substitutes for landlines—even so, their batteries need to be charged. Outside these districts, there will be organisations providing these services—sometimes publicly owned, maybe by the city authority itself, sometimes private—to which residents and businesses can subscribe and pay a tariff. Exceptionally, water, waste removal, electricity and gas may connect to buildings invisibly through underground pipes and cables. But in most cities, even in more prosperous districts, there will be a tangle of overhead lines for electricity and telephony stretching from building to building along the streets, and in those streets there will also be designated points for depositing waste for collection.

Sometimes, individual buildings contribute strongly to the identity of cities—as with Manhattan's or Hong Kong's clustered skyscrapers, Dubai's many shopping malls, or Sydney's Opera House. But it may sometimes be the more holistic character of a city's built environment that is definitive. There may be clear conjunctions, or conversely separations, of activities in its patterns of land use; the overall density of development may vary with buildings crammed closely together or spread apart; the street pattern may be gridded or structured around boulevards or freeways; or there may be lots of greenery in parks, private gardens or spacious tree-lined streets. These are characteristics of what is termed the cityscape—a term coined by analogy with 'landscape' to express this. Thus, for Venice, to take an obvious example, it is not so much just the individual buildings like the Doge's Palace or the Rialto Bridge, rather the whole composition that is definitive: buildings, piazzas, canals and lanes, their dominant building materials and style, the overall density and scale of the place, and the interspersion of palaces and churches among workshops and dwellings. Likewise in San Francisco it is the cityscape, itself the product of a street grid madly imposed on a hilly site, that counts. In Cairo it is the city-wide traffic jam that holds, like glue, the fragments of its cityscape together. In Tokyo it is the night-time neon and other lighting that creates the whole cityscape.

In 1960 the academic urban planner Kevin Lynch offered in *The Image of the City*[5] an analytical schema for characterising a cityscape. He derived it from surveys of how residents of Boston, Jersey City and Los Angeles said that they found their way around their city. What emerged from their descriptions was a distinction between five elements of their mental image of their city: paths for movement; nodes where paths intersect or activity

intensifies; edges where two elements join, providing discontinuities or possibly barriers; districts of distinct character; and landmarks serving as markers, either close or distant. Thus, in advising a visitor traversing their city, people might say "Keep straight ahead (path) with the park on your left" (the park as edge), "At a junction flanked by hotels (node) bear left", "You'll know you're heading in the right direction when you see the radio mast" (landmark) or "Then you go through an industrial zone" (district). Though derived empirically from North American cities, you can recognise applying this analysis to, say, Frankfurt, Delhi or Kampala.

In most cities of the global North and in some cities of the global South there are popular movements for the conservation of treasured buildings from the past. Typically, they may include buildings such as palaces, churches, mosques, temples, markets, barracks and theatres, some of which may have been adapted to new purposes. But conservation may also be pursued for whole districts of a city that are historically or architecturally important: three examples are the residential area of Liverpool 6, dating from its prosperous time in the 18th century, the so-called 'White City' in Tel Aviv, a district with a large number of modernist buildings from the 1930s designed by immigrant architects from Europe, and also Mumbai's large collection of Art Deco buildings from the same period. Many such conserved buildings and districts around the world are on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage sites.

In all cities, there is a property market in which plots of land or buildings get bought and sold at a price. Typically, a number of factors, shaping demand or supply, determine the price. Location is one and it is generally the case that prices are higher towards the city centre, but the nearness of attractions like parks, waterfronts or universities, or the good accessibility that nearness to airports or freeways provide, may also increase price. The condition of buildings may be important: those in older, now rundown districts may be cheap, but, on the other hand, some older districts may have environmental qualities that confer higher status, even fashionability, that commands a price premium. In many cities, districts with cheap and also costly properties stand cheek by jowl, as in some Latin American and Asian cities where luxury flats and shanties adjoin each other physically, though with minimal social or economic interaction.

Modernist buildings, Tel Aviv's White City

Most buildings in most cities are valued for their practical use, as homes, workshops, offices or whatever. But in recent years, city property has become very attractive as an investment, a competitor to government bonds, company shares, or even artworks and gold; and sometimes an attractive haven for laundering money illicitly gained. These investors may be individuals or corporations, from Europe or North America, and increasingly

from the Middle East, Asia and Russia, including the sovereign wealth funds of some governments. Some operate through anonymous shell companies, so-called because they exist only on paper, without premises, employees or assets. The cities that these investors favour—in expectation of fast, continuing rises in property values in the high-end properties they prefer—include Paris, London, New York, Vancouver, Singapore and Shanghai. One consequence is that in some parts of these cities there are many buildings that remain permanently unoccupied and unused. Some local observers claim that these buildings, even whole districts of them, always remain unlit after nightfall.

PART THREE

SHAPING CITY IDENTITY

Any of these seven elements—Home, Work, Daily Life, Politics, Culture, Travel, Buildings—may contribute characteristics that create the identity of any city. A city's identity, unlike its name, is not given, universally recognised, formally approved or officially sanctioned. Identity—like beauty—is in the eye of the beholder. That may be the eye of a resident of the city or of a visitor to the city, and as residents or visitors we might debate what we feel is so particular in giving identity to a favourite city. Observers of the city—as writers, painters, photographers, movie makers and others—may also influence city identity. As noted before, there is a strong tradition of novels, especially crime fiction, being rooted in particular cities. Some painters have used particular cities over and over again as subjects to explore: Canaletto and Venice, and the Impressionists and Paris are obvious examples. And, in the previous century, movie makers have displayed images of many cities, which through television are projected right into people's homes.

There are many kinds of city identity. Some have been long established, sometimes originating in previous centuries, and are widely accepted; others are more recent and may be contentious. Then, existing city names have been borrowed to give an identity to another city, like the many variations on Paris and Venice around the world. When a city identity is unique it may have one of a variety of forms: it may relate to a singular city characteristic or a composite of characteristics; it may relate to tangible or abstract characteristics of the city; or it may express a permanent or ephemeral characteristic. Finally, and importantly, a city identity can express either an overall positive or negative view of a city, an identity that attracts or repels.

But what influences bring these different kinds of characteristic to bear on the identity of today's city? They are threefold. First and foremost, a city's present-day, intrinsic characteristics will be important in shaping the city's identity. But second, there may well be inheritances from its past that manifest themselves in its present buildings, politics, customs and cultures. And third, in a globalised world, no city is immune from the possible influence of practices imported from other cities elsewhere.

Chapter Ten

Many Kinds of City Identity

There are many kinds of city identity. One is a *historic identity* that has long been associated with a particular city, even to become a nickname. Paris as 'the City of Light' is an example, variously ascribed either to its role in the 18th-century philosophical Enlightenment, or to its early adoption of street lighting in its boulevards and in the illumination of major buildings. Rome as 'the Eternal City' is another example, expressive of its longevity, reportedly already called such in the 1st century BC. Manila, Shanghai and Hong Kong have each at different times been called the 'Pearl of the Orient'. There is too the moniker of New York as 'the Big Apple': its complex derivation seems to be from local horse racing in the early 20th century, where the prizes were called 'big apples', through the city's later dominance in jazz—'There are many apples on the tree, but only one Big Apple'—to its conscious adoption in the 1970s by the city's tourism promoters to encourage visitors to 'come and take a bite of the Big Apple' at a time when the city's reputation for crime, poverty and decay was at its height. Finally, among historic identities, there is the enigmatic 'See Naples and die', a saying often ascribed to Goethe on his early-19th-century Grand Tour, purportedly meaning that after its splendour there is nowhere else worth visiting.

Sometimes there are *borrowings* of city names to express identity. Again, Paris is an exemplar, and Bucharest, Beirut and Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) have all been deemed to be 'the Paris of the East', largely for their sophistication, culture and cityscape—Saigon and Beirut were both colonised by the French. Athens has likewise had its imitators in cities thought of as having equal intellectual distinction, as with Edinburgh as 'the Athens of the North', Bogota as 'the Athens of South America', and Adelaide as 'the Athens of Australia'—though Melbourne has a larger Greek population. And Nashville likes to call itself 'the Athens of the (United States) South', though arguably this is more to do with the full-scale replica of the Parthenon built there for an 1897 Exposition. Many cities with canals and waterways within them have been equated with Venice: Wikipedia identifies 39 cities that claim to be the 'Venice of the North',

including St Petersburg, Stockholm and Manchester, and 22 cities claiming to be the 'Venice of the East', including Bangkok and Kyoto. As with New York and 'the Big Apple', many of these identities are the product of tourist boosterism.

An identity might be *singular* or *composite*. Buildings provide good examples. For there are some single structures that are universally associated with readily identifiable cities, such as the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, the Sydney Opera House and the Statue of Liberty in New York. Their image brings readily to mind the city in which they are located. Usually it is both the uniqueness of the structure and its physical prominence in the city that give it force as a singular identifier; it may also have been widely reproduced in painting, photography and film. On the other hand there are cities where it is whole districts of many buildings—the composite cityscape—that create identity. Examples are the cityscape of Manhattan with its skyscrapers and gridded street plan, the jumble of buildings crowded together in Hong Kong, the modernism of Brasilia and the neon-soaked streets of night-time Tokyo. This distinction between singular and composite may also apply to other characteristics. Take cuisine: a city may be renowned for one characteristic dish—a guidebook may urge the visitor not to miss this treat—or it may be a whole style of food, exemplified by many dishes, that characterises the city. In Addis Ababa it is the injera that is deemed unmissable, in Copenhagen it is smorgasbord, in Austin, Texas, it is barbequed beef brisket. Whereas in Palermo it is a whole, distinct cuisine, combining Italian, Spanish and Arab influences, that is typical. Likewise with customs, there may be a singular habit that is characteristic, such as a form of greeting—for example, a handshake, cheek kiss, fist bump or hug—or there may be a whole, composite pattern of behaviour of a certain degree of formality.

An identity may combine *tangible* or *abstract* characteristics. Again, individual buildings and a whole cityscape are tangible, and so are local dress and food. In contrast, public behaviour—shouting, pushing and shoving, jeering, staring, spitting, and many other customs—is mostly intangible and abstract; likewise, the conduct of city authorities, including the helpful or unhelpful bureaucracy which residents must deal with in their daily lives. Also, there is the bureaucracy that greets visitors on their arrival, especially the sometimes very unfriendly passport controllers, as in New York. And too the forces of law and order, both legal like the police or illegal like vigilantes. On the other hand, taxi drivers in many cities are noted for their affability and helpfulness.

It may be characteristics that are *permanent* and/or *ephemeral* that count in a city identity. Transport, for example, encompasses such a distinction.

There is the permanent infrastructure of streets and railways, car parks, and stations, and the kinds of vehicle that may characterise a city, as do Paris's boulevards, Los Angeles's freeways, Venice's *vaporetti*, Moscow's elegant metro, or taxis of unique liveries in different cities. But there is also, and often more distinctively, the ephemeral movement of people and vehicles that use the infrastructure: the crush of people on Mumbai's trains and on Addis Ababa's trams, or the crazy street traffic of Beijing and Cairo. City celebrations may likewise have permanence or ephemerality, being annual, seasonal or occasional in their occurrence. There may be permanence in a city's association with a football team, a symphony orchestra or a renowned theatre. But it is the ephemeral rites or festivals that are mostly identified with individual cities, like the Durga Puja in Kolkata, Munich's Oktoberfest and London's Notting Hill Carnival. Other occasional celebrations— like marathons, Gay Pride festivals, Halloween and indeed Christmas—while adopted in many cities of the world, may offer a particularly distinctive performance by locals and visitors in some cities, like Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, Halloween in Mexico City and Christmas in New York with its bell-ringing Santa Clauses.

Above all, a city identity may embrace *positive* or *negative* experiences for residents or visitors. There may be pleasure from the look of the place, attractive old and new buildings, its greenery, accessible and economical transport, or the ready availability of services like cafes, bookshops or pharmacies; and the friendliness of people in a city is often valued positively. For residents, these satisfactions are often summed up as the 'liveability' of a city. But some cities can offer a largely negative experience for residents and visitors. Many of its citizens may lack an adequate roof over their head, with many street-sleeping or squatting, or being in insecure, low-income, informal work, or some of its children may resort to begging. From time to time, a city may be prone to ill health, from contagious disease—such as with coronavirus in recent years—or from vehicle emissions and air pollution. The city may also be renowned as unwelcoming, badly administered, corrupt, even oppressively policed, with petty crime, and even parts of it known as no-go areas. And a city's political volatility may lead to frequent protest and disorder in its streets,

Many cities in the world, probably most cities, offer both positive and negative experiences. All cities have housing for both the rich and the poor: elegant high rises and leafy suburban villas on the one hand, decaying slums and shanty towns on the other. Likewise, both orderly shopping malls and disorderly street markets. Shanghai, already noted above as a 'Pearl of the Orient', was also in the past called the 'Whorehouse of the Orient'. There is then the question of whether the positive or negative characteristics

dominate, at a particular time, in a city's widely held identity: this can matter greatly in the encouragement, or discouragement, that the city offers to immigrants and visitors.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

INTRINSIC INFLUENCES— FROM THE PRESENT

To country dwellers a city, even a smallish one, will seem a very different world; strange, bewildering, even frightening. Yet it is in cities that more than half of their global fellows now choose to spend their lives. This is a recent phenomenon: in 1950, 30% of the world's population was urban, today it is 55% and by 2050 the projection is for it to be 68%.[1] The 2018 UN World Urbanisation Prospects Report observes that:

> "Urbanisation has generally been a positive force for economic growth, poverty reduction and human development. Cities are places where entrepreneurship and technological innovation can thrive, thanks to a diverse and well-educated labour force and a high concentration of businesses. Urban areas also serve as hubs for development, where the proximity of commerce, government and transportation provide the infrastructure necessary for sharing knowledge and information. Urban dwellers are often younger, more literate and more highly educated, are more likely to have access to decent work, adequate housing and social services, and can enjoy enhanced opportunities for cultural and political participation as well as gender equality. Economies of scale in urban areas and technological innovation can facilitate the sustainable provision of infrastructure such as roads, piped water and electricity, as well as basic services such as education and healthcare."[2]

While this is generally true, present day life in cities varies from case to case. There are commonalities and differences: between cities of different sizes, between cities in rich and poor countries, between cities of the global North and South, between cities in different continents, and between cities subject to different political regimes.

City size is an important factor behind their characteristics. The world's cities are mostly getting bigger and bigger: their populations, economies and geographical extents all grow from year to year, so that the world now has[3]:

33 cities of 10 million or more population—megacities with important political or economic functions;

48 cities of 5–10 million—this the fastest growing group;

467 cities of 1–5 million—though medium-sized globally, they are often the largest cities in their countries;

598 cities of 500,000 to 1 million—the most prevalent type on most continents;

and more numerous cities of less than 500,000, which together house nearly half the world's urban people.

As a generality, the larger the city, the more diverse is its economy, the more varied its architecture, the richer its culture, and the more complex its transport modes. It may be the case that education—schools, colleges, universities—and healthcare—surgeries, clinics, hospitals—are more readily available to people in larger cities. Certainly, retailing will be more buoyant: most large cities now have shopping malls and online retailing is making great strides. But there may also be more evident poverty, more homelessness, and bigger gaps between the lives of the rich and the poor. And some smaller cities may have unique characteristics that distinguish them: maybe a prestigious university, a nationally important museum or art gallery, or a leading sports team.

There is a broad correlation between national incomes and the degree of urbanisation: most high-income countries have high levels of urbanisation, such as Australia, Canada, Japan, the USA and many European countries; middle-income countries, like Brazil, China, Iran, Mexico, India, Indonesia and Ethiopia, are getting richer while experiencing rapid urbanisation; while low-income countries, especially in Africa, still have low levels of overall urbanisation, though some may have a few very large cities.

Today it is the cities of the global South that are growing fastest. A listing of the world's current 100 fastest growing cities includes only three in the global North: Las Vegas, Austin and Atlanta in the USA.[4] All the others are in the global South: examples are Dakar in Senegal, Nairobi in Kenya, Antanarivo in Madagascar, Wenzhou and Wuhan in China, Jaipur and Patna in India, and Santa Cruz in Bolivia. All 100 of the fastest growing cities have recent annual population growth rates above 2.4%, 34 have rates greater than 3%, 10 have rates greater than 4% and three have rates greater than 5%. At a 5% growth rate, a city population will double every 14 years, at 4% it will double every 18 years, and at 3% it will double every 24 years. This growth comes largely from migration, though the typical youthfulness of migrants also raises fertility and hence higher natural growth in the cities. In recent decades there has been a great migration of people to the world's

cities in search of a better life: opportunities for work and income, the care of their family, education of their children, security and safety, and maybe too a stronger sense of independence and self-esteem. These migrants have come mostly from the smaller towns and villages of their country, sometimes across borders from neighbouring countries, least commonly across continents and oceans from more distant lands. China has seen the world's biggest in-country migration to its cities: today over 200 million people there are living outside their place of birth and upbringing, a movement largely from the central and western rural regions to the cities of the southern and eastern coasts. But such rural–urban migration is also evident in many other countries of the world. Cross-border migration has, for example, been common from Zimbabwe to the more prosperous cities of Botswana and South Africa, where there are now substantial immigrant Zimbabwean communities. Likewise, there has been migration from post-communist Central and Eastern Europe to Western European cities, especially since the extension of the European Union. In 2018 in the USA, it was estimated that there were almost 60 million Hispanics—about 18% of the overall population—living there, mostly in its cities. The wider transcontinental, transoceanic migration has particularly been a post-colonial movement of the last half century and more, particularly when people from the former colonies of the European powers migrated to the cities of their former rulers; some have also gone to North America and Australasia. Also, there are people whose professional careers take them to and from the major cities of the world. Size is an important factor behind the city's characteristics.

Such rapid growth shapes city development economically, socially and politically. In my book on *Modern Cities* I observed that:

> "For cities to grow in an orderly manner, certain formal economic, social and political processes must operate successfully…Existing businesses expand and new businesses emerge to provide employment and income for the growing population. Shelter is provided, either in the existing housing stock or newly built. There are connections to water, power and telecommunication supplies. Infrastructure for transport, water, sewerage, waste disposal and services for education, healthcare and welfare arrive. The newcomers get help and support in finding their feet in this new place, which may come from services provided by public or civil society agencies or from contacts and communities already in the city. And the city authorities secure funding, personnel and political support to plan, manage and regulate the city's growth. Through such processes the additional resources of the newcomers–their energy, skills, consumption, spending and tax revenue–can stimulate and support a virtuous circle of city growth."[5]

In cities of explosive growth, such formal processes may be partially absent or sometimes simply be overwhelmed by the pressures of an expanding population. Existing organisations—businesses, public authorities and civil society—may be unequipped to respond adequately, unable to offer sufficient jobs, school places, healthcare or housing. In these circumstances, in the place of formal processes of city growth, informal provision flourishes to meet these needs; or it supplements them, creating a dual economy. Feeding city people illustrates the distinction between formal and informal provision: on the one hand, there are supermarkets belonging to national, even international, chains, with vast premises offering a dazzlingly wide range of goods, employing trained staff and paying them taxed wages, and reporting its profits; on the other hand, there are street stalls offering just one kind of food, made and sold by the maker or their family, pocketing the earnings and quite probably not paying taxes. This duality—of the formal and informal—is likewise evident in many aspects of work, housing, travel and even entertainment in the cities of the global South.

In the global North the current trajectory of city development is more varied. Some cities in North America, Europe and Russia are declining, especially those with outdated economies or ageing populations, whereas some are stable and others are growing with successful economies. A recent report on the prospects for cities in the European Union reveals a varied pattern.[6] It forecasts that over half of the cities will see their populations decline by 2050, one fifth by more than 10%, and some—in Eastern Germany, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania and Bulgaria—by more than 25%. Of the cities that are forecast to grow, most will grow by more than 10%, some—including London, Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Munich and Bologna—by 25–50%, and a few—such as Luxembourg, Stockholm and Brussels—by more than 50%.

Current politics may also define today's cities, particularly through their economies and governance. Economically, capitalism has triumphed. There are really no centrally planned communist cities left—maybe Pyongyang in North Korea is a sole exception—though some of their historic features, like public ownership of land or dominant public housing, may persist, but these are also found elsewhere, for example, in Hong Kong and Singapore. Today's cities mostly have mixed economies, with both private and state enterprises as active agents in shaping them. Visit Moscow, Beijing or Hanoi and you will find privately owned stores, restaurants and taxis akin to those in Madrid, Mexico City or Montreal.

In terms of city governance, the distinction is between autocratic and (genuinely, not just nominally) democratic practice. This is most evident in

the misconduct of elections to city assemblies or mayors and in the degree of corruption in the conduct of city government. These city pathologies may be largely invisible. More visible to residents and visitors will be street crime and also the widespread presence of the police, even the army, carrying guns at the ready, maybe exercising vehicle stops, street closures, and random stop and searches. The impact of such practices will be reinforced when trust in the authority of city government is low. Just as there are 'failed states' in the world, there are also 'failed cities': arguably, contemporary examples might include Gaza City, Baghdad, Kabul, Manila, Mogadishu and Port-au-Prince. In such cities the police may be unreliable forces for maintaining law and order, at least in an incorrupt, legal and accountable way, and others—gangs, vigilantes or fanatics—may take it upon themselves to punish citizens, even in some cases by kidnapping and killing.

Many modern cities have characteristics often described as iconic. Originating as a descriptor of a painting of a religious figure as an aid to devotion, its modern meaning is of a representative symbol. Like the painting, a modern icon is usually strongly visual and its image is what helps us to recognise it. In cities, buildings may often be described as iconic, because they recognisably represent that city: just think of the Imperial Palace in Beijing, the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, Table Mountain in Cape Town, the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro and many more. These are all single and physical, as city icons often are. But the iconic quality may extend beyond the individual building or structure. It may characterise a common building type, as with the Art-Nouveau-style entrances to many Paris Metro stations or the brownstone houses in New York. Or it may encompass a whole district of a city, like the French Quarter in New Orleans or New Delhi, or indeed the whole city, as with Venice. It may also not just be buildings: many visitors to London might regard the policemen's helmets, its pubs, the black taxis and the double-decker buses as iconic. Indeed, the prevalence of red as the colour of those buses, and also of other public facilities like telephone booths and postboxes, is unique to London. And local clothing or local cuisine might be iconic as representative of many a city.

CHAPTER TWELVE

INHERITED INFLUENCES— FROM THE PAST

There are only a few cities in the world with little history, that have seemingly arrived fully formed in the present. Obvious examples are new cities, created afresh by the diktat of some authority, like the new capital cities of Brasilia in Brazil, Yamoussoukro in Ivory Coast, Abuja in Nigeria, Astana in Kazakhstan and Naypyidaw in Myanmar.[1] Aside from such capitals, many nations have built new cities as part of their national development policies, exemplified in Britain, Sweden, France and Egypt.[2] There are other cities that have grown so rapidly in an unplanned manner that they have scant evidence of history in their functions or buildings. This is true of boomtowns that have prospered and grown from exploiting some discovered or created resource, such as Las Vegas from gambling, Cancun from tourism, Silicon Valley from IT innovation and entrepreneurship, and Shenzhen from manufacturing electronic goods, all grown to be million-plus cities over short periods of time.[3] Many cities in the global South also have this ahistorical character of rapid, recent expansion. One is Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which now has a population of over 11 million—making it the third largest city in Africa after Cairo and Lagos—having grown from a mere 8000 in 1900, and still only 500,000 in 1960 after independence from its colonial status, but with explosive growth since then.[4]

There are, as well, old cities that have had to be substantially rebuilt—economically and socially as much as physically— after some cataclysmic event. Earthquakes, for one, as in San Francisco in 1906 and 1989, Tokyo in 1923, and Port-au-Prince in 2010. In the Tokyo case, 100,000 people died and more than half the buildings in the city, many of timber construction, were destroyed or seriously damaged. Major city fires can be equally destructive, as can be tsunamis. In all such cases the city's history is in part lost. Even more consequential can be the effect of war. In World War 2, aerial bombing severely damaged London, Coventry, Hamburg and Dresden, while ground combat left Stalingrad, Warsaw and Berlin in ruins.

More recently, prolonged civil war has destroyed much of some cities: Beirut, Gaza City and Aleppo are all examples.

But most cities have continuous histories. And inheritances from their past are potent influences on their present identity. Economists have a concept called 'sunk cost' by which they mean the cost paid for something in the past that cannot be recovered. So they argue that present choices and decisions should disregard the past, and just focus on the present and the future. But this is hardly possible in cities where the consequences of past decisions and investments are all too evident in the present. For cities are commonly subject to inertia. This is most apparent in the buildings and infrastructure of today's cities, much of which has been inherited from the past: for example, the dwellings in which people live, the roads they travel, the power lines above and underground to which they connect, all have mostly been there for some time. An important task of business and government in the present-day city is the adaptation of this inheritance to meet current needs, through—to stay with the same examples—improving dwellings to incorporate water supply, toilets, air cooling or insulation; reconfiguring road space to accommodate new transport modes, increase safety and ease movement; and upgrading the networks and revising the tariffs for power supply. Such adaptive action may be stimulated by new technologies, as with the succession of new modes of city transport over the last century and more, as motorised travel supplemented walking and riding, in shared and individual vehicles, and as trams, metros, transport termini, car parks and freeways came to be fitted into the city. Adaptation may be more cost effective and less disruptive than demolition and rebuilding. In some cases, the present task may not be just to adapt the built inheritance but to conserve it, keeping the monuments, preserving old buildings, landscapes and cityscapes, even protecting whole historic districts of a city. This may be for cultural reasons, though equally the inheritance may be economically valuable as a stimulus to tourism.

This inertia that characterises cities is not just confined to its buildings and infrastructures. The social customs of daily life often have traditional roots, sometimes quite deep roots. This applies very evidently to celebrations. Every city has a calendar of such events through the year, and sometimes there will be traditional food or traditional clothing as part and parcel of an event. Some customs survive because they have become commercialised, even commodified. Halloween is a case in point, now reputedly the third most celebrated event worldwide after Christmas and Easter, with its parties, pumpkins, cards, costumes, house decorations, and trick and treating. Valentine's Day and Mother's Day are similarly now universal and largely commercialised. But inherited continuities extend beyond social

celebrations into many social norms. In some cities, there may be what are regarded as traditions, accepted—often unthinkingly—as simply 'how things are done here'. This may apply, for example, to buying or renting property, to frequently moving house or staying put, to joining in with particular recreations, to women going out to work or staying at home, to behaving in certain ways in public, and to dressing for different occasions like job interviews or funerals. Such a list can go on and on. Barbara Ehrenreich's 2007 book *Dancing in the Streets* on public celebrations is subtitled *A History of Collective Joy*.[5] The word 'collective' here is significant, for most inherited customs are inherited collectively. Families are an important transmitter of customs, in part from their parenting role and in part from the endorsement of traditional customs that parental authority provides. Schools and workplaces can operate similarly. And many other collective enterprises—such as sports clubs, faith congregations, and volunteer or neighbourhood groups where people with common interests or experiences come together—can also fulfil this role. For adopting an inherited custom can be an important source of shared solidarity.

Many cities have a strong, unique tradition in their culture. Often there will be a museum focused on such a cultural tradition. And the city may still have a community of practitioners, perhaps attracting aficionados from elsewhere. It may be that a city is associated strongly with painting or a style of painting, as is Paris still with the Impressionists and subsequent styles of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, or New York with the Abstract Expressionism or Pop Art of the mid-20th century. Musically, Vienna and Salzburg are associated with Mozart, and Bayreuth with Wagner, associations maintained in part by contemporary festivals. Popular music forms of the 20th century inform the reputation of some cities: jazz and New Orleans, country music and Memphis, samba and Rio de Janeiro, reggae and Kingston, and grunge and Seattle, for example.

The economy of today's cities may also in part be derived from the past. For there are examples of a city's economic specialisms that have been long established and may indeed be an important feature of the city's present-day identity. If its products are consumable, then they may well be found in gift shops and marketed to tourists. The historic specialisms may be as makers, thinkers or traders. Among makers, we can note Paris for fashion (though Milan, New York and London compete with their own Fashion Weeks), Guinness in Dublin (invented in 1759, still brewed there but also now in 50 other countries), engineering in Rhine-Ruhr, clothing in Dhaka and electronic goods in Shenzhen. For thinkers, there are cities long devoted to intellectual or cultural endeavours, ranging from the university cities in most countries of the world, to the IT entertainment centres of Hollywood

in Los Angeles and Bollywood in Mumbai, and those cities like Venice and Istanbul that are magnets for cultural tourism. Exemplars of cities known for trading are Antwerp for diamonds, Johannesburg for gold, and the trio of great financial cities of London, New York and Tokyo spanning the globe in every 24-hour cycle. Also, every city often has its long-established street markets, market halls or souks. These different city specialisms have developed through a historic process of so-called agglomeration, in which localised connections and interdependencies have developed between businesses in the same sector. That sector then expands as a whole with the support of relevant labour skills, local suppliers of raw materials, machinery, finance and other services, and the exchange of information between local businesses themselves which may be fostered by city trade associations.

But there can be less direct economic links to the past in today's cities, where a process of innovation has adapted an old product or service into a new but different one, perhaps in a new sector. Jane Jacobs, in her 1970 book *The Economy of Cities*, argued that this process of adaptation characterises the city economy and indeed explains its health. She declared that:

> "Innovating economies expand and develop. Economies that do not add new kinds of goods and services, but continue only to repeat old work, do not expand much nor do they, by definition, develop."[6]

New work grows out of old work, from new applications for either the materials, the skills used or the markets served in the old work; or sometimes as a response to a problem faced in the old work. The examples that Jacobs gives are of a dressmaker expanding into making brassieres to improve the fit of the dresses; the company that became 3M diversifying from producing sand into making sandpaper and then applying adhesives to other products like masking tape and Post-it notes; and even beer distributors starting protection rackets! The new work may not be undertaken by those who did the old work; indeed, often it may be new entrepreneurs, sometimes in the informal economy, who see and grasp the opportunity for a new product or service. It's simpler to start new enterprises in cities, for so much of what is necessary is already there: local markets for new products or services, premises in which space can be rented, a large and diversely skilled labour force, established businesses to act as suppliers, partners or agents, and sources of capital and professional advice. Clearly, the scope of such support systems varies from city to city and from time to time, and some new enterprises will fail. But most cities have present-day economic activity that is to some degree, directly or indirectly, rooted in its past.

That past may have been politically different from the city's present. It may historically have been dynastic or authoritarian and such regimes often have a strong legacy. Thus, the Tsarist, Hapsburg, Prussian and Ottoman empires that collapsed at the end of World War 1 all left a rich architectural heritage of palaces, churches or mosques, markets, and barracks in their capital cities of St Petersburg, Vienna, Berlin and Constantinople. And in each case, there was also a long-lasting political consequence: the advent of communism in Russia, the secularisation of Turkey under Atatürk, the persistence of Muslim communities in the Balkans, the renewal or creation of independent states in Central and Eastern Europe, and volatile left–right political rivalries in inter-war Vienna. Berlin is the extreme case, having experienced over the last century or so the discontinuity of a succession of differing regimes: the pre-World War 1 Prussian empire, the fragile democracy of the Weimar republic in the 1920s, the Nazi regime of 1933–1945 and the cataclysm this unleashed on the city at the end of World War 2, the subsequent Cold War division of the city between East Berlin and West Berlin which were separated from 1961 to 1989 by the infamous Wall, and then finally from 1991 to the present day the restoration of Berlin as the capital of a reunited Germany. This history is evident today in the city's buildings and spaces—though it often needs close observation to see it—but it has also led to an ongoing debate among Berliners about how much, and how, it should be acknowledged by them in their daily lives, their culture, their new architecture or their governance.[7]

There are though often continuities in city politics. In democratic regimes there may be a constitution that defines electoral processes or responsibilities, like the powers of the mayor, or sources of city revenue, which is only occasionally amended. With dynastic and authoritarian regimes, there may just be long-established conventions. In either case, city politics may have been strongly shaped by events in the past. Some political parties may be long established: for example, today's socialist parties often go back a hundred years or so. And in many cities, there are days of the year marked for political celebration, often related historically to revolutions or liberations. For example, 4 July in the USA and 14 July in Paris and other French cities; in Indian cities three national holidays are marked each year: Republic Day on 28 January, Independence Day on 15 August and Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 2 October.

The most widespread and persistent historic political influence on today's cities comes from colonialism. Up until the middle and later 20th century, much of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and the cities within them, were governed by British, French, Belgian, German, Italian or Dutch colonial regimes that had conquered and displaced earlier native states,

often erased their culture, and defined and imposed the rules and customs under which indigenous populations lived. Even the USA governed the Philippines and Hawaii. These colonised countries and cities achieved independence in the latter half of the 20th century. But many customs survived the political change. Cuisine is one notable survivor: so you will find excellent French patisserie in Abidjan in the Ivory Coast, French baguettes in Saigon,* German *Apfelstrudel* in Windhoek (Namibia), and fine Italian espresso coffee and pizza in Asmara (Eritrea) and in Addis Ababa.

In his 2015 book on *Ten Cities that Made an Empire*—the cities are Boston, Bridgetown, Dublin, Cape Town, Calcutta, Hong Kong, Bombay, Melbourne, New Delhi and Liverpool—Tristram Hunt notes how in them:

> "the footprint of the old British Empire remains wilfully in evidence. After sporting pastimes and the English language (to which might be added Anglicanism, the parliamentary system and Common Law), Jan Morris has described urbanism as 'the most lasting of the British imperial legacies'."[8]

For Morris had declared in her 1983 book *Stones of Empire: The Buildings of the Raj* that:

> "Among history's imperialists the British were certainly not the greatest builders, but they were the greatest creators of towns…Half the cities of the American East owe their genesis to the British Empire, most of the cities of Canada, many of the cities of Africa, all the cities of Australasia and the tremendous city states of Singapore and Hong Kong."[9]

Certainly, here and in other once-colonial cities, there is a legacy of buildings of the former rulers: palaces, courthouses, barracks and cathedrals, now adopted and adapted by the post-independence regimes. New Delhi, built by the British in the 1920s and 1930s as their new capital, separate from the old city, is a supreme example—extensive and spacious, and in style "neither British, nor Indian, nor Roman, simply Imperial" in Jan Morris's judgement.[10] These cities were also often divided between Native and European quarters, and in some cases the latter have mutated since independence into the preferred neighbourhoods of the new business and political elites. The missionaries, who so often accompanied the colonial rulers, created the worldwide communities of Anglicans (now 85 million of them) and Roman Catholics (1.2 billion). Many former colonies have retained English, French, Spanish or Portuguese as official languages, and

* Try the characteristic *Banh mi*, which is a baguette filled with pork, cucumber, carrot, mayonnaise, coriander, and chilli or peanut sauce.

their authors and academics write in these languages and thereby connect with peers in their former rulers' communities. New constitutions were often the product of negotiations on decolonisation and created legislative, executive and judicial institutions based very much on Western models—institutions that ironically had rarely been present in the colonial regimes. Indeed, in New Delhi's government building, the text "Liberty Does Not Descend To A People, A People Must Raise Themselves To Liberty. It Is A Blessing That Must Be Earned Before It Can Be Enjoyed" is carved into the stonework—this just a couple of decades before the British abandoned their Indian Raj. Not all constitutional arrangements have survived, for many ex-colonies, particularly in Africa, have succumbed to dictatorship. And their cities have often become battlegrounds in civil wars, as in the past with Freetown in Sierra Leone, Monrovia in Liberia, Kigali in Rwanda and Maputo in Mozambique—sometimes with the former colonial power clandestinely involved. Surprisingly, colonial era laws still hold in some cities, including, for example, public order laws—as deployed recently in Hong Kong against street protests—and the criminalisation of homosexuality.

Similar inheritances survive in many cities of the former communist countries that became newly independent in the 1990s. Of these, 12 states—on the western fringe of Russia, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia—had been part of the Tsarist Russian Empire and then republics in the Soviet Union, and are still regarded today by the Russian government as within their political sphere of interest. Here, in cities like Tashkent in Uzbekistan or Minsk in Belarus, much Soviet Russian law and custom still prevail, not least because the present, autocratic rulers are often former members of the Politburo under Soviet rule. In the cities of the former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe, including the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which only became communist after World War 2, persistent Russian influence has been less dominant. And they have opened themselves to West European capital and customs, particularly for some through membership of the European Union.

North America and South America had thrown off colonial rule earlier, in the 18th and 19th centuries. But history is still apparent in their cities. In South America, Spanish and Portuguese influence remains strong, which is evident in architecture, cuisine and customs. In the USA, the many and diverse immigrations, initially from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and since then from virtually every country in the world, have given many of its cities a defined identity: as evidenced by the Irish and Boston, the French and New Orleans, the Mexicans and other Latinos and Los Angeles, the Cubans and Miami, and the Chinese and San Francisco. Canada's cities too exhibit such historic influences, particularly in

predominantly francophone Montreal and other cities in Quebec.

This kind of demographic residue is apparent in many other former colonised cities. There are still many ethnic Russians living in cities such as Tashkent in Uzbekistan, Kiev in Ukraine and Riga in Latvia. People originally of Spanish or Portuguese origin, and many other nationalities, are an important component of the population in Latin American cities, for it was they who largely brought those colonies to independence. Europeans are less numerous in the cities of former Asian or African colonies. But here, there are mixed-race people—variously called creole, mestizo or Anglo-Indian—who are successors to the offspring of past marriages or liaisons between colonisers and the colonised.

These colonial influences from the past can cut both ways: as above in once-colonised cities, but also back in the home country and its cities. Edward Said, in his 1993 book *Culture and Imperialism*, observed that:

> "Far from being unitary or monolithic or autonomous things, cultures actually assume more 'foreign' elements, alterities, differences, than they consciously exclude. Who in India or Algeria today can confidently separate out the British or French component of the past from present actualities; and who in Britain or France can draw a clear circle around British London or French Paris that would exclude the impact of India or Algeria upon these two imperial cities?"[11]

The same might be said of Lisbon and Brazil, Amsterdam and Indonesia, and Brussels and the Congo. In all these European cities, there are buildings, street and place names, statues, institutions, and practices that reference past colonial connections. And their museums contain artefacts taken—stolen, many would say—from former colonial lands. In London, to give examples, the British Museum contains many Benin Bronzes from Nigeria and the Elgin Marbles from the Athens Parthenon; and among royalty's Crown Jewels in the Tower of London is the Koh-I-Noor diamond obtained by Queen Victoria after the British annexation of the Punjab in 1849. Some imperial references may already have been erased by renaming streets or even by removing statues—Stalin has disappeared from many plinths in former communist countries, likewise Cecil Rhodes recently in Cape Town and Oxford. But in many European cities, the cuisines from earlier colonies are widely on offer. There are, too, many Western novels and films with narratives that explore colonialism: witness Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* (1904), Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* (1948), and Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979). And, amazingly, among the honours that the British Queen can still confer on her subjects are Commander (CBE), Officer (OBE) and Member (MBE) of the Order of the British Empire, each hierarchically distinct in status from the other.

Above all, in many European cities, there are today large immigrant communities from their former colonial lands. So, for example, Brazilians have migrated to Lisbon; Ecuadorians, Bolivians and Colombians to Madrid; Congolese to Brussels; Indonesians to Rotterdam and Amsterdam; Vietnamese, Senegalese and Algerians to Marseilles, Lyons and Paris; and Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Caribbeans and Nigerians to London, Birmingham, Leicester and Bradford. In some cases, these flows included the return of former colonialists, such as British East African farmers or the so-called French *pieds-noir* of North Africa, no longer feeling at home in the former colony. These migrations were sometimes eased by a privileged residential status, accorded to people from former colonies. Common language also bound migrants' origins and destinations together, since the colonial powers had usually encouraged or required their colonial subjects to learn their language. The presence of such immigrants is often contentious, and there are political parties and media in many countries that demonise them. In 2018 it was revealed that the British government had been hounding immigrants, the so-called Windrush generation (named after the first ship that brought them to the UK) who had come from the Caribbean in the 1950s, for their lack of documentation to show that they had British nationality and the right to stay; many have since lost healthcare, welfare benefits, jobs and tenancies, or even, in a few cases, have been deported. The British Minister who was responsible resigned and compensation will be paid.

In these many ways, the past still haunts the present in today's cities.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

IMPORTED INFLUENCES—FROM ELSEWHERE

Today, people living in cities round the world will often have a real sense of life in cities in other countries. They acquire this knowledge in many ways. They may have relatives or friends living in these other cities and can keep in touch with them by phone, email, Skype, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp or Zoom, perhaps even by letter. They, and others without such overseas contacts, can also see foreign cities on TV, especially through world news coverage, and in fictional form in movies. Media—newspapers, magazines, journals, film, radio, TV, the internet and social media—have become a principal means by which city people are made aware of the wider world. Also, some people will have travelled to other cities on business or as tourists. In all these ways, experiences, practices and ideas can be communicated from one city to another. Such transnational contact between cities is part of the wider phenomenon of globalisation in which the world's places—continents, regions, nations, cities—are bound increasingly closer together. This intimacy of actual or mediated contact is expressed by the common concept of the 'global village'.

Business has globalised in recent decades in a number of ways. The World Trade Organization (WTO) estimated that international trade in 2018 was worth US$19.7 trillion in goods and US$5.6 trillion in services. Today, goods and services on offer in many cities may come from multinational corporations that have supplemented or displaced local providers, sometimes through takeovers. So, the streets of most cities in the world are filled with vehicles—lorries, vans, cars, motorbikes, scooters and buses—designed in Asia, Europe and North America, sometimes manufactured locally under licence. Food imports are widely available, sold in supermarkets, which may be foreign-owned, or on offer in cafes, restaurants or bars: Coca-Cola, Starbucks coffee and Heineken beer are now universal brands, though local beers are still found in most cities. IKEA, the world's largest furniture retailer, has stores in the cities of over 50 countries. IT kit in offices and homes is usually imported. Globalisation has happened too among services.

So, for example, major accountants like PricewaterhouseCoopers and major financiers like HSBC (a.k.a. the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) have a presence in many of the world's cities. Consumer service providers like Deliveroo, Uber and Airbnb have internationalised. And capital roams the world's cities in search of investment opportunities that offer a return, in new property—including many of the growing number of skyscrapers in cities—and infrastructure, even in artworks or sports teams.

Culture too has globalised. In 1992 the historian Eric Hobsbawm reflected, in the context of the quincentenary of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas, on cultural interchange between the Old and the New World. He observed that:

> "If we consider the balance of European and New World elements in our culture, an interesting contrast between elite or high culture and popular culture becomes apparent. In the field of high culture, the balance still favoured the Old World until the late twentieth century…The Americas are still net importers of talent and ideas, and nowhere more so than in the USA, even in the area of its greatest intellectual triumph, scientific research… however, American popular cultures, from the middle or, at the latest, the end of the of nineteenth century, have shown a remarkable power to penetrate the Old World."[1]

Among the latter, Hobsbawm was thinking particularly of jazz, rock 'n' roll, TV and movies. He concluded:

> "…if there is a genuine 'clash of cultures' between the New World and the Old, it is here: between a New World whose main strength and dynamic force is popular and an Old World whose cultural impact on the New has overwhelmingly been through elites and rulers."[1]

Nearly 30 years on, this analysis might be contested in its distinction between high and low culture, and its focus just on Europe and North America. For culture, in all its forms, has globalised as much as business; indeed it is often promoted as business. Consider sport of all kinds on TV and in the numerous 'world championships', pop music sales and tours, the growth of national cinema and its worldwide distribution, international cultural festivals in cities round the world for art, writing, film or theatre, the franchising of TV programmes like *Love Island*, *The Simpsons* and *The Apprentice*, and the international performers and directors in opera and dance companies.

Such globalisation has not been exclusively a one-way process whereby Western commercial and cultural products have become dominant in all the

world's cities. China has become the new 'workshop of the world'. Chinese investment has become important in building African city infrastructure, as with the new tram in Addis Ababa. The newly rich Gulf city states are also now key investors in Western cities: for example, the Qatar sovereign wealth fund owns London's Shard skyscraper, Harrods department store and the Paris St Germain football team in its US$300 billion international portfolio. And pop music from South Korea, TV soap operas from South America, Turkey and Thailand, and films and novels from many countries have all found international audiences.

In many cities, globalisation has created work for local business in providing supplies—from parts to complete goods—to industries in other countries and cities. Goods may also be traded from one place to another, where the place of origin has advantages that make them competitive: cheap—as with some fruit and vegetables or clothing—or unique—as with some cosmetics, food, TV programmes or minerals. Many city economies now have a mix of local and global businesses providing goods and services for consumption. In some cities, such changes have benefited them economically, providing work and income. But not all, for in other cities, especially in the global South, many workers have become locked into poorly paid work and bad working conditions as outsourcers to foreign companies. Consequently, opposition to globalisation has also entered politics in many countries and cities, not least because of the exploitation of local people and resources, including—many critics argue—environmental damage to air or water quality.

Many international agencies have been active in promoting transfers of policies and practices that shape cities. The OECD has conducted reviews of city performance among its members. The WTO has pushed for the liberalisation of international trade, through the reduction of tariffs and the adoption of rules for fair trading. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have in recent decades proselytised a free-market agenda of deregulation, privatisation and lower taxes to national and city governments as a condition of its financial support. Many United Nations agencies have been influential in setting standards for and fostering transfers of economic, social, health and cultural measures that impinge on city life. Most particularly, the UN Human Settlements Programme, known as Habitat and based in Nairobi, has done so since 1978 through publications and events. Its mission is "to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and adequate shelter for all." In 2017 it published its "New Urban Agenda" that:

> "represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future—one in which all people have equal rights and access to the benefits and opportunities

> that cities can offer, and in which the international community reconsiders the urban systems and physical form of our urban spaces to achieve this…we have reached a critical point in understanding that cities can be the source of solutions to, rather than the cause of, the challenges that our world is facing today. If well-planned and well-managed, urbanization can be a powerful tool for sustainable development for both developing and developed countries.
>
> The New Urban Agenda presents a paradigm shift based on the science of cities; it lays out standards and principles for the planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas along its five main pillars of implementation: national urban policies, urban legislation and regulations, urban planning and design, local economy and municipal finance, and local implementation. It is a resource for every level of government, from national to local; for civil society organisations; the private sector; constituent groups; and for all who call the urban spaces of the world 'home', to realize this vision."[2]

To a large extent, this promotes policies and practices that had already been developed in many cities of the world, like, for example, land use regulation, building conservation, slum upgrading, public transport priority, housing affordability, business development and universal child education.

Aside from such intergovernmental organisations, there are many international associations that foster exchanges of experience between today's cities. City twinning, connecting the local governments of cities which sense some affinity to foster commercial, official and personal exchanges, developed in Europe after World War 2—the Coventry–Stalingrad connection claims to be the first. It has now spread worldwide. Some twins seem, at first glance, curious: to take one example at random, what does Baku in Azerbaijan find in common with Basra in Iraq, Naples in Italy, Pretoria in South Africa and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil among the 17 cities with which, according to Wikipedia, it is twinned? Just an excuse for jollies for the politicians, a cynic might say. Another organisation is the City Mayors Foundation, founded in 2003 to promote good government, which has published a Code of Ethics "for city leaders who wish to perform their duties beyond all reproach".[3] And there is Metropolis, a global network of 138 major cities and metropolitan areas, which aims "to connect, share experiences, and mobilise on a wide range of local and global issues".[4] And for most city professionals—like architects, engineers, accountants, teachers and others—there are international associations which publish advice, arrange events and promote prizes to celebrate excellence.

In recent decades there has been a great migration of people to the world's cities in search of a better life: opportunities for work and income,

the care of their family, education of their children, security and safety, and maybe too a stronger sense of independence and self-esteem. These migrants have come mostly from the smaller towns and villages of their country, sometimes across borders from neighbouring countries, least commonly across continents and oceans from more distant lands. China has seen the world's biggest in-country migration to its cities: today over 200 million people there are living outside their place of birth and upbringing, a movement largely from the central and western rural regions to the cities of the southern and eastern coasts. But such rural–urban migration is also evident in many other countries of the world. Cross-border migration has, for example, been common from Zimbabwe to the more prosperous cities of Botswana and South Africa, where there are now substantial immigrant Zimbabwean communities. Likewise, there has been migration from post-communist Central and Eastern Europe to Western European cities, especially since the extension of the European Union. In 2018 in the USA, it was estimated that there were almost 60 million Hispanics—about 18% of the overall population—living there, mostly in its cities. The wider transcontinental, transoceanic migration has particularly been a post-colonial movement of the last half century and more, particularly when people from the former colonies of the European powers migrated to the cities of their former rulers; some have also gone to North America and Australasia. Also, there are people whose professional careers take them to and from the major cities of the world.

Transnational migration has created diasporas in many cities, which can act as agents for the import of new customs. Now, one in thirty people in the world live outside their country of birth. A recent UN report[5] stated that 18 million Indians form the world's largest diaspora, with the largest groups living in the UAE, the USA and Saudi Arabia. The next most dispersed nationalities are 11 million Mexicans, 11 million Russians, 10 million Chinese and 8 million Syrians. Some of these—like Indian construction workers in the UAE or Syrian refugees—will have little interaction with and impact on the indigenous population of the cities to which they have migrated. But many, including those from other countries with smaller diasporas, will settle in communities of their fellows in foreign cities in mostly richer countries.

Through immigration, many cities in the world now have a cosmopolitan population, diverse in its origins, nationalities and ethnicities. Some of the communities that make them cosmopolitan may be long-established, which is certainly true of many North and South American cities. In other cities, their cosmopolitanism may be established from recent patterns of migration. Cosmopolitanism evidences itself in cities in many ways. It may be there in

the appearance of people, especially their looks, and perhaps too in the native languages that they speak at home, or can be overheard speaking in the street or on public transport. Take London, for example: here the 10 most common alternatives to English for home speaking are Bengali, Polish, Turkish, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu, French, Arabic, Tamil and Portuguese, a mix associated with large non-European and European immigrant communities. Another contrasting example is Toronto: aside from native English or French, the 10 alternatives are Cantonese, Chinese, Mandarin, Tamil, Spanish, Tagalog (for Filipinos), Italian, Portuguese, Persian and Russian. With these languages will come customs and cultures associated with the linguists' origins, including faiths, foods, celebrations and, maybe for special occasions like weddings, traditional clothing. City economies may also be changed, not just with new businesses to meet the needs of these immigrant communities, but also through bringing their exotic tastes to the markets of indigenous city dwellers: witness, across the world, Irish pubs, Chinese takeaways and salsa dance schools.

A key solvent in these transfers of knowledge between cities—by individuals as much as organisations—is a shared language. It is English that has the greatest global reach, with 370 million native speakers, 610 million second-language speakers and about 1 billion in all worldwide.[*] English is an official language in 70 countries. It will be taught to children there and in many other countries. Much worldwide scientific and political discourse uses English, as does air traffic control—worrying, I always think, given the language's penchant for ambiguity. When travelling abroad you observe that people of different nationalities—Swedish and French, say—will use English for mutual conversation. This popularity is a curse for native English speakers since it inhibits our learning foreign languages—as we know, you order your drink in Italian and the waiter replies in English! English words have also crept into many languages, especially in day-to-day usage. The travel writer Jan Morris reports, of an encounter in Isfahan:

> "one of the more endearing hazards of modern travel, the Student of English. We are too late to escape. 'Sir!' he cries. 'Madam!' fluttering his notes and bearing down on us. 'Allow me please to ask you one question, before you leave the bridge: is it permissible or not, in the English language, to pursue a gerund with a participle? And would you be kind enough to comment on my pronunciation in the following passage, Exercise 12? Sit down, sir; sit down, madam! Be comfortable!'"[6]

Across the world's cities, street signage, both commercial and official, is often in English—frequently mis-spelt and sometimes including rather

[*] The aspirant international language Esperanto has only 2 million speakers.

odd usages, such as the Delhi Metro's restriction of seats to the "differently abled". Many common words are to do with travel and communication: examples are taxi and hotel (though both are of French derivation), welcome, exit, bus, WC, ATM, and wifi. On both the Shanghai and Dubai Metros, announcements of the next station are in English and there is writing on the platform edge stating "Mind the Gap"—borrowed from the London Underground. City youth may adopt English nicknames: you'll find a Max, Ryan and Daisy in Bangkok, as well as in New York. They pick up and relish English words: Awesome! OK! Cool! Sorry! Shit! and Bye-bye! can be heard in their street conversation. English phrases (often American in origin) are current: no problem, friends with benefits, work in progress, one-night stand and fast food, for example. They watch American movies without subtitles, and they can sing along with all the words of pop songs in English. Even texting in native languages has adopted some English-language initialisms, like omg (oh my god), wtf (what the fuck) and lol (laugh out loud). The annual English Proficiency Index[7] ranks countries on the basis of tests taken by citizens: in 2019 the top four countries were the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and Denmark (no surprise there); the non-European counties in the list's top 20 are Singapore (fifth), South Africa (sixth), Kenya (eighteenth) and the Philippines (twentieth). The use of English in the world's cities has become a badge of modernity.

There's another source of imports to cities that can only be called fashion. This includes not just items of clothing originating elsewhere, actually imported or reproduced locally, but also ways of wearing them: narrow or wide jeans? short or long skirts? shirts worn inside or outside the waist? shoe laces tied or untied? Also, this equally applies to make-up and hair styles. But it extends beyond personal appearance. For city people are prone to fashion trends in many things. It may be a new, imported product like a cosmetic, pasta or whisky, perhaps promoted in a successful commercial campaign. It may be a new foreign dish incorporated into family or restaurant menus. New pop songs travel around the world, as do new dance steps. A Chinese correspondent characterised "China's Millennials" in a 2019 London Review of Books article:

> "A typical Chinese millennial hipster will turn up to see you wearing a snug designer jacket, really saggy jeans or super-tight leggings, and white sneakers. They'll be carrying an eco bag, not any old cotton tote. But one that's trending on Instagram. Baseball caps and dramatic eye wear are among the most popular accessories. Unlike the urban middle-class generation that came before them, Chinese millennials (roughly those born between 1985 and 2000) aren't particularly drawn to such luxury brands as Chanel, whose showy logo is considered too 'mature.' And they're reading Sally Rooney…Chinese millennials are a product of globalisation."[8]

Sometimes it is impossible to put your finger on the source of an imported fashion that has become all the rage in a city.

Nor is fashion just restricted to the consumerist ephemera of clothing, cosmetics, cuisine or entertainment. Such imitation operates equally today in the building types and styles, created by professional architects and engineers and their commercial or political clients, that now characterise cityscapes around much of the world: freeways, skyscrapers, business parks, shopping malls and marinas have become near universal. While new transport modes like metros, trams, tuk-tuks, minibuses and bike-sharing schemes have become standard components of city transport. All have been exported and imported between the world's cities, often financed by international capital.

And such transfers have characterised politics as well, particularly popular politics that has sought to change policies or even regimes. Here, universal access to TV, smartphones and social media has been potent in providing inspiration and examples from the citizens of one city to another. This was evident in the street demonstrations that heralded the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989–1990, as each night TV screens would display that day's demonstrations with displays, chants and behaviour designed for the international audience. It was evident too in the pro-democracy events in the same period in Beijing's Tiananmen Square—though with a less positive outcome. Similar mediated copycatting in Gaza and the West Bank cities has characterised the successive Palestinian Intifadas of recent decades, as well as the popular demonstrations in the so-called Arab Spring of 2011, and more recently in Hong Kong and in Yangon, Myanmar.

Contemporary analysts of international relations make a distinction between hard and soft power. Hard power is coercive; the deployment of military or economic force to achieve an end. Soft power is not coercive but works to achieve its ends through appeal and attraction, relating particularly to cultures, values and preferences. This distinction can be seen among the imports from elsewhere observable in today's cities. Some are clearly a consequence of the hard power of economic globalisation, driven by multinational business, national governments and international organisations, aided by their consultants, in pursuit of their view of desirable wealth and efficiency. But, equally, many of the imports into today's cities that help to shape their identity have the character of soft power, in the form of ideas and practices that attract support, sometimes with the encouragement of governments or commercial interests, but often just from the people in those cities themselves.

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